

A SURVEY STUDY OF SCHOOL COUNSELORS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPORTANCE
OF
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS

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A SURVEY STUDY OF SCHOOL COUNSELORS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPORTANCE
OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS

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ABSTRACT

The requirements for school counselor certification have changed since 2000 in Missouri. Most notably, the requirement of previous teaching experience has been removed. As a result, individuals from backgrounds other than teaching have the opportunity to earn their masters' degrees in school counseling and earn the student services certificate of license to teach. Since the position of counselor developed out of teaching, many studies have examined teaching experience or lack of it as variables. Yet none has examined school counselors' perceptions of the importance of professional development areas related to the MoStep School Counseling Competencies. This research study surveyed school counselors to determine if there was a relationship between teaching experience or lack of it and counselors' perceived importance of 18 professional development areas derived from the MoStep School Counseling Competencies. The study also examined demographic variables, self-efficacy and stress, and their possible relationships to counselors' perceptions of the importance of professional development areas related to the MoStep School Counseling Competencies for those with teaching experience and those who lack teaching experience. Findings suggest that teaching experience has no relationship to counselors' perceptions of the importance of professional development areas. However, an unanticipated finding was that counselors' perceptions of the importance of professional development areas was related to counselors' years of experience as a counselor.

The issue of years of experience has not been studied regarding school counselors, but has been examined in teaching. Since the early years of counselor experience are important to success in the profession, issues such as early-career mentoring and administrative understanding of the role of the school counselor may prove useful.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Across the United States, educational systems are experiencing teacher shortages, primarily in secondary subject areas such as mathematics, science, foreign language, and special education, to name a few. Yet there are teacher shortage areas that span across the entire kindergarten through grade 12 system. One of these specialty areas in need of educators is school counseling. While classroom teachers must have bachelor's degrees to teach (among other requirements), this specialty certification area requires a master's degree. In order to be certified as a school counselor, a master's in counseling degree is required. Just as teacher shortages have prompted state boards of education to develop alternate routes to teaching, so have counselor shortages prompted alternative ways to earn counseling certification. One of the most significant changes to counselor certification is the removal of the teaching requirement as a prerequisite (Barret & Schmidt, 1986).

Since the first counselors were teachers doing the work of both teacher and counselor simultaneously, it is important to trace the evolution of the position of counselor. Background to the problem will examine how counseling certification developed out of teaching and how counselor certification has changed in Missouri. Given the historical context, the purpose of the study is to discover if there is a relationship between school counselors' perceptions of the importance of professional development areas related to the MoStep School Counseling Competencies and their prior teaching experience.

Background to the Problem

In order to get a sense of counselor certification, it is important to examine teacher

certification as well since school counseling evolved out of teaching. Historically, individuals who wished to become teachers entered baccalaureate programs of study in education that would lead to teaching certificates upon completion of the degree and state certification requirements. While each college or university teacher education program had its own requirements for fulfillment of the degree, states also had specific criteria that needed to be completed before issuance of a certificate. In some cases, for example, a minimum of work experience outside education was required of applicants. Perhaps a minimum ACT score was necessary. Generally, the teacher education programs assisted education majors with the completion of additional requirements. Many states issued lifetime teaching certificates to these teachers (Ingersoll, 2001).

Historically, school counselors started as high school teachers who performed the customary duties of teachers and were also given additional responsibilities in the area of vocational guidance. Many times these individuals did not necessarily choose the counselor duties portion of the job, but rather fell into it in much the same way new teachers ended up with coaching or sponsoring clubs (Hoyt, 2001). In the beginning of the position, individuals did not hold certificates in counseling, but did have teaching certificates. The first vocational guidance counselors emerged in the late 1800's (Gysbers, 2001; Myrick, 2003). Eventually, the job of teacher/counselor became two distinct positions. Thus, counselors have always had roots as teachers. Generally, as these individuals chose to become school counselors, they had to have teaching experience in order to earn certification through their state departments of education. In Missouri, a minimum of two years of teaching experience was required as recently as 2000 (Missouri School Counselor Association, 2000). By the early 1960's, master's degree programs in school counseling were being established for this relatively new profession (Sink & MacDonald, 1998; Hoyt, 2001). Eventually these teacher/counselors went on to earn their master's degrees in school counseling while working as teachers. Attending classes part time, a

full-time teacher would need a number of semesters to complete such programs (Barret & Schmidt, 1986).

The need for teachers throughout the United States has prompted state policymakers, higher education institutions, and public schools to examine and develop ways to generate a greater number of teachers. Districts experiencing the greatest shortfall of qualified teachers are in either urban or rural locations. Contributing to the problem in these urban and rural districts is the high teacher turnover rate from year to year (Darling-Hammond, 2003). Some researchers, however, argue that there is not an insufficient supply of teachers at all, but rather an excess demand and a high turnover rate (Ingersoll, 2001). Nonetheless, supply and demand are not in balance. The same is true for school counselors. The U. S. Department of Labor (1998) reports that counselors will be in demand as large numbers retire in the next ten years. As the demand for counselors is increasing, the requirements for certification are changing (American School Counselor Association, 2005).

After the National Commission on Excellence in Education came out with a scathing report titled *A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform* in April 1983, state education boards felt the need to strengthen education by toughening teacher requirements. The report's findings also addressed the teacher shortage in critical areas and made recommendations that would later set the framework for emergency and alternative forms of teacher certification. Some states responded by altering their teacher certification so that teachers would be required to undergo a set amount of professional development in order to maintain, renew, or upgrade their teaching credentials. As the 1990's began, supply and demand did not match in the teaching profession. The need for teachers outweighed the supply. In some cases, the number of new teachers graduating from accredited colleges and universities matched the demand, but the rate of teacher turnover is high (Steadman & Simmons, 2007). This suggests that the teacher shortage

is also an indicator of the need to retain teachers through better professional development and other forms of support.

In an effort to alleviate teacher shortages in critical areas, alternative methods of certifying teachers have been created. For individuals who already possessed bachelor's degrees in the areas of math, science, or foreign languages the alternative route to teacher certification has allowed them to enter the teaching profession without earning additional degrees in education. For school districts that allow or need this optional route in critical areas, the process is alleviating teacher shortages and allowing course and program offerings to remain intact (Towner-Larsen, 2000).

Another critical shortage area developed as well: school counseling. Fewer teachers were choosing to earn master's degrees in school counseling. The demand for more highly qualified teachers has led to states mandating continuing education beyond the bachelor's degree. The degree master's of school counseling requires more credit hours than do other education degrees in general. For example, some Missouri institutions require 32 credit hours for a master's degree in educational administration versus 48 credit hours for a master's in school counseling. The extra training required for the counseling degree may be a deterrent for some seeking graduate work (Sesser, 2000).

Missouri's policies have reflected national trends. In 1985, in a response to *A nation at risk: The imperative or educational reform* (1983), lawmakers in the state of Missouri passed legislation requiring school districts to provide professional development to all teachers and extra assistance to beginning teachers via higher education and an assigned mentor by September 1988 (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1988). Current Missouri professional development guidelines establish a professional development committee (PDC) in

each district to oversee professional development activities. The professional development committee is charged with four responsibilities:

- (a) identify instructional concerns and remedies
- (b) serve as a confidential consultant upon a teacher's request
- (c) assess faculty needs and develop inservice opportunities for school staff
- (d) present to the proper authority faculty suggestions, ideas, and recommendations pertaining to classroom instruction (DESE, 2007). (p.31)

An additional provision includes the requirement that the district must provide a plan of professional development for a teacher's first two years of teaching. Does this include counselors with no prior teaching experience? The answer to this is unclear and may be interpreted differently by school districts. In Missouri Professional Development Guidelines for Student Success (2007), the question and answer section lists several questions that may suggest a position:

What qualifies as prior teaching experience?

Prior teaching experience is having had two full years (not necessarily consecutive) of teaching experience under a regular teacher contract in a public school system.

Does "entry year" mentor program apply to teachers new to the district, teachers new to teaching, teachers who change subject matter, or all of these?

Certification standards require only those teachers **new** to teaching who have not taught a full year in a public school to participate in the "entry year" mentor program. A second year of mentoring is recommended.

Must Professional Development Committee (PDC) membership be limited to classroom teachers?

No. Counselors, librarians, coordinators, directors, principals, superintendents, and any other certified staff member may serve on the committee if selected by teachers (DESE, 2007). (p. 5-6)

Therefore, if counselors are new to the profession and do not possess teaching credentials, under the Missouri professional development guidelines for mentoring, these individuals would be assigned mentors along with professional development plans for two years. However, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has posted, revised as of October 2005, requirements for the Student Services certification upgrade. In order for candidates to upgrade from Initial certification to Career Continuous certification, they must have participated in two years of district-provided mentoring during the first two years of student services experience. There is no clear exception, as stated above, regarding previous teaching or certification areas (DESE, 2007).

Since 1988, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has altered its state teacher certification process to reflect changes recommended on the national level. Prior to September 1988, teachers who earned bachelor's degrees through traditional education programs received lifetime certificates to teach. Beginning in September 1988, teacher certification became a tiered process. The initial certificate teachers earned classified them at the PCI level. After these teachers met requirements of contracted teaching experience and professional development, they could upgrade their certificates to the next level PCII. Additional years of experience, education, and professional development were required before they could upgrade to the CPC level (R.Rosenketter, personal communication, July 2003).

However, the state changed the system again in 2003 to reflect similar requirements, but less confusing terminology. Initial teaching certificates were changed from PCI to Initial certificates. Career Continuous replaced the CPC certificate. Additionally, once teachers reach

the Career Continuous stage, they earn certificates that are valid for 99 years. Essentially, the process went from a three-tiered preparation program to a two-tiered program. The basic requirements for applicants wishing to obtain a Missouri teaching certificate included the following:

1) A bachelor's degree from a DESE approved teacher education program in Missouri, or from a teacher education program in another state that is approved by that state's education agency;

2) A recommendation from the designated teacher education official where the program was completed;

3) An overall grade point average of 2.5 on a 4-point scale in both the overall and the content area;

4) Qualifying scores on the Praxis test(s); and

5) Completion of educational, professional, and subject area requirements. Currently in Missouri, there are nine classifications of certificates for licenses to teach. (See Appendix A for complete listing.)

Prior to 2000, the requirements for the Elementary or Secondary School Counselor Certificate included:

1) Valid Missouri teaching certificate

2) Two years approved teaching experience

3) A course in Psychology and Education of the Exceptional Child

4) A master's degree with emphasis in guidance and counseling.

5) One year of accumulated paid employment other than teaching or counseling (secondary counselors).

- 6) Recommendation for certification by official from a college or university approved to educate counselors and completion of planned program consisting of 24 hours graduate credit in guidance and counseling with at least 12 semester hours focused upon guidance and counseling at the level for which certification is requested. (Missouri School Counselor Association, 2000).

Upgrading and renewing the counselor certificate was done every five years and required at least two years of counseling experience on the appropriately-certified level during the previous five years. Renewal also required at least six semester hours of additional graduate credit or a Commissioner of Education approved professional development plan equivalent to six hours of college credit. Plus 15 clock hours of workshops or seminars appropriate for the level of the requested renewal had to be approved by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE, 1986). Similar requirements were needed for additional renewal after 10 years. Membership in professional organizations on the state or national level was required, as was attendance at a minimum of five annual meetings. Sixty clock hours of DESE approved workshops and seminars were needed. In addition, the state required participation in activities such as work experience, conducting workshops, independent research, and volunteer work in social agencies for at least 60 clock hours and with Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education approval. Finally, six semester hours of graduate work appropriate to the individual's counseling assignment were needed (Missouri School Counselor Association, 2000).

In late summer of 2000, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education authorized by the State Board of Education altered the counselor certification requirements. One of the changes was the title of the certificate. Prior to the fall of 2000, the certificate was called either the Elementary School Counselor Certificate or the Secondary

School Counselor Certificate. The new name became the Student Services certificate of License to Teach. According to MSCA Historian and Past President Linda Lueckenhoff (personal communication, November 13, 2007) the name change needed to include the phrase “license to teach” so that individuals who were certified as counselors without teaching credentials could enter the Missouri State teacher retirement system as certified teachers. Upon first earning the certificate, it is referred to as the Initial Student Service certificate, and is valid for four years (DESE, 2007).

Other changes included the removal of the teaching prerequisite. Without the teaching certificate or experience, candidates with qualifying master’s degrees were required to complete coursework in teaching methods and practices, classroom management, and psychology of the exceptional child. Candidates also needed the recommendation of the official representative of the state-approved program. In addition, candidates needed a qualifying score on the state designated assessment that did not include the principles of learning and teaching. Current requirements are available on the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website and appear in Appendix B (DESE, 2005).

Requirements for upgrading the Initial Student Services Certificate to Career Continuous Student Services Certificate include four years of state-approved counseling experience. Participation in two years of district mentoring during the first two years of counseling experience is required. In addition, the development, implementation and completion of a professional development plan containing at least 40 contact hours or three credit hours of graduate work toward an advanced degree is necessary. Another requirement is successful participation in annual performance-based evaluations (DESE, 2005). For those who hold a Career Continuous Student Services certificate, the professional development requirement will be exempt if the candidate has two of the following conditions met: 1) ten years of state-

approved counselor experience, 2) an educational specialist's degree, or 3) national board certification from a professional school counseling organization (DESE, 2007).

Statement of the Problem

Educators and researchers are divided on the success of alternative certification programs in developing high quality teachers and counselors. Many studies contradict one another. What is clear, however, is that students who have the greatest need for high quality teachers seem to be getting shortchanged (Stover, 1999). Students who have learning disabilities or who live in poor urban and rural areas are the students who are being taught by the seemingly less-prepared, alternatively certified educators. Moreover, turnover rates are high in these areas, even among the alternatively certified teachers. While these alternatively certified individuals may have a strong desire to teach, they do not possess the same credentials that other first year teachers possess. They do not experience student teaching or educational practicums as do traditionally trained teachers. Counselors may experience internships or field experiences, but do not have teacher backgrounds, degrees, or experience. Districts are left with the task of professionally developing these teachers and counselors while they, in some cases, complete the state requirements and become oriented to the profession. Interestingly enough, the new counselor, regardless of his or her route to counselor certification is expected to perform on the same level as experienced counselors (Matthes, 1992). Additionally, House and Martin (1998) indicate that with society becoming more global, better use of resources is needed to close the achievement gap between poor and minority children and their more advantaged peers. Therefore, in this context it is important to examine early-career school counselors' perceptions of the importance of professional development areas related to the MOStep School Counseling Competencies.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to discover if there is a relationship between school counselors' perceptions of the importance of professional development areas related to the MoStep School Counseling Competencies and their prior teaching experience. The study will survey recent graduates of one university's counselor education program. The study findings will help inform practice for university counselor preparation programs, regional professional development centers, employing districts, and other professional organizations.

Research Questions

1. What professional development areas related to MoStep School Counseling Competencies do early-career school counselors perceive as important?
2. Is there a relationship between the perceived importance of professional development areas and school counselors' prior teaching experience or lack of it?
3. Are there relationships between demographic variables and perceived importance of professional development areas for early-career school counselors?
4. Are there relationships between demographic variables and the perceived importance of professional development areas for counselors with teaching experience?
5. Are there relationships between demographic variables and the perceived importance of professional development areas for counselors without teaching experience?
6. Is there a relationship between self-efficacy and the perceived importance of professional development areas for early-career school counselors?
7. Is there a relationship between self-efficacy and the perceived importance of professional development areas for counselors with teaching experience?

8. Is there a relationship between self-efficacy and the perceived importance of professional development areas for counselors without teaching experience?

Design and Methods

The survey and letter of introduction was mailed to 380 graduates of a master's in school counseling program from one growing Midwest university between the years 2002 through 2008. Surveys were numerically coded in order to keep track of returns. Non-responders were mailed reminder postcards after three weeks. The data collected was analyzed using frequency counts, descriptive statistics, and correlations. Findings are discussed in Chapter 4.

The researcher designed the instrument utilizing questions regarding employment, professional development areas related to the MoStep School Counseling Competencies, self-efficacy, stress, job satisfaction, professional development opportunities, mentoring, the use of the Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Model, and demographic items. Survey items have been borrowed and adapted from the research of Barrow, Wooldridge, Buckley-Rohrer, and Shaver (2000) regarding the non-employment of certified school counselors in Missouri and Ashton and Webb's (1986) research regarding teacher self-efficacy.

Definitions of Key Terms

Early career school counselors: The study will use the term *early-career school counselors* or *new counselors* to identify those individuals who are within the first several years of employment as school counselors.

Mentors: *Mentors* are experienced teachers or counselors who assist new teachers or counselors on an on-going, regular basis for no less than one school year. A new

counselor participating in a mentoring program or who may be returning to the profession after a length of time may also be referred to as a *protége*. The study will include an item regarding the use and helpfulness of district-assigned, official counseling mentors.

Professional development: Professional development encompasses a large range of activities for teachers and counselors. For the purposes of this study, the definition of *professional development* will include activities sponsored or created by employing districts for the express purpose of assisting school counselors.

School counselor: The term *school counselor* may be expressed by using any or all of the following terms interchangeably: *counselor*, *school counselor*, *professional school counselor*.

Self-efficacy: Teacher efficacy has been examined and defined a number of ways (Bandura, 1993; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Tshannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). For the purposes of this study, *teacher efficacy* is simply a teacher's judgments about his or her ability to promote students' learning despite life's pressures. This study will generalize the term *teacher efficacy* to include *counselor efficacy*, or more simply *self-efficacy*.

Chapter 2

Review of Related Literature

Introduction

Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence, had a vision of free schools for all people funded by taxes. While his vision did not bear fruit immediately, his ideas were the foundation for publicly funded local school systems in the 19th century. The American school system in the United States began as not much of a true system at all, but rather a disjointed collection of local, regional, and private educational institutions. Beginning in the 1830s, the underlying beliefs linking the institutions became catalysts to a dramatically developing and evolving system. State-wide common schools began to take shape and it was recognized that all young children should be educated. By the 20th century, American public education provided more years of schooling for a larger percentage of the population than any other country in the world (U.S. Department of Education, retrieved 7/7/08).

As society has changed, so have the demands and expectations of school systems. As Reese (2007, 2001, 2000) points out, schools have become multi-purpose institutions that are easily criticized and often the subject of reform. At the same time, the United States (and world) job market is becoming more complex and schools need to prepare high school graduates for the transition to the post-secondary level. Students must be ready for the world of work, for vocational or technical school training, or for university studies. At the same time, societal challenges such as divorce; violence in communities and schools; substance use and abuse; sexual behavior and experimentation; and teen parenting are just a few of the issues students face each day (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000). The need for comprehensive guidance programs in

schools has never been greater than today. Henceforth, the need for well-prepared school counselors is critical.

Background

School guidance programs began in the early 1900's as vocational guidance to help young people into the work force. Much of the focus was on the needs of society, industry, and job placement rather than personal and educational aspects of individuals (Beesley, 2004; Gysbers, 2001; Pope, 2000). The first counselors were not actual formally trained counselors at all; they were teachers assigned the position of vocational counselor. These individuals were given lists of duties to be performed in addition to their regular teaching duties. No organizational structure was developed or provided (Gysbers, 2001; Myrick, 2003). In 1938, Congress established the Occupational Information and Guidance Branch in the Bureau of Vocational Education. Under this legislation, states were provided with money to employ state supervisors of guidance. The new state supervisors were supposed to encourage the introduction and operation of school guidance programs at the kindergarten through grade 12 levels, but with a primary interest in the secondary level (Hoyt, 2001). In a first-hand account, Hoyt explained that some state supervisors seemed competent, but others did not. By the late 1940's, the state supervisors had formed the National Association of Guidance Supervisors (NAGS). The organization eventually added "Counselor Trainers" to its title becoming the National Association of Guidance Supervisors Counselor Trainers (NAGSCT). By the early 1960's another name change reflected the need to increase the number of school counselors and it became the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES), which remains the current name of the organization (ACES, retrieved 7/8/08).

In the 1940's, vocational guidance was starting to be influenced by the mental health movement – including psychotherapeutic procedures and psychometrics, child development studies, and progressive education (Super, 1955). These factors contributed to the increased need to move away from teachers working as vocational counselors to actually developing and educating individuals to be specialized school counselors. Since counselors were a new emerging position in schools, Hoyt's (2001) anecdotal experience was not atypical:

Thus, in many states, the only firm requirement for becoming a school counselor was that the applicant have a teaching certificate and some bona fide teaching experience. In my case, I had to begin working as a teacher-counselor, and I actually taught courses to high school students part of the day. If I had tried to become a full-time school counselor without teaching experience, I could not have worked in a Maryland high school at that time (Hoyt, 2001). (p.376)

When the Soviets launched the first satellite into space in 1957, the United States government became worried about our nation's ability to compete in the scientific and technical fields. As a result, the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) was passed by Congress in 1958. The focus of the legislation was to ensure that highly-trained individuals were developed to their fullest potential and that math, science, and foreign language instruction would be strengthened (U. S. Department of Education, retrieved 7/7/08). With a stronger emphasis given to the academically talented student, school guidance programs gave priority to the college-bound student. The legislation also made funds available to train large numbers of individuals to become counselors. By 1962, there were more than 400 counselor education programs at the graduate level. Standards for counselor education and guidance programs were emerging (Sink & MacDonald, 1998; Hoyt, 2001).

Career awareness became an important part of vocational guidance and the roles of the school counselor throughout the 1960's through the 1990's. Yet the roles were still being defined and were evolving in response to societal shifts. Pope (2000) defines this time period as the 4th stage in career counseling in the United States – a time when it became important to have meaningful work to enrich our lives. The shift away from the service-delivery approach to guidance to a more comprehensive developmental guidance and counseling program was well underway. By 1997, nearly half of the 50 states had developed some form of comprehensive guidance and counseling program (Sink & MacDonald, 1998). One study examined the development of comprehensive guidance systems throughout the country and discovered that states borrowed models from one another. The majority of the 24 models examined were adaptations from the Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Model, including its organizational framework developed by Gysbers and Henderson in 1994 (Sink & MacDonald, 1998).

During this time of unclear and changing expectations for counselors, education was continuing to undergo great scrutiny. The public was demanding reform of educational systems after the National Commission of Excellence in Education released its report *A Nation at Risk: the Imperative for Educational Reform* in 1983. The report resulted in five categories of recommendations for educational reform. The categories included A) content; B) standards and expectations; C) time; D) teaching; and E) leadership and fiscal support. While recommendations in all areas were seen as critical, for the purposes of this literature review, only one category will receive elaboration: teaching. Seven points were identified to improve teacher preparation, make it more rewarding, and a respected profession. The points are summarized here:

- 1) Teacher preparation programs should have high academic standards with candidates exhibiting aptitude for teaching and competence in subject matter. University

- preparation programs should be judged based on how well their graduates meet the criteria.
- 2) Salaries should increase, be competitive, and performance-based. Salary, promotion, tenure, and retention decisions should be based on an evaluation system where superior teachers are rewarded, average teachers are encouraged, and poor teachers improve or are terminated.
 - 3) School boards should develop 11-month contracts for teachers to foster professional development while providing for increased compensation.
 - 4) School boards should develop career ladders that distinguish between beginning, experienced and master teachers.
 - 5) Recruit individuals with math and science aptitude from business and industry to fill the shortages in these academic areas. Other critical shortage areas must also be addressed, such as English.
 - 6) Attract new teachers in shortage areas by way of grants and loans.
 - 7) Utilize master teachers in designing teacher preparation programs and supervising new probationary teachers (National Commission on Excellence in Education, retrieved 7/13/05).

State and local boards of education were moving to address the issues of the report, namely to raise the standard quality of teachers and address the needs in critical shortage areas effectively. Many wondered if these ideas were in conflict with one another (Merrow, 1999). One researcher pointed out that the “missing link” in school reform was the need for school counselors (Beale, 2003).

Since 2000, researchers have continued to examine teacher and counselor supply and demand (Ingersoll, 2002; Towner-Larsen, 2000) and the so-called alternative routes to teacher and counselor certification (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Olsen & Allen, 2001), even debating the effectiveness of these programs in producing high-quality professionals (Paese, 2003; Smith, 2001). The purpose of this research is not to debate any of these issues, but rather to examine the counselors' perceptions of the importance of professional development areas related to the MoStep School Counseling Competencies and determine if there is a relationship between those perceptions and school counselors' prior teaching experience or lack of it. In the examination of this topic, several factors must be explored: teaching experience; standards for counselors; internship/field placement experience, perceptions of counselors' roles and effectiveness; counselor self-efficacy; stress; job satisfaction; professional development; and mentoring.

Teaching Experience

Do school counselors need teaching experience to be effective, high quality professionals? Researchers have examined and debated this question since the beginning of counselor certification. Since the first counselors were actually teachers, it is an expected question to ponder. As recently as 1992, a study discovered 21 states that still required teaching experience for school counselor credentials (Kandor & Bobby, 1992). According to the American Counseling Association (2003), only a few states still require teaching experience for school counselor credentials.

In 1949, a study of 406 counselors in 20 states that were part of the North Central Association of Secondary Schools found overwhelming support for the teaching requirement for school counselors (Simmers & Davis, 1949). While the teaching requirement was heavily favored in most literature of this time period, there were those who disagreed. The American

Personnel and Guidance Association expressed concern that some teaching experiences could be a detriment for counselors. It further suggested that individuals with backgrounds other than teaching could provide valuable services to students, if given proper training (APGA, 1958). Prominent writers of the early 1960's were divided on the subject. Some of these individuals supported teaching experience for counselors (Hoyt, 1962; Hutson, 1962; Miller, 1962). Many others did not support the need for teaching experience for counselors (American Psychological Association, 1962; Cohen 1961; Nugent, 1966; Stewart, 1961; Wrenn, 1962). The basic arguments for detractors were that the standard was quantitative rather than qualitative; that it deterred outstanding prospects who did not possess teaching experience; and it encouraged those who were incompetent teachers to escape their unsuccessful teaching careers (Baker, 1994).

Three studies in the 1960's and 1970's compared the two groups, with interviewing behavior being the dependent variable. Each study revealed similar results: school counselors without teaching experience were exhibiting more favorable interviewing techniques and behaviors than were their teaching-experience counterparts (Campbell, 1962; Mazer, Severson, Axman, & Ludington, 1965; Merrill, Lister, & Antenen, 1968). Another dependent variable studied was effectiveness ratings. Dilly, Foster, and Bowers (1973) and White and Parsons (1974) found no significant differences in the principals' rating of effectiveness between counselors with experience and those without teaching experience. The authors of these studies subsequently suggested that the teaching requirement be discontinued.

Two other studies utilized self-reported data for comparison between those with and without teaching experience. One study by Peterson and Brown (1968) compared counselors' perceptions of themselves in the following three areas: acceptance in the schools; understanding of school policies and procedures; and ability to perform significant guidance activities. Neither group perceived themselves as higher in these areas than the other group. Wittmer and Webster

(1969) surveyed counselor trainees and found that the ones with teaching experience rated themselves as significantly more dogmatic than those without teaching experience.

Studies comparing the two groups of counselors do not appear in the literature again until the 1990's. Olsen and Allen (1993) studied principals' perceptions of school counselors with and without teaching experience. No significant differences were perceived by the principals on 13 counselor functions. The study also found that while teaching experience as a prerequisite to counseling does not seem to be supported by reality, perceptions of its importance continue to be held.

A study by Bringman and Lee (2008) examined middle school counselors' perceptions of their competence in delivery of developmental classroom guidance lessons. The purpose of the study was to determine whether teaching experience was necessary in order for school counselors to feel competent when conducting classroom guidance lessons. Developing, organizing, and delivering the classroom guidance lessons are important components of a comprehensive guidance program and are categorized as direct services to students. The study showed that it is helpful, but not necessary, for counselors to have prior teaching experience in order to feel competent at classroom guidance. More importantly, the researchers found that experience as a counselor was more indicative of self-perceived competence than a teaching prerequisite. The researchers suggested that counselors-in-training be required to conduct developmental guidance lessons during their internship in order to gain experience.

A literature review does not exist regarding early-career counselors' perceptions of the importance of professional development areas, specifically those areas related to the MoStep School Counseling Competencies. Further, the teaching experience component and professional development perceptions do not exist in the literature.

Standards for School Counselors

If prior teaching experience is not a prerequisite to counselor success, what should be required? Counselor education programs across the nation may have chosen to obtain accreditation through the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The organization provides guidelines for institutions in the training of school counselors (CACREP, 2001). CACREP's core curriculum has been the foundation for the educational requirements of most state certification agencies. Among the standards outlined in the CACREP document, the experiential component is considered most critical. Internship and practicum experiences provide the counselor-in-training the opportunity to develop and refine counseling skills while performing a variety of school-related activities, including classroom guidance lessons.

Many counselor preparation programs do not seek accreditation through CACREP. According to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), there are 14 universities in the state's Directory of Approved Professional Education Programs under the heading of *Counselor*. Under the heading *Counselor (Non-Teaching Background)*, there are 10 universities listed (DESE, 2007). All 10 on the non-teaching background list are also on the counselor list. Four universities on the counselor list do not appear on the non-teaching background list. Of all the universities listed, only two institutions are CACREP accredited. One of the two is listed as accredited and also listed as in the process of accreditation (CACREP, 2008).

In the state of Missouri, however, approval by DESE is more critical to university counselor preparation programs than CACREP accreditation. The state developed sets of standards for educator preparation in teaching, administration, counseling, and library/media specialists, among others called the Missouri Standards for Teacher Education Programs, or

MoSTEP. For school counselors, there are 16 quality indicators and two to five performance indicators for each quality indicator. A complete copy of the MoSTEP school counseling competencies may be found in Appendix C.

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) has also developed school counselor competencies. The organization worked collaboratively with the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES), CACREP, The Education Trust, members and leaders of ASCA, district counseling supervisors, practicing counselors, and counselor educators from all over the United States (ASCA, 2007). The resulting document is organized around the framework of the ASCA National Model® of program components. It provides counselor education programs with benchmarks for assisting graduates with the tools needed to develop comprehensive guidance programs. School counselors may use the standards to help them self-evaluate and develop professional development plans. In addition, ASCA suggests, “School administrators may find these competencies useful as a guide for seeking and hiring highly competent school counselors and for developing meaningful school counselor performance evaluations.” (p.1) The comprehensive competencies include skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed for performing the wide range of school counselor duties from four domains of comprehensive guidance programs: foundation, management, delivery, and accountability. To view the complete document, see Appendix D.

In addition to program standards for counselors there are ethical standards. The primary organization for development of ethical standards for counselors is the ASCA. The document was a collaborative effort by the ASCA delegate assembly and was first written in 1984. Revisions to the standards were written in 1992, 1998, and 2004. Ethical responsibilities of counselors include: responsibilities to students, parents or guardians, colleagues and professional organizations, the school community, and to the profession. A diversity component is included to

encourage greater cultural competence. Also included is a procedure to assist counselors in maintaining ethical behavior of self and others within the profession (ASCA, 2004). The document may be viewed as Appendix E.

The Missouri School Counselor Association (MSCA) is a professional organization that works in cooperation with national organizations such as ASCA and the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE). The MSCA also engages in professional collaboration with local and state organizations including the American Counseling Association of Missouri (ACAM), Missouri Counselor Educators, and the Missouri Association for Career and Technical Educating (MACTE). While many of the aforementioned organizations support activities of a broad spectrum of counselors, the MSCA focuses on the unique concerns and professional issues of school counselors (MSCA, 2008).

A school counselor candidate in Missouri must earn a master's degree with an emphasis in guidance and counseling from a DESE-approved program of at least 24 semester hours. The candidate must also be recommended for certification from a DESE-approved college or university that trains counselors. The individual must also either possess a teaching certificate from an approved teacher preparation program or complete courses in teaching methods and practices, classroom management, and the psychology of the exceptional child. In addition, all candidates must earn qualifying scores on the Praxis for school counselors (DESE, 2007). (The complete document of certification requirements for counselors in Missouri was previously referenced as Appendix B).

In an effort to help develop uniform certification standards in the 1990's, several organizations worked collaboratively including the ASCA, the American Counseling Association (ACA; known at the time as the American Association for Counseling and Development), and ACES. Several areas were examined for revision: needs-based program development;

multicultural issues; developmentally-based intervention strategies; research; counselor supervision; and development of school-based internships. The idea behind the work was to establish consistency in the credentialing process for state agencies around the country (Baker, 1994). One of the most critical elements in the school counseling degree programs is the practical internship/field placement experience.

Internship/Field Experience

What is the value of the internship experience? Do school counselor candidates with teaching experience have different field placement experiences than those school counselor candidates without teaching experience? Counselor candidates without teaching experience often have additional coursework, but the internship/field experience for all candidates is the same. Among the DESE certification requirements is 300 hours of supervised internship or field experience in an appropriate school setting. Certificate classifications include grades K-8, grades K-12, and grades 7-12. The state requirement is consistent with CACREP literature regarding the importance of the internship experience to the profession. For the purpose of this study, the terms *internship* and *field experience* will be used interchangeably with the author noting that many universities may differentiate between the two terms.

Many studies have examined the importance of the internship experience for counselors with and without teaching experience. Researchers Peterson, Goodman, Keller, and McCauley (2004) theorized that studies of interns may yield information about whether curricular adjustments were needed for either teachers or non-teachers during their internship experiences or field placements. Additionally, the researchers noted an absence of information regarding teachers moving from teaching to counseling and suggested that this reflected an assumption that

few challenges were present in this transition. The qualitative research focused on interns' perceived deficiencies, strengths, challenges, and adjustments during their internship experience.

The study participants numbered 26 from the same Midwestern state. Findings suggested that teachers seemed to have no less difficulty in adjusting to their new roles as counselors than those without teaching experience. Yet both groups reported considerable differences in their perceptions of challenges and how they adjusted to those challenges. One finding that appeared to challenge assumptions of the importance of teaching experience was the daunting challenges faced by teachers as they switched from their familiar, comfortable roles in the school culture to new roles and new ways of relating and “what the position of school counselor would entail (Peterson et al, 2004).” Both groups perceived gaps in their preparation. In response to the question “What do you wish you had known?” several themes emerged from both groups: awareness of school culture, including school, teacher, and administrator cultures; resources for building a guidance curriculum; articulating the role of school counselor to school personnel and parents; filling the gaps of knowledge (example: play therapy, special education, crisis responses, legal issues), and skills training related to working with children and parents (Peterson et al, 2004). Of the aforementioned themes, the following are present in the quality indicators found in the MoStep School Counseling Competencies: resources for building a guidance curriculum; articulating the role of school counselor to school personnel and parents; and within the category of filling the gaps with knowledge, the examples of special education, crisis responses, and legal issues.

Based on the work of Peterson et al, and an ethnographic study of an exemplary school counselor (Littrell & Peterson, 2005), Peterson and Deuschle (2006) developed a model for preparing non-teachers to become counselors. The model emphasizes the need to shift from providing graduate students with information to providing school personnel with pertinent

information in working with the interns. It also encourages the opportunity for non-teachers to become immersed in school contexts and other venues that serve children, while also observing school culture. The model also offers suggestions to help the site supervisor feel more comfortable in the leadership role. In addition, it provides guidance for filling in the gaps in interns' knowledge and skills as quickly as possible.

Jackson, Snow, Boes, Phillips, Stanard, Painter, and Wulff (2002) point out that the internship itself encompasses a significant portion of the graduate students' experience. The field experience must reflect practices that have been integrated throughout the coursework. Supporting, supervising, and mentoring the interns while understanding what challenges they face is critical to their development as counselors.

In Missouri, the internship/field placement experience of 300 hours is the same for all interns, with no additional hours required for those individuals without teaching experience (DESE, 2005). Given that the respondents for this study are from the same institution, there are no survey items regarding the actual internship/field placement experience.

Perceptions of Counselors' Roles and Effectiveness

Once counselors are on the job, what affects other educators' perceptions of them? Education is one of the few professions where society expects novice teachers to assume the same responsibilities as experienced teachers; the same is true of the expectation of novice counselors (Matthes, 1992). According to Matthes (1992) novice school counselors are confronted with a sink-or-swim situation regardless of their counselor preparation programs. A comprehensive guidance program cannot be successful without the support and involvement of the entire school community of stakeholders, including students, parents, counselors, teachers,

administrators, support personnel, and members of the community. Nor can the newly-trained counselor be successful without the same widespread support (Jackson et al, 2002).

Often there is a widespread lack of understanding on the part of principals and teachers on the role of the school counselor (Johnson, 2000). Typically the perceptions held about counselor role and effectiveness are determined by the administration. If the administrator sees the job of the counselor as that of administrative assistant or coordinator of scheduling, testing, or records, then that becomes the counselor's role. Counselors cannot be seen as advocates or change agents without administrative support for those roles. The cultivation of a positive working relationship between principal and school counselor is essential to the counseling profession and the overall improvement of school climate (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994; Niebuhr, Niebuhr, & Cleveland, 1999). However, often times, principals do not fully understand the comprehensive guidance program or how the counselor can contribute to student achievement or school climate. A study by Dollarhide, Smith and Lemberger (2007) examined school counselor and principal relationships. Their findings suggest that counselor educators collaborate with educational leadership faculty to better educate future principals about the value of the ASCA National Model® and to explain how this model contributes to the work that principals value.

Beginning in the summer of 2009, an online course will be offered to Missouri school administrators through DESE titled Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Program: An introduction for administrators. The two-credit course provides an overview of the role and function of the comprehensive guidance program in schools. It also provides participants with the understanding of the role of the school counselor in planning, designing, implementing, evaluating, and enhancing the program. The course description also indicates that administrators

will have a greater understanding of what they can do to support the full implementation of the comprehensive guidance program in their schools (DESE, retrieved 7/12/09).

Despite the available research, the perception that teaching experience is a necessary prerequisite for counseling persists in schools. In a study by Olson and Allen (1993) the first author states that many administrators and staff insisted to her that counselors must have teaching experience to be successful in a school environment. While some principals commented on the need for prior teaching experience, study findings showed no significant differences between the two groups when principals rated the effectiveness of counselors in 13 functions. Smith (2001) studied counselor educators' perceptions of the need for teaching experience in counselors. Most counselor educators believed that the teaching experience may be helpful, but it is not necessary. Overall, counselor educators in states with and without the teaching requirement recommend additional requirements for those without teaching experience. Most often, the suggestion was for additional fieldwork rather than coursework. In Missouri, the internship/field experience component of counselor training does not differentiate between those who have teaching experience and those who do not. Additional coursework, on the other hand, is added for those who do not have teaching credentials. Three additional courses are required that complete curriculum in: teaching methods and practices; classroom management; and the psychology of the exceptional child (DESE, 2005).

In contrast to the perceptions of principals and counselor educators, a study by Quarto (1999) examined teachers' perceptions of counselors with and without teaching experience. Teachers were asked about counselors' general and specific school counseling functions. Teachers perceived school counselors with teaching experience to be the most effective in carrying out both types of counseling functions, followed by counselors with prior experience in mental health, then lastly with experience in the insurance field.

A separate study by Beesley (2004) examined teachers' perceptions of school counselors' effectiveness, but made no distinction between types of counselor preparation. Overall, teachers were satisfied with the services provided by school counselors in the areas of classroom guidance, individual and group counseling, consultation, and coordination of special education services. Yet teachers also saw room for improvement in numerous service areas: career counseling, academic planning and college preparation, community referrals, and public relations. Elementary counselors received the highest satisfaction ratings leading one to believe that this setting may be somewhat better suited for traditional classroom delivery of developmental guidance services. If teachers were satisfied with the classroom guidance of counselors in the study, this may suggest that counselors' prior teaching experience is not a critical issue to classroom teachers.

Self-efficacy

What are counselors' own perceptions of their effectiveness? Does teaching experience relate to the early-career school counselors' self-efficacy? Scores of research studies have been conducted on the subject of self-efficacy. Simply put, self-efficacy is beliefs about one's own ability to perform a given behavior despite pressures and stressors of life (Bandura, 1986, 1995; Dembo & Gibson, 1985; Ashton & Webb, 1986; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2001). The leading research was conducted by Bandura, and no discussion of the topic is possible without mention of his influence. Self-efficacy has been shown to be an important aspect in successful teaching and counseling (Bandura, 1995; Larsen & Daniels, 1998). While there has been development of teacher efficacy scales (Gibson & Dembo, 1985; Ashton & Webb, 1986) there are currently no instruments designed to measure school counselor self-efficacy. In a review of counseling self-efficacy literature, Larson and Daniels (1998) conclude that while

Bandura did not research or identify counselor self-efficacy, the social cognitive theory is easily translated to counselor self-efficacy and that counselor self-efficacy beliefs are the “primary causal determinant (p.180)” of effective counseling action. But as Bodenhorn and Skaggs (2005) pointed out, there are no valid measures of counselor self-efficacy developed. In their research, they discussed the development of an instrument that contained 43 items. The study differentiated between self-confidence and self-efficacy. In addition, respondents who had teaching experience reported significantly higher self-efficacy than those without teaching experience. There was also a significant difference with between women and men, with women reporting higher self-efficacy, though the sample size may be important to note here (182 women and 43 men). Bodenhorn and Skagg (2005) also reported that while preliminary reliability and validity were promising, more work needed to be done to corroborate with job performance evaluations.

Does school counselor self-efficacy have any relationship to the perceived importance of professional development areas related to the MoStep School Counseling Competencies? Since this study is an exploration of school counselors’ perceived importance of professional development areas, rather than of counselor self-efficacy, the researcher has chosen to examine possible relationships between the two by utilizing two, five choice Likert-type scales of teacher efficacy in the study. The work of Ashton and Webb (1986) utilized the items developed by Berman and McLaughlin (1977) for a Rand Corporation study. Ashton and Webb pointed out that if teachers doubt their competence as teachers, then they will most likely not be satisfied with their profession. Thus if they are dissatisfied with teaching, they may question their professional competence. The current study will examine whether there is a relationship to school counselors’ self-efficacy and their perceived importance of professional development areas related to the MoStep School Counseling Competencies.

Stress and Job Satisfaction

Do early-career school counselors face stressors that may relate to their self-efficacy? In addition to self-efficacy, stress can figure prominently in job satisfaction and professional performance (Pettegrew & Wolf, 1982; Ashton & Webb, 1986; Rayle, 2006). Counselors have been facing increased demands to spend the ASCA recommended amount of time of 70 % in direct services to students (ASCA, 1999). Yet, several studies examined the daily routines of counselors and discovered that more time was being spent in non-counseling, administrative activities (Coil & Freeman, 1997; Hardesty & Dillard, 1994). Unclear role expectations can lead to job stress and dissatisfaction. A study by Olson and Dilley (1998) demonstrated that counselor job satisfaction influenced emotional well-being. Similarly, Kesler (1990) concluded that job dissatisfaction lead to greater levels of job-related stress.

A study by Barrow, Wooldridge, Buckley-Rohrer, and Shaver (2000) examined certified counselors in Missouri to discover why nearly 40% were not employed as counselors in the state, despite a severe shortage identified by Compton (1996). Compton's work indicated that the Missouri teaching field with the greatest shortage was elementary counseling; the sixth ranked shortage area was secondary counseling. Counselors in Compton's study gave a variety of reasons for non-employment including changing roles and tasks, as well as low salaries. The Barrow et al. (2000) study also indicated a variety of reasons for non-employment as counselors in Missouri. One reason was that counselors in rural areas bordering the state were employed as counselors in neighboring states that paid higher salaries. Other reasons included current employment in another school position; too much paperwork and non-counseling duties; low salary; desire to stay in the classroom; need to take a pay cut to work as a counselor; and high student to counselor ratio. The study also examined reasons individuals chose to become

certified as school counselors. Fifty-three percent of respondents listed personal satisfaction as the main reason for getting certified as school counselors. A majority of respondents (81%) also indicated that they would earn their master's degrees and certification as counselors again, despite the fact that they are not currently employed as counselors.

Since the primary variable of interest in this study is professional development needs of school counselors, rather than stress and job satisfaction, the researcher has chosen to utilize the work of Aston and Webb (1986) on the survey instrument. Two additional questions deal with stress and job satisfaction. An open-ended question about stress has been adapted to a five-choice, Likert-type item. Another item is a seven-choice, Likert-type question regarding job satisfaction. A copy of the Ashton and Webb instrument is Appendix F.

The researcher has borrowed four items from the Barrow et al. (2000) study. They included a question about current employment as a school counselor. Another item asked respondents who were not employed as counselors to indicate any and all reasons that applied to them from a checklist of 16 choices. Another item supplied a checklist of nine choices for participants to indicate their reasons for earning a master's degree in school counseling. Another item asked whether the job of school counselor met the participants' expectations. A copy of the Barrow instrument is labeled Appendix G.

Professional Development and Mentoring

Finally, what on-the-job supports do early-career school counselors need to enhance their effectiveness? The induction of teachers and counselors into the profession is greatly enhanced by involvement in on-going professional development activities. In Missouri, each school district must provide a plan of professional development for the first two years for those new to the profession (DESE, 1988). Professional organizations are outstanding resources for professional

development activities. State and national conferences, local community workshops, and district-level in-services provide a variety of opportunities (Borders & Schmidt, 1992). While some districts across the country have specialized professional development action plans specifically for their counselors (Kaplan, Geoffroy, Paré, & Wolf, 1992), many more do not. High-quality professional development programs designed for school counselors are needed in order to maintain their effectiveness, stay current with the profession and enhance professionalism (Borders & Schmidt, 1992).

Proper supervision is important to the success of counselors-in-training through the first years and throughout practice (AACD, 1989). While most counselors receive on-the-job supervision, it is often in the form of an administrator who performs annual evaluations (Schmidt & Barrett, 1983). If supervisors tend to be administrators without counseling knowledge and training to enhance professional development, then the utilization of mentors for first-year counselors is warranted. Administrators typically have no formal training or preparation about what counselors do in schools (Matthes, 1992). Supporting graduates as they are transformed into counselors is critical to their professional development (Jackson et al, 2002). Further, Jackson (et al, 2002) stated that the early years of induction into the profession are critical to the lasting identity and continued growth of the counseling profession. Gysbers and Henderson (1994) recognize that support from the school community, including administrators, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders, is important for counseling program success. It is a community-wide program rather than one supported only by counselors.

Finding the right mentor to facilitate a counseling graduate into the profession is important to the early-career school counselor's success. VanZandt and Perry (1992) developed a statewide model for matching new counselors with veteran counselors. However, criticism of the

project came from difficulties due to geographic location and matching up the individuals. Networking, on the other hand, was a major benefit and participants appreciated knowing there was someone to share concerns with and provide mutual support. VanZandt and Perry (1992) recommended a formal induction process that involved professors visiting graduates on the job and collecting feedback that could inform curricular changes and professional development needs.

A statewide mentoring program for teachers and counselors was developed in Missouri in 2003 through a grant for the Career Education Mentoring Program. The program is a cooperative effort through DESE and the University of Central Missouri. The counselor component of the program is in cooperation with the MSCA, which is divided into 12 regional districts. Each district has a District Chair for coordination of the mentoring program. The regions are as follows: Central; Greater Kansas City; Jefferson County; Kansas City; Mid Missouri; Northeast; Northwest; St. Louis City; St. Louis Suburban; South Central; Southeast; and Southwest. The purpose of the mentor is to support the work of new counselors or those who have been away from the profession for a few years. The Missouri program uses the term *protégé* to refer to new or returning counselors who participate in the mentoring program.

Goals of the Career Education Mentoring program included increasing the retention rate of those new to the profession and satisfying the state mentoring requirement. A 2008 study of the program indicated an increase in the retention rate for participants from 2004 through 2006 when compared with those who did not choose the mentoring program (Watkins & Scott). In addition, protégés indicated that benefits of the program included having a peer confidant outside their employing districts who could provide perspective and guidance without any repercussions, and having a mentor serve as a bridge between theory and practice. Areas of the program that

protégés felt needed improvement included mentor accountability, the program structure and content, and contact time with the mentors. The current study will ask early-career school counselors if they have professional development opportunities designed specifically for counselors within their employing districts. The survey will also ask counselors if they had mentors and, if so, whether or not they found them helpful.

Summary

The chapter reviewed the literature on counselor preparation and induction to support the current study's purpose, to identify early-career school counselors' perceptions of the importance of professional development areas related to the MoStep School Counseling Competencies. The next chapter describes a survey study designed to achieve this purpose. The survey will include variables that have been shown in other studies to influence new counselor effectiveness, and will include counselors with and without prior teaching experience in order to address the persistent question of whether there is a relationship to teaching experience.

Chapter 3

Design & Methods

Rationale

School counseling certification has changed over the last twenty years in Missouri and other states throughout the country. While many of these changes have been designed to increase the availability and sheer numbers of certified counselors, the changes have not been without controversy. Most recently, the central issue fueling debate was the removal of the teaching certificate requirement. A survey conducted in 2000 indicated that ten of the 16 states that still required teaching credentials were headed toward removing or reducing the stipulation (Sesser, Ferris, & Cowles, 2000). The same year, the official position of the Missouri School Counselor Association (MSCA) was to continue the teaching element of counselor certification (Hatridge, 2000). Reasons in favor of the teaching certificate included the developmental nature of guidance delivery taking place in the classrooms, and credibility with teachers as a resource regarding classroom management (Hatridge, 2000). Yet MSCA understood that the candidate pool of counselors needed to increase and elimination of teaching credentials could theoretically open the door for individuals with other types of degrees, such as psychology and social work, and professional credentials such as private practice.

Beginning in August 2000, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) finalized and published the new requirements for the application for a Student Services Certificate of License to Teach. Missing from the requirements was the teaching component. However, for those who wished to become school counselors who did not possess state-approved teacher preparation, coursework in several areas was required. The areas included

teaching methods and practices, classroom management, and the psychology of the exceptional child.

Purpose

The purpose of the study is to discover if there is a relationship between school counselors' perceptions of the importance of professional development areas related to the MoStep School Counseling Competencies and their prior teaching experience.

The study will shed some light on which professional development areas related to the MoStep School Counseling Competencies early-career school counselors view as important.

Demographic variables and self-efficacy will also be examined to see if there are relationships to perceived importance of professional development areas related to the MoStep School Counseling Competencies and teaching experience or lack of it. The study results will help inform practice for university counselor preparation programs, regional professional development centers, and employing districts, as well as professional organizations.

Research Questions

The following research questions have guided the study:

1. What professional development areas related to MoStep Counseling Competencies do early-career school counselors perceive as important?
2. Is there a relationship between the perceived importance of professional development areas and school counselors' prior teaching experience or lack of it?
3. Are there relationships between demographic variables and the perceived importance of professional development areas for early-career school counselors?

4. Are there relationships between demographic variables and the perceived importance of professional development areas for counselors with teaching experience?
5. Are there relationships between demographic variables and the perceived importance of professional development areas for counselors without teaching experience?
6. Is there a relationship between self-efficacy and the perceived importance of professional development areas for early-career school counselors?
7. Is there a relationship between self-efficacy and the perceived importance of professional development areas for counselors with teaching experience?
8. Is there a relationship between self-efficacy and the perceived importance of professional development areas for counselors without teaching experience?

Population and Sample

The population utilized in this study included graduates of a master's in school counseling degree program at a moderately-sized, growing, private Midwestern university between the years 2002 through 2008. The liberal arts institution is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Since the program started in the early 1980's, there have been over 3600 graduates. Individuals in the degree program experience two field placements at the end of their degree program. Each field placement encompasses a minimum of 150 supervised clock hours. The counselor-in-training is supervised by an experienced school counselor in a volunteering school district. The counselor-in-training is evaluated by both the cooperating school counselor and a university professor.

The total number of surveys mailed was 380. Of this number, 57 surveys were returned undeliverable and without forwarding addresses. Of the remaining 323 surveys that were sent,

70 were completed and returned to the researcher in self-addressed envelopes with pre-paid postage. Follow-up postcards were sent to potential respondents who did not reply to the survey and whose addresses were not eliminated due to insufficient addresses. The subsequent mailing yielded 22 additional completed surveys, for a total of 92 completed surveys. The total percentage of returned surveys was 24.2%. The percent of return increases to 28.4% when the researcher subtracts the number of surveys that were not deliverable from the total number of surveys mailed. One of the 92 surveys was disregarded because the respondent only answered two of the items. Of the 91 surveys utilized for the study, only 53 were completed by school counselors. The remaining 38 were completed by individuals who were not employed as school counselors.

Instrumentation

The researcher designed a survey on the perceived importance of professional development areas related to the MoStep School Counseling Competencies, combining items from previously published surveys with new items and a demographic section. The survey consisted of 34 items. The following section provides an explanation and rationale for each question.

The largest portion of the survey was developed by the researcher and asked participants to rate how important it would be for them to receive professional development in 18 areas derived through a systematic process. The 16 MoStep School Counseling Competencies created in 2008 were a revision of the previous 13 MoStep School Counseling Competencies combined with competencies from ASCA; common core standards from CACREP's school counselor program standards; Praxis II School Guidance and Counseling testing; and DESE certification requirements. The result was 16 competencies, with a total of 73 areas of knowledge expected of

school counselors. (The competencies are previously referenced as Appendix C.) These areas of knowledge were cross referenced with counselor performance-based evaluation standards and criteria to determine which areas of knowledge are examined during counselor employment evaluations (see Appendix H). For this study, one area of study was chosen for each of the 16 categories. Two additional areas of study were chosen and utilized for the survey based on recommendations from current practicing school counselors the researcher consulted for the project. The two additional areas of study are from the following categories: CGP: System Support; and Professional Orientation, Identity, and Well-Being. Figure 1 indicates the MoStep School Counseling Competency and the area(s) of study deemed most readily evaluated (according to the researcher).

Figure 1

MoStep School Counseling Competencies Chosen as Professional Development Areas

MoStep School Counseling Competency 16 Categories (73 Areas of Study)		
Category	Area of Study	Synthesized Description
1. Human Growth & Development	6	Strategies for differentiated interventions
2. Social & Cultural Diversity	10	Strategies for education others about diversity
3. Assessment	18	Interpreting student assessments
4. Career Planning & Development	24	Career assessment instruments and techniques
5. Helping Relationships	30	Strategies for school, family, systems perspective
6. Group Work	35	Planning, evaluating, and managing group processes
7. Structural Components of a Comprehensive Guidance Program (CGP)	37	Utilizing facilities, resources, budget, and staffing patterns
8. CGP Components: <i>Guidance Curriculum</i>	41	Collaboration techniques with teachers and school personnel
9. CGP Components: <i>Individual Planning</i>	44	Technology to assist all students
10. CGP Components: <i>Responsive Services</i>	48	Crisis team leadership and collaboration
11. CGP Components: <i>System Support</i>	53 55	Program + Personnel=Results approach AND Distinguishing between Non-guidance & fair-share responsibilities
12. CGP Components: <i>Technology</i>	58 & 59 combined	Technology available for delivery, management, & evaluation of CGP
13. Professional Relationships in the School, Family, & Community	62	Consultation strategies – home, school, & community
14. Ethical Standards	64	Practice ethical decision-making
15. Legal Standards	67 & 68 combined	Updates & changes in local, state, and federal policies
16. Professional Orientation, Identity, & Well-being	71 73	Ways to create PD plan AND Self-care strategies

To improve the content validity of the instrument, development of Figure 1 involved collaboration with current, experienced school counselors. The researcher conducted a focus group of practicing school counselors and assistant principals who evaluated school counselors. The purpose of the group was to ascertain the appropriate areas of study and how they corresponded or did not correspond to evaluated standards. Six school counselors with a total of 100+ years (average 20 years) of school counseling experience, and three assistant principals with 40 years (average 14 years) of experience as assistant principals participated in the voluntary focus group meeting.

Item 1: *Are you employed as a school counselor?* Respondents were asked to indicate in the blank space provided whether or not they were employed as school counselors. If participants answered *yes*, they were to indicate number of years in the space provided. If they responded *no*, they were asked if they were currently employed and given a blank to indicate job title.

Item 2: *If you are NOT employed as a school counselor, please indicate reasons below. If you are employed as a school counselor, please skip to question 3. Please indicate why you are NOT employed as a school counselor. Check all that apply.* Items 2, 3 and 23 were taken from a Barrow et al. (2000) study that examined why counselors in Missouri were not employed as counselors. Item two allowed those not employed as counselors to share reasons for non-employment. Participants were able to check as many as 16 choices, one of which was a blank for specifying other reasons not listed. The purpose for his question is to ascertain why respondents are not working as school counselors.

Item 3: *Please indicate your reasons for getting your Master's in school counseling* (Barrow, et al, 2000). The question explored reasons for earning a master's degree in school

counseling. Participants were able to check all that applied of the nine choices listed. One of the choices was *other* and a blank was provided for participants to specify any unlisted reason.

Items 4 through 21 were developed by the researcher. Respondents were asked: *How important would it be for you to receive professional development in each area listed below?* The Likert scale choices were as follows: 1 = not important; 2 = low importance; 3 = average importance; 4 above average importance; 5 = high importance. Participants circled their choice for each of the 18 items. The topics for professional development corresponded with the areas of study indicated in Table 1 above.

Item 22: *Did you have an official mentor (not informal, but assigned by your district) for your first year or two as a new School Counselor?* Respondents were given choices *yes* or *no* and blanks next to *1 Year* or *2 Years* to indicate how many years mentoring took place. Additional follow-up questions in the item asked if a mentor was professionally helpful. Blanks were provided for *yes* or *no* responses. If participants indicated *no*, they were asked if they believe they would have benefitted professionally by having a mentor. Three options for response were given: *Yes*, *No*, and *Uncertain*. The purpose of this item is to determine possible relationships between counselors who were assigned mentors and their perceived importance of PD items.

Item 23: *Does the job of school counselor meet your expectations* (Barrow, et al, 2000)? Respondents were given a *yes/no* option. In the event of a *no* response, 10 possible reasons were given to choose among, with no limit. The tenth option was *other* and a blank was provided for participants to specify the reason. The purpose of the question was to ascertain possible relationships between counselor job satisfaction and perceived importance of professional development needs among the two groups of counselors.

Items 24, 25, 26, and 27 were taken from an Aston and Webb (1986) study regarding teacher efficacy. Items 24 and 25 were each five-point, Likert-scale questions regarding teacher's efficacy. The term *teacher* is being generalized to mean *counselor*. The dichotomous choices ranged from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. Items 16 and 17 dealt with stress and job satisfaction which Ashton and Webb found to be related to teacher efficacy. Item 16 was a five-point, Likert-scale question about stress, which Ashton and Webb have found to be related to self-efficacy. Choices ranged from *not at all stressful* to *extremely stressful*. Job satisfaction was the subject of item 17. The item is an adaptation of an Ashton and Webb question. The researcher modified the question to be a Likert-type with seven options ranging from *extremely satisfied* to *extremely dissatisfied* to follow the format of similar survey items. The original Aston and Webb item had seven choices with blanks next to each choice. It asked if respondents were offered professional development opportunities specifically for counselors within their districts. Choices were either *yes* or *no*. The purpose of the Ashton and Webb items is to ascertain if there are any relationships between counselor efficacy, job satisfaction, and stress and the importance of PD items among respondents in the study.

Item 29 asked if the respondent's district utilizes the Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Program. Answer choices were either *yes* or *no*.

Items 30-32 were demographic questions regarding *gender*, *age*, and *year master's degree* was earned. Item 33 and 34 asked whether those employed as school counselors had previous *teaching certification*, *type of certification*, and *previous teaching experience*. A copy of the survey is Appendix I.

Data Collection

Letters of introduction and surveys were mailed to 380 graduates of a master's in counseling program from the selected university between the years 2002-2008. A postage-paid envelope was provided for return of the study. Surveys were each coded in numerical sequence beginning with 001 and ending with 380. Participants were assured their responses would be kept confidential and they would not be identified. Follow-up postcards were sent as reminders to those individuals who did not initially return the survey. A copy of the letter of introduction is Appendix J.

Data Analysis

Procedures for data analysis included a display of frequency counts for the following variables: gender; age group; years as a counselor; teaching experience; years since earning master's degree; had official mentor; job meets expectations; available professional development for counselors; and use of the Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Program. Descriptive statistics were developed for the importance ratings for survey items 4-20 by reporting the mean and standard deviation for each item. Items were then sorted to indicate highest to lowest rating.

The 18 professional development areas were categorized into six professional counselor standards. The mean, standard deviation, low and high scores, and Cronbach alpha internal reliability coefficients were calculated.

Limitations

The study had several limitations:

- Only graduates of the selected university were included as participants. The findings may not generalize to other institutions. However, because all programs in the state

have similar requirements for certification, it is likely that the academic program experienced by the participants would be similar to other programs.

- The researcher did not conduct a pilot study to establish the validity and reliability of the instrument in advance.
- While the original population of 380 was deemed to be of sufficient size, the low return rate, incorrect addresses, and responses from noncounselors resulted in a low *n*.

Chapter 4 includes the presentation and analysis of data. In Chapter 5 the researcher will discuss the findings and implications for future studies.

Chapter 4

Presentation & Analysis of Data

The purpose of this study was to discover if there is a relationship between school counselors' perceptions of the importance of professional development areas related to the MoStep School Counseling Competencies and their prior teaching experience. Background to the study examined counseling certification, its origin and history, changes, and the current requirements in Missouri. Fifty-three counselors participated in this study.

Table 1 displays the frequency counts for selected variables. Most (90.6%) were female and their ages ranged from “under 30” to “60 or older” (*Mdn* = 34.5 years). Mean years as a counselor was $M = 3.22$ ($SD = 2.10$) and 39.6% reported to have had prior teaching experience. The number of years since they received their Master's degree in Counseling ranged from one to seven ($M = 3.45$, $SD = 1.91$). Seventy-two percent reported having had an official mentor. For over half (58.5%), their job met their expectations. For 73.6% of the counselors, their district provided professional development opportunities specifically for counselors and 64.2% reported that their district utilized the Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Program (MOCGP) (see Table 1).

Table 1

Frequency Counts for Selected Variables (N = 53)

Variable	Category	<i>n</i>	%
Gender	Male	5	9.4
	Female	48	90.6
Age Group ^a	Under 30	18	34.0
	30-39	21	39.6
	40-49	10	18.9
	50-59	3	5.7
	60 or older	1	1.9
Years as Counselor ^b	1 or 2 years	21	39.6
	3 to 5 years	24	45.3
	6 to 10 years	8	15.1
Teaching Experience	No	32	60.4
	Yes	21	39.6

^a Age: *Mdn* = 34.5 years

^b Years: *M* = 3.22, *SD* = 2.10.

Table 1 *Continued*

Table 1 *Continued*

Variable	Category	<i>n</i>	%
Years since Master's Degree in Counseling ^c			
	1 or 2 years	18	34.0
	3 or 4 years	21	39.6
	5 to 7 years	14	26.4
Had Official Mentor			
	No	15	28.3
	Yes	38	71.7
Job Meets Expectations			
	No	22	41.5
	Yes	31	58.5
Professional Development for Counselors			
	No	14	26.4
	Yes	39	73.6
Use MOCGP			
	No	19	35.8
	Yes	34	64.2

^c Years: $M = 3.45$, $SD = 1.91$.

MOCGP = Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Program.

Research Question 1

Research Question One asked, “What professional development areas related to MoStep School Counseling Competencies do early-career school counselors perceive as important?” Table 2 displays the importance ratings for 18 professional development areas. These ratings were made using a five-point scale: 1 = *Not Important* to 5 = *High Importance*. The participants rated all of the areas as relatively important (no means below 3). The highest rated professional development areas were Item 17, “Consultation Strategies ($M = 4.13$),” and Item 5, “Diversity Strategies ($M = 4.13$).” Conversely, the lowest rated professional development area was Item 20, “Professional Development Plan ($M = 3.53$)” (see Table 2).

Table 2

*Descriptive Statistics of Importance Ratings for Professional Development Areas
(N = 53)*

Area	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
17. Consultation Strategies	4.13	0.83
5. Diversity Strategies	4.13	0.92
8. School, Family, Community Systems	4.08	0.98
15. Non-Guidance, Fair-Share	4.08	1.12
13. Crisis Planning	4.06	0.91
18. Ethical Decision Making	4.00	0.92
4. Strategies for Differentiation	3.96	0.90
19. Policy and Law	3.96	0.90
7. Career Assessments	3.92	0.90
11. Collaboration with School Personnel	3.91	0.93
6. Student Assessment	3.89	0.93
16. Technology Program Management	3.83	0.98
9. Plan, Manage, Evaluate Group Processes	3.83	0.99
12. Technology with Students	3.79	1.03
14. Program plus Personnel Equals Results	3.64	0.94
21. Self-Care Strategies	3.62	0.92
10. Facilities, Resource, Budget, Staffing	3.58	1.12
20. Professional Development Plan	3.53	0.91

Note. Ratings based on five-point scale: 1 = *Not Important* to 5 = *High Importance*.

Table 3 displays the psychometric characteristics for the summated scale scores based on the 18 importance ratings. The total aggregated score had a mean of $M = 3.89$ and a Cronbach alpha internal reliability coefficient of $r = .91$. These 18 importance ratings were categorized into six professional counselor standards. Five of six scales had more than one item so Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients were calculated. These coefficients ranged in size from $r = .62$ to $r = .72$ with a median coefficient of $r = .70$ (see Table 3).

Table 3

Psychometric Characteristics of Importance Scales Based on Counselor Standards

($N = 53$)

Standard	Number of Items	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High	Alpha
1. Guidance Curriculum	3	4.00	0.70	2.33	5.00	.64
2. Individual Planning	3	3.87	0.76	2.00	5.00	.72
3. Responsive Services	3	3.99	0.72	2.33	5.00	.62
4. System Support	3	3.69	0.80	2.00	5.00	.70
5. Professional Communication	1	4.13	0.83	2.00	5.00	n/a
6. Professional Responsibilities	5	3.84	0.65	2.20	5.00	.71
Total Score	18	3.89	0.59	2.61	4.94	.91

Note. Ratings based on five-point scale: 1 = *Not Important* to 5 = *High Importance*.

Note. Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients were only calculated for scales that contained more than one item.

Interpretation Approach for Correlations

Cohen (1988) suggested some guidelines for interpreting the strength of linear correlations. He suggested that a “weak correlation” typically had an absolute value of $r = .10$ (about one percent of the variance explained), a “moderate correlation” typically had an absolute value of $r = .30$ (about nine percent of the variance explained) and a “strong correlation” typically had an absolute value of $r = .50$ (about 25 percent of the variance explained). Therefore, for the sake of parsimony, this Presentation & Analysis of Data Chapter will primarily highlight those correlations that were at least “moderate” strength to minimize the potential of numerous Type I errors stemming from interpreting and drawing conclusions based on potentially spurious correlations.

Research Question Two

Research Question Two asked, “Is there a relationship between the perceived professional development areas and school counselors’ prior teaching experience or lack of it?” To answer this question, the first row of Table 4 is shaded and displays the Spearman rank-ordered correlations comparing whether the counselor had teaching experience (0 = *No* versus 1 = *Yes*) with the seven importance scales. Spearman correlations were used instead of Pearson product-moment correlations due to the ordinal nature of the data. The entire combined sample size was small ($N = 53$). Inspection of Table 4 found that whether the counselor had teaching experience was not significantly related to any of the seven importance scores (see Table 4).

Table 4

Spearman Rank-Ordered Correlations for Selected Variables with Professional Development Areas. Entire combined sample (N = 53)

Variable	Professional Development Needs Scales						
	Total	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six
Teaching Experience ^a	.00	.05	.05	.01	-.10	.07	-.11
Years as a Counselor	-.22	-.44 ****	-.11	-.10	-.09	-.21	-.29 **
Had a Mentor ^a	.18	.28 **	.14	.16	.05	.03	.18
Job Met Expectations ^a	.02	.08	.02	.17	.01	.12	-.09
PDfor Counselors ^a	.24 *	.30 **	.24 *	.17	.09	.30 **	.07
Use MOCGP ^a	.23 *	.36 ***	.20	.11	.20	-.03	.15
Female Gender ^a	.22	.19	.08	.22	.13	.34 ***	.15
Age Group	.07	-.14	.18	.16	.11	.03	.01
Years since Master's Degree Counseling	-.26 *	-.38 ****	-.13	-.22	-.15	-.29 **	-.30 **

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .005$. **** $p < .001$ Note. Needs Scales: One = *Guidance Curriculum*; Two = *Individual Planning*; Three = *Responsive Services*; Four = *System Support*; Five = *Professional Communication*; Six = *Professional Responsibility* ^a Coding: 0 = *No* 1 = *Yes*. MOCGP = *Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Program*.

Research Question Three

Research Question Three asked, “Are there relationships between demographic variables and the perceived importance of professional development areas for early-career school counselors?” Also in Table 4 are the correlations for eight demographic factors with the seven importance ratings. For the resulting 56 correlations, 13 were significant at the $p < .05$ level and seven were of “moderate strength” based on the Cohen (1988) criteria. Specifically, the guidance curriculum importance scale was negatively related to the counselors years as a counselor ($r_s = -.44, p < .001$) and years since obtaining their Master’s degree ($r_s = -.38, p < .001$). It was also positively related to the availability of professional development for counselors in their district ($r_s = .30, p < .01$) and the use of MOCGP ($r_s = .36, p < .005$). In addition, the professional communication importance scale was positively related to the availability of professional development for counselors in their district ($r_s = .30, p < .01$) and being a female counselor ($r_s = .34, p < .005$). In addition, the professional responsibility importance scale was negatively related to the number of years since the counselor obtained their Master’s degree ($r_s = -.30, p < .05$) (see Table 4).

Research Question Four

Research Question Four asked, “Are there relationships between demographic variables and the perceived importance of professional development areas for counselors with teaching experience?” Table 5 displays the Spearman correlations for the subsample of 21 counselors with teaching experience. Fifteen of the 56 correlations were statistically significant and all were of moderate strength using the Cohen (1988) criteria. Four correlations had an absolute value of at least $r = .50$. The counselor’s years of experience was negatively related to the guidance curriculum importance score ($r_s = -.51, p < .01$) and the professional responsibility importance

score ($r_s = -.58, p < .005$). The availability of district provided professional development for counselors was positively related to the responsive services importance score ($r_s = .53, p < .005$). In addition, the use of MOCGP was positively related to the guidance curriculum importance rating ($r_s = .56, p < .005$) (see Table 5).

Table 5
Spearman Rank-Ordered Correlations for Selected Variables with Professional Development Areas.

Teaching Experience Subsample (n = 21)

Variable	Professional Development Needs Scales						
	Total	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six
Years as a Counselor	-.46 **	-.51 **	-.15	-.19	-.42 *	-.21	-.58 ***
Had a Mentor	.24	.39 *	.09	.17	.34	-.02	.23
Job Met Expectations	.09	.16	.11	.16	.12	.14	-.02
PD for Counselors	.37 *	.49 **	.28	.53 ***	.17	.48 **	.01
Use MOCGP	.49 **	.56 ***	.20	.21	.41 *	.12	.49 **
Female Gender	.11	.35	-.10	.12	.04	.26	.14
Age Group	-.07	-.35	.22	.18	.00	.15	-.16
Years since Master's							
Degree in Counseling	-.34	-.42 *	-.02	-.21	-.32	-.25	-.37 *

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .005$. **** $p < .001$.

Note. Needs Scales: One = *Guidance Curriculum*; Two = *Individual Planning*; Three = *Responsive Services*; Four = *System Support*; Five = *Professional Communication*; Six = *Professional Responsibility*. Coding: 0 = No 1 = Yes. MOCGP = *Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Program*.

Research Question Five

Research Question Five asked, “Are there relationships between demographic variables and the perceived importance of professional development areas for counselors without teaching experience?” Table 6 displays the Spearman correlations for the subsample of 32 counselors without teaching experience. Four of the 56 correlations were statistically significant and all were of moderate strength using the Cohen (1988) criteria. Specifically, their guidance curriculum importance score was negatively related to their years as a counselor ($r_s = -.43, p < .01$) and their years since obtaining a Master’s degree ($r_s = -.44, p < .005$). Female counselors had higher professional communication importance scores ($r_s = .38, p < .01$). The years since the counselor obtained their Master’s degree was also negatively related to the professional responsibility importance score ($r_s = -.33, p < .05$) (see Table 6).

Table 6
Spearman Rank-Ordered Correlations for Selected Variables with Professional Development Areas.

Non-Teaching Experience Subsample (n = 32)

Variable	Professional Development Needs Scales						
	Total	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six
Years as a Counselor	-.09	-.43 **	-.09	-.04	.01	-.17	-.15
Had a Mentor	.14	.18	.17	.17	-.12	.03	.22
Job Met Expectations	-.03	.00	-.10	.18	-.01	.10	-.09
PD for Counselors	.14	.11	.19	-.11	.04	.16	.13
Use MOCGP	.07	.19	.18	.04	.11	-.15	-.06
Female Gender	.28	.11	.20	.26	.16	.38 **	.18
Age Group	.16	.00	.17	.16	.19	.00	.13
Years since Master's							
Degree in Counseling	-.26	-.44 ***	-.22	-.25	-.14	-.28	-.33 *

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .005$. **** $p < .001$.

Note. Needs Scales: One = *Guidance Curriculum*; Two = *Individual Planning*; Three = *Responsive Services*; Four = *System Support*; Five = *Professional Communication*; Six = *Professional Responsibility*.
^a Coding: 0 = No 1 = Yes.

Research Question Six

Research Question Six asked, “Is there a relationship between self-efficacy and the perceived importance of professional development areas for early-career school counselors?” To answer this question, Spearman rank-ordered correlations compared four ratings of the counselor’s self-efficacy with the seven importance scores (Table 7). Self-efficacy scores were paraphrased to reflect that a high score indicated favorable self-efficacy. Four of 28 correlations were significant with one being of “moderate strength” using the Cohen (1988) criteria. The counselor’s degree of satisfaction was positively related to their guidance curriculum importance score ($r_s = .42, p < .001$) (see Table 7).

Table 7

Spearman Rank-Ordered Correlations for Self-Efficacy Variables with Professional Development Areas.

Entire Combined Sample (N = 53)

Variable	Professional Development Needs Scales						
	Total	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six
24. Reach students despite bad home environment	.00	-.01	.03	-.17	.06	-.02	.00
25. Able to get through to difficult students	.07	.26 *	-.06	.00	.02	-.02	.22
26. Lack of Stress	-.04	.07	-.03	.12	-.07	-.04	.01
27. Degree of satisfaction	.23	.42 ****	.25 *	.23 *	.13	.15	.13

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .005$. **** $p < .001$.

Note. Needs Scales: One = *Guidance Curriculum*; Two = *Individual Planning*; Three = *Responsive Services*; Four = *System Support*; Five = *Professional Communication*; Six = *Professional Responsibility*.

Note. Higher self-efficacy scores reflect greater self-efficacy.

Research Question Seven

Research Question Seven asked, “Is there a relationship between self-efficacy and the perceived importance of professional development areas for counselors with teaching experience?” Table 8 displays the 28 correlations comparing the four self-efficacy ratings with the seven importance scores for the 21 counselors with teaching experience. Four of the correlations were statistically significant and all four were of “moderate strength” using the Cohen (1988) criteria. The counselor’s self-efficacy rating for their ability to get through to difficult students was positively correlated with four of seven importance ratings (see Table 8).

Table 8

Spearman Rank-Ordered Correlations for Self-Efficacy Variables with Professional Development Areas.

Teaching Experience Subsample (n = 21)

Variable	Professional Development Needs Scales						
	Total	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six
24. Reach students despite bad home environment	.20	.25	.08	-.24	.19	-.24	.29
25. Able to get through to difficult students	.46 **	.49 **	.20	.24	.39 *	.18	.58 ***
26. Lack of Stress	.19	.13	.11	.22	.14	.25	.13
27. Degree of satisfaction	.24	.32	.04	.23	.09	.01	.14

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .005$. **** $p < .001$.

Note. Needs Scales: One = *Guidance Curriculum*; Two = *Individual Planning*; Three = *Responsive Services*; Four = *System Support*;

Five = *Professional Communication*; Six = *Professional Responsibility*.

Note. Higher self-efficacy scores reflect greater self-efficacy.

Research Question Eight

Research Question Eight asked, “Is there a relationship between self-efficacy and the perceived importance of professional development areas for counselors without teaching experience?” Table 9 displays the 28 correlations comparing the four self-efficacy ratings with the seven importance scores for the 32 counselors without teaching experience. Two of the 28 correlations were statistically significant with one coefficient being of “moderate strength” using the Cohen (1988) criteria. The counselor’s degree of satisfaction rating was positively related to their guidance curriculum importance score ($r_s = .49, p < .001$) (see Table 9).

Table 9

Spearman Rank-Ordered Correlations for Self-Efficacy Variables with Professional Development Areas.

Non-Teaching Experience Subsample (n = 32)

Variable	Professional Development Needs Scales						
	Total	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six
24. Reach students despite bad home environment	-.13	-.21	.03	-.12	-.06	.16	-.24
25. Able to get through to difficult students	-.21	.06	-.26	-.19	-.22	-.17	-.05
26. Lack of Stress	-.16	.04	-.12	.06	-.21	-.21	-.09
27. Degree of satisfaction	.24	.49 ****	.33 *	.22	.18	.23	.13

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .005$. **** $p < .001$.

Note. Needs Scales: One = *Guidance Curriculum*; Two = *Individual Planning*; Three = *Responsive Services*; Four = *System Support*;

Five = *Professional Communication*; Six = *Professional Responsibility*.

Note. Higher self-efficacy scores reflect greater self-efficacy

Summary

The purpose of this study was to discover if there is a relationship between school counselors' perceptions of professional development areas related to the MoStep School Counseling Competencies and their prior teaching experience or lack of it. Frequency counts were developed for the following variables: gender; age group; years as a counselor; teaching experience; years since earning master's degree; had official mentor; job meets expectations; available professional development for counselors; and the use of the Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Program.

In summary, the most important findings of the study related to each question were as follows:

Question 1: What professional development areas related to MoStep School Counseling Competencies do early-career school counselors perceive as important? Counselors rated all 18 areas as important with no mean below 3.

Question 2: Is there a relationship between the perceived professional development areas and school counselors' prior teaching experience or lack of it? The teaching experience variable was not significantly related to any of the professional development areas.

Question 3: Are there relationships between demographic variables and the perceived importance of professional development areas for early-career school counselors? Years of experience as a counselor had significance in this study and is an unanticipated finding.

Question 4: Are there relationships between demographic variables and the perceived importance of professional development areas for counselors with teaching experience? Years of experience as a counselor and professional responsibility were negatively related to guidance curriculum suggesting that as counselors gain experience they view the importance of professional development in the area of guidance curriculum as less important.

Question 5: Are there relationships between demographic variables and the perceived importance of professional development areas for counselors without teaching experience? The guidance curriculum importance scale was negatively related to counselors' years as a counselor and years since obtaining their master's in counseling. Years of experience as a counselor had significance in this study and is an unanticipated finding.

Questions 6, 7, & 8: Is there a relationship between self-efficacy and the perceived importance of professional development areas for early-career school counselors? Is there a relationship between self-efficacy and the perceived importance of professional development areas for counselors with teaching experience? Is there a relationship between self-efficacy and the perceived importance of professional development areas for counselors without teaching experience? Counselors with high self-efficacy seemed to indicate greater importance in the area of guidance curriculum for professional development.

In the final chapter, the researcher returns to the literature for interpretation of findings, and their implications for future research. Chapter 5 also includes methodological enhancements, and policy and practitioner recommendations.

Chapter 5

Discussion of Findings

Introduction

School counselor certification has undergone many changes since its beginnings in vocational education in the 1800's. Because the first counselors were actually teachers, the roles and responsibilities were intertwined with teaching duties. The position of counselor was born from a societal need for steering individuals into industry and was focused on job placement rather than interests of prospective student workers. Today the focus is on students and their needs in the areas of personal and social, academic, and career development. While the role of counselors has changed, so have the requirements to become a school counselor. Teaching backgrounds are no longer a necessary component to the teaching certification process in most states (ACA, 2003).

Summary of Findings

The purpose of this study was to discover if there is a relationship between school counselors' perceptions of the importance of professional development areas related to the MoStep School Counseling Competencies and their prior teaching experience or lack of it. Research questions that guided the study focused on respondents' perceived importance of 18 topics of professional development related to the MoStep School Counseling Competencies and the Standards and Criteria for Performance-Based Counselor Evaluations. Research questions used teaching experience, self-efficacy, and the following demographic information as variables: gender; age group; years as a counselor; teaching experience; years since earning master's

degree; had official mentor; job meets expectations; available professional development for counselors; and use of the Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Program.

Findings for Research Question 1

Research Question One asked, “What professional development areas related to MoStep School Counseling Competencies do early-career school counselors perceive as important?” The study indicated that of the 18 professional development areas “Consultation Strategies ($M=4.13$, $SD=0.83$)” and “Diversity Strategies ($M=4.13$, $SD=0.92$)” were the highest rated professional development areas in terms of importance for early-career school counselors. The lowest rated professional development area was Item 20, “Professional Development Plan ($M = 3.53$).” Participants rated all areas as important with no mean less than 3. Dillman (2007) observed that respondents who answered self-administered questionnaires were typically very honest, but that the social desirability factor could not be overlooked. Respondents often answer in the manner they think the surveyor wants them to answer.

With the respondents rating all 18 professional development areas as with no mean less than 3 (average importance) to 4 (above average importance), perhaps the ratings can be attributed to the validity of the importance of the standards to school counselor practice rather than social desirability. Since none of the professional development areas had a mean of less than 3, it suggests that the standards are sufficiently linked to practice (P. Placier, personal communication, July 30, 2009). The perceived importance of professional development areas related to the MoStep School Counselor Competencies does not appear in the literature.

For the analysis, the 18 professional development areas were categorized into six counselor standard evaluation areas, plus a category for the total, and aligned with the Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Program (MOCGP) components. The six counselor standard evaluation areas are as follows: Guidance Curriculum; Individual Planning; Responsive Services;

System Support; Professional Communications; and Professional Responsibilities. (A chart showing the survey item alignment is Appendix K.)

Findings for Research Question 2

Research Question Two asked, “Is there a relationship between the perceived professional development areas and school counselors’ prior teaching experience or lack of it?” Spearman correlations were chosen rather than Pearson product-moment correlations due to the ordinal nature of the data. The population size for the data was small ($N = 53$). The APA manual (2001) suggests an index of effect size that estimates the magnitude of the relationship. Cohen (1988) provided some guidelines for interpreting effect size and suggests the following: weak correlation ($r = .10$); moderate correlation ($r = .30$); and strong correlation ($r = .50$). For Research Question 2, the variable of teaching experience was not significantly related to any of the six importance scores. Since the position of counselor was borne out of teaching, the researcher expected there may be some relationship to the professional development areas and the teaching experience variable. There are no other studies in the literature regarding professional development areas and their relationship to teaching experience or lack of it, and the finding was unexpected. In teaching, the timing of professional development in the early years of professional employment is important to the teachers’ receptiveness to such activities. Teacher attitudes change over time. In the first year of employment attitudes toward professional development activities tends to be lower than in the second of employment where it is significantly higher. After the second year, attitudes toward professional development start to drop and then steadily decline to levels comparable to the first year level by the time teachers reach year 10 (Torff & Sessions, 2008).

Findings for Research Question 3

Research Question Three asked, “Are there relationships between demographic variables and the perceived importance of professional development areas for early-career school counselors?” Demographic variables for the early-career counselors indicated that the guidance curriculum scale was negatively related to counselors’ years as a counselor and years since obtaining a master’s degree in counseling. The more experience counselors had, the less important they rated guidance curriculum. Guidance curriculum was also positively related to the availability of professional development for counselors in their district, and the use of the MOCGP. Counselors who experience professional development opportunities within their districts may put a greater emphasis on components of the guidance curriculum, and specifically the MOCGP components. The professional communication scale was positively related to the availability of professional development for counselors in their districts and with being female. Counselors with district access to professional development rated professional communication as important. Most counselors in the study were female (female = 48, male = 5), so this correlation may not have actual significance. The professional responsibility scale was negatively related to number of years since earning master’s degree. The more experience counselors gained, the less important the area of professional responsibility became, perhaps due to greater confidence and familiarity with their jobs.

Years of experience as a counselor seems to have significance in this study and is an unanticipated finding. Attention to school counselors’ perceptions of importance of professional development areas has not been studied. Similarly, counselors’ years of experience and its relatedness to importance of professional development has not been studied. Yet a study of teachers’ attitudes about professional development may help inform the finding. Torff and Sessions (2008) found that teaching experience was the best predictor of teachers’ attitudes regarding professional development. The data implicated that professional development should

be timed according to teachers' careers. In the first four years of professional employment, teachers were most receptive to professional development. The years that teachers attitudes were most favorable were years two and three, not years one and two as the researchers expected. Torff and Sessions suggest that timing of professional development initiatives coincide with the findings. Typically the first year or two of employment, teachers are engaged in mentoring relationships that serve as a form of professional development. Waiting until the second or third year to initiate additional professional development may be warranted.

Findings for Research Question 4

Research Question Four asked, "Are there relationships between demographic variables and the perceived importance of professional development areas for counselors with teaching experience?" The subsample of counselors with teaching experience ($n = 21$) was small. Years of experience and professional responsibility were negatively related to the guidance curriculum scale, suggesting that counselors perceived the importance of professional development in the area of guidance curriculum as less importance as they gained counseling experience.

In a study of teachers' attitudes about professional development, Torff and Sessions (2008) found that teachers' attitudes changed over the course of the first ten years in the profession. In the first two years, teachers were more supportive of professional development, with an increase indicated from the first year to the second year. After the second year, the support steadily diminished. By the ten-year mark, support had reached a level comparable to the level of the first year teachers'. After ten years of experience, the attitudes tended to not change. The researchers noted slightly less positive attitudes supporting professional development by secondary teachers than elementary teachers.

The availability of district professional development for counselors was positively related to the responsive services score. Counselors who had professional development available

through their districts indicated a perceived importance for responsive services. The MOCGP was positively related to guidance curriculum importance. Counselors who indicated their districts use the MOCGP indicated a perceived importance for guidance curriculum.

In the study, 64 percent of respondents indicated that their districts utilize the MOCGP and 35.8 percent do not utilize the MOCGP. Gysbers, Lapan, and Blair (1999) discussed the implementation of a statewide comprehensive guidance model and its importance in working with students. Gysbers (2001) predicts that the basic framework for a comprehensive model will remain the same over time, but the elements that are emphasized within it will undoubtedly change and adapt to the needs of students as society changes. Changing and adapting the comprehensive guidance elements will provide greater flexibility based on needs assessments for districts and schools. Counselors will need to adapt to the new curriculum through various means of professional development, including maintaining their professional affiliations and participating in district available professional development opportunities.

Findings for Research Question 5

Research Question Five asked, “Are there relationships between demographic variables and the perceived importance of professional development areas for counselors without teaching experience?” The subsample of counselors without teaching experience ($n = 32$) was small. The guidance curriculum importance score was negatively related to their years as a counselor and years since obtaining their master’s degree. The correlation suggests that as counselors gained experience, they perceived less importance for professional development in the area of guidance curriculum. Female counselors had higher professional communications score. The years since the counselor obtained a master’s degree was also negatively related to professional responsibility, suggesting that as counselors gain experience, they find it less important to gain

professional development in the area of professional responsibility. The timing of professional development to coincide with positive attitude toward professional development in the early years of teaching may have some usefulness in the introduction of professional development for school counselors (Torff & Sessions, 2008).

Findings for Research Questions 6, 7, & 8

Research Question Six asked, “Is there a relationship between self-efficacy and the perceived importance of professional development areas for early-career school counselors?”

Research Question Seven asked, “Is there a relationship between self-efficacy and the perceived importance of professional development areas for counselors with teaching experience?”

Research Question Eight asked, “Is there a relationship between self-efficacy and the perceived importance of professional development areas for counselors without teaching experience?” Self-efficacy variables for early-career counselors indicated that counselors’ degree of satisfaction with their jobs was positively related to guidance curriculum importance. For those with teaching experience, self-efficacy variables were positively related to guidance curriculum, system support, professional responsibility, and the total of all standards areas. For individuals without teaching experience, self-efficacy variables were positively related to guidance curriculum and individual planning, with only guidance curriculum being statistically significant. The more self-efficacious counselors seemed to indicate greater importance in the area of guidance curriculum for professional development.

Overall, the perceived importance of professional development areas of early-career school counselors had no relationship to teaching experience or lack of teaching experience. An unanticipated finding was that perceived importance of professional development areas related to the MoStep School Counseling Competencies was related to counselors’ years of experience as a

counselor rather than to the teaching experience variable. While this particular issue has not been studied in school counseling, it has been examined in teaching. Since school counselors began as teachers and many of their responsibilities include teaching-related activities such as classroom guidance planning, preparation, and delivery, it may be fair to examine the years of experience issue from this point of view. Sherman (2005) found that the best way to close the gap between the experienced teacher and the novice was to develop a professional development school (PDS). The model consists of hands-on experience for prospective teachers while they are still students in college. The program takes place throughout the students' coursework and integrates them into school culture through practicums and course-based experiences that allow them the opportunities to participate in tutoring, assessments, and collaborative endeavors. Participation leads to the possibility of a year-long, unpaid internship that precedes the traditional student teaching experience.

Conclusions and Implications

While this study of early-career counselors' perceptions of the importance of professional development areas may not be generalized due to sample size, it does suggest additional frames for viewing the topic of counselor professional development. With an unanticipated finding of counselors' years of experience as a counselor being related to their perceived importance of professional development areas, perhaps further examination of the early years of professional employment may be useful. Matthes (1992) studied the induction of novice school counselors into the profession and found that they are expected to be successful from day one on the job. Matthes likened the experience to the comprehensive guidance program in that it takes a community of stakeholders to formulate its success. Jackson (et al. 2002) concurs that widespread support for the novice counselor helps ensure success.

The early years of counselor experience are critical to success, yet there is often widespread misunderstanding of the role of school counselors by administrators and teachers (Johnson, 2000). If the administrator sees the job of the counselor as that of administrative assistant or coordinator of scheduling, testing, or records, then that becomes the counselor's role. Counselors cannot become advocates or change agents without administrative support. Therefore it is important to cultivate the principal and counselor working relationship to positively affect the overall climate of the school (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994; Niebuhr, Niebuhr, & Cleveland, 1999). Yet, principals do not always fully understand the comprehensive guidance program or how the counselor can contribute to student achievement or school climate. Dollarhide, Smith and Lemberger (2007) examined school counselor and principal relationships. They suggest that counselor educators collaborate with educational leadership faculty to better educate future principals about how counselors and guidance models contribute to the work that principals value.

If experience as a counselor appears to be more indicative of the importance of professional development areas than teaching background does, then does it stand to reason that a focus on the induction of counselors into the profession and mentoring is warranted? Perhaps the question of teaching experience versus non-teaching experience should be set aside in favor of strengthening the induction year(s) experience while emphasizing the benefits of the mentoring relationship. In addition, emphasis should be placed on developing the working relationship, philosophy, and vision within the collaborative principal-counselor relationship.

Recommendations for Future Research

The professional development of school counselors is enhanced by collaboration with a mentor during the induction years (Jackson et al, 2002). Studying the mentor/protégé relationship

may provide insight into post-mentoring professional development. Possible future research questions could include the following:

1. Do school counselors who experience helpful mentor/protégé relationships in their first two induction years have different professional development needs from those school counselors who do not have helpful mentoring relationships?
2. Is there a difference in professional development needs for school counselors who have participated in a statewide mentoring program only versus those who participated in district mentoring relationships?
3. Do school counselors who participate in state professional counseling organizations and mentoring programs perceive themselves to be more effective at classroom guidance than those who do not participate in state professional organizations and mentoring programs?

Other possible studies could examine school level variables such as principal leadership, professional learning community, and provision of professional development, on school counselor efficacy.

In addition, the number of respondents to the survey was 91, with only 53 of these individuals being employed as school counselors. Barrow et al. (2000) studied the non-employment of school counselors in Missouri. Counselors have been listed on the shortage areas in Missouri from 2004 through 2007 (DESE, 2007). Studying the non-employment of school counselors may address this issue and offer explanations for the phenomenon.

Methodological Enhancements

The study had several limitations that could be addressed in future studies. A larger sample representing more than one counselor education program might provide more robust

findings. The study was limited to one metropolitan area; the importance of professional development areas for school counselors in rural or small town districts may differ. While this researcher chose to do a quantitative study, future research regarding school counselor professional development may be better suited for a mixed methods design. Respondents in this quantitative study often wrote in additional comments on their surveys. The respondents wanted to express themselves and open-ended items on additional studies would be a venue for such expression. Given the finding that years of experience was such an important determinant of importance of professional development areas, perhaps a longitudinal study would provide information on how experience affects professional development. In addition, there is a need for further studies of the effects of mentoring.

Policy Recommendations

The professional development of school counselors is critical to their successful work with students (Borders et al., 1992; Jackson et al., 2002; Kaplan et al., 1992; Matthes, 1992; Peterson, J. et al., 2004). Yet school and district administrators set the tone for how the school counselor is utilized. As a result, the role of the school counselor is often dictated by individuals who have little training in regard to what school counselors do, or what they are capable of doing. One recommendation for the state board of education would be to examine the field experience in educational administration degree programs and develop, along with universities, an additional required number of hours that deals with utilization of school counselors and the comprehensive guidance program. The additional field work would focus on the collaborative nature of their work regarding student success. New in Missouri for the summer of 2009, administrators have the opportunity to participate in an on-line course about the Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Program. The two-credit course provides participants the

understanding of the role of the school counselor in planning, designing, implementing, evaluating, and enhancing the program (DESE, retrieved 7/12/09). Since school counselors are uniquely trained in their school- and community-wide curriculum, no assumptions can be made about their roles and responsibilities. In addition, counselor preparation programs can dedicate a portion of field experience hours in developing collaborative relationships with the administrative team.

Practitioner Recommendations

Experienced school counselors are in unique positions to assist their newly inducted colleagues into the profession. As new counselors gain experience, their affiliations with local and state professional organizations and the university where they earned their master's degree are sources of continued professional development that may include training to become a mentor themselves. Missouri has an innovative, statewide mentoring program that encourages and trains the veteran counselor to mentor the protégé. Participation in the statewide mentoring program will support the professional development of the early-career school counselor while offering mutual benefit to the veteran counselor.

Summary

Certification for school counselors has been transformed over recent years. One of the most significant changes has been the removal of the previous teaching requirement. Most states no longer require school counselors to have been teachers but may require additional coursework in teaching methodology, classroom management, and psychology of exceptional children. While studies have suggested virtually no differences in counselors with teaching experience

versus those without teaching experience, the perceived importance of professional development areas has been less explored.

The differences in the importance of perceived professional development areas of the two groups in this study are more attributable to the years of experience as counselor than to prior teaching experience. The more years of experience counselors had, the less importance they gave to the 18 areas of professional development. Perhaps future studies can ask what professional development areas are appealing and important to more seasoned school counselors.

APPENDIX A

Compendium of Missouri Certification Requirements Index

Subject Area/Grade Level

[Early Childhood \(Birth through Grade 3\)](#)

Early Childhood Requirements for Teachers with Early Childhood Special Education Certificates
Early Childhood Requirements for Teachers with Elementary Education Certificates
Family Resource Certificate for Teachers with Early Childhood Education and/or Early Childhood Special Education Certificates

[Elementary \(Grades 1-6\)](#)

[Middle School Education \(Grades 5-9\)](#)

[Secondary Education \(Grades 9-12\)](#)

Agriculture (Grades 9-12)
Art (Grades K-12; K-9; K-12)
Business Education (Grades 9-12)
Business Education Cooperative Education (Grades 9-12) Cooperative Education (Grades 9-12)
Dance (Grades K-12)
Driver Education (Grades 9-12)
English (Grades 9-12)
Family and Consumer Sciences (Grades 9-12)
Foreign Language (Grades K-12; K-9)
Health (Grades K-12; K-9; 9-12)
Industrial Technology (Grades 9-12)
Journalism (Grades 9-12)
Library Media Specialist (Grades K-12)
Marketing Education (Grades 9-12)
Mathematics (Grades 9-12)
Music (Grades 9-12)
Physical Education (Grades K-12; K-9; 9-12)
Science (Grades 9-12)
Social Science (Grades 9-12)
Speech and Theatre (Grades 9-12)
Unified Science (Grades 9-12)

Special Education

[Blind and Partially Sighted Special Education Majors \(Grades K-12\)](#)

[Blind and Partially Sighted Requirements for Elementary or Secondary Education Majors \(Grades K-12\)](#)

[Deaf and Hearing Impaired Special Education Majors \(Grades K-12\)](#)

[Deaf and Hearing Impaired Requirements for Elementary or Secondary Education Majors \(Grades K-12\)](#)

[Early Childhood Special Education \(Birth through Grade 3\)](#)

[Early Childhood Special Education Requirements for Teachers with Early Childhood Certification \(Birth through Grade 3\)](#)

[Early Childhood Special Education Requirements for Teachers with Special Education Certification \(Birth through Grade 3\)](#)

[Early Childhood Special Education Requirements for Teachers with Elementary Certification \(Birth through Grade 3\)](#)

[Family Resource Certification Requirements for Teachers with Early Childhood Education and/or Early Childhood Special Education Certification \(Birth through Grade 3\)](#)

[Mild/Moderate Disability Requirements for Special Education Majors \(Grades K-12\)](#)

[Mild/Moderate Disability Requirements for Elementary or Secondary Education Majors \(Grades K-12\)](#)

[Severely Developmentally Disabled Requirements for Special Education Majors \(Grades K-12\)](#)
[Severely Developmentally Disabled Requirements for Elementary or Secondary Education Majors \(Grades K-12\)](#)

Other

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[Gifted Education \(Grades K-12\)](#)
[Special Reading \(Grades K-12\)](#)
[Vocational Family and Consumer Sciences/Family Resource Educator Competencies \(Birth through Grade 12\)](#)

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[Middle School Principal \(Grades 5-9\)](#)
[Postsecondary Career Director](#) [Career Education Director](#)
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[Superintendent \(Grades K-12\)](#)

Student Services

[Adult Education Supervisor \(Secondary/Postsecondary and Adult\)](#)
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[Career Education Counselor](#)
[School Psychological Examiner ♦s Certificate](#)
[School Psychologist](#)
[Secondary Counselor \(Grades 7-12\)](#)
[Speech and Language Pathologist \(Birth through Grade 12\)](#)
[Career Education Placement Coordinator \(Secondary/Postsecondary and Adult\)](#)

Career Education

[Secondary Career Education](#) [Postsecondary Career Education](#)

[Adult Education and Literacy](#)

APPENDIX B

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNSELOR (GRADES K-8) *Revised Oct. 2005*

I. PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS: The elementary school counselor, initial student services certificate, valid for a period of four (4) years from the effective date on the certificate, will be issued to those persons meeting the following requirements:

A. Recommendation for certification from the designated official of a college or university approved to train elementary school counselors by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education; and

B. The applicant must possess either:

1. Completion of a master's degree with a major emphasis in guidance and counseling from a college or university meeting approval of the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education based upon the completion of a planned program of at least twenty-four (24) semester hours of approved graduate credit in courses in guidance and counseling with at least twelve (12) semester hours focused upon guidance in the elementary schools:

a. Complete one (1) course in each of the following areas:

- 1)** Orientation to the Personal and Professional Development in Counseling;
- 2)** Foundation of Elementary and Secondary School Guidance;
- 3)** Theories and Techniques of Elementary and Secondary School Counseling;
- 4)** Analysis of the Elementary School Child and School Learning Problems;
- 5)** Theories and Techniques of Group Counseling; or
- 6)** Practicum in Counseling;

b. Supervised Practice in an Elementary School Guidance Program for at least three (3) semester hours; and

c. Knowledge and/or competency in each of the following areas:

- 1)** Theories of human development;
- 2)** Theories of learning;
- 3)** Theories of personality;
- 4)** Theories of career development;
- 5)** Assessment materials and techniques;
- 6)** Analysis of school adjustment and classroom climate;
- 7)** Utilization of information services and community resources;
- 8)** Research methods and statistics;
- 9)** Consulting with parents and staff;
- 10)** Development of positive mental health in the school environment;
- 11)** Process of staffing with other professionals to develop instruction strategies;
- 12)** Program development including needs assessment, implementation, evaluation;
- 13)** Time management with attention to priority setting for goals and objectives; or
- 14)** Professional organization and ethical standards;

OR

2. A master's degree or higher degree in education, school counseling, counseling, counseling psychology, or a closely related mental health discipline; and additional graduate course work specific to school counseling, as designated by the state-approved recommending certification official, including a supervised internship or field experience of at least three hundred (300) hours in an appropriate school setting; and

Revised Oct. 2005

C. The applicant must either:

1. Possess a bachelor's degree in education from a state-approved teacher preparation program;

OR

2. Complete a curriculum in teaching methods and practices, classroom management and the psychology of the exceptional child, as specified by the recommending certification officer of a state-approved program; and

D. Must achieve a score equal to or greater than the Missouri qualifying score on the assessment designated by the State Board of Education, not to include the principles of learning and teaching.

II. CAREER CONTINUOUS STUDENT SERVICES CERTIFICATE

A. The elementary school counselor, career continuous student services certificate will be issued upon completion and verification of the following:

1. Four (4) years of state-approved school counseling experience;
2. Participation in two (2) years of district-provided mentoring (during the first two (2) years of student services experience);
3. The development, implementation and completion of a professional development plan of at least forty (40) contact hours of professional development, or three (3) semester hours of graduate credit toward an advanced degree; and
4. Successful participation in an annual performance-based evaluation.

B. The elementary school counselor, career continuous student services certificate will remain valid upon verification of the following:

1. Participation in a performance-based system of evaluation; and
2. Participation in twenty (20) contact hours of professional development annually.

C. The elementary school counselor, career continuous student services certificate holder is exempt from additional professional development if the holder has a local professional development plan in place with the school and meets at least two (2) of the following:

1. Ten (10) years of state-approved school counselor experience;
2. An educational specialist's degree in school counseling; and/or
3. Certification from a board-approved nationally recognized professional school counselor

organization.

**MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATION
REQUIREMENTS FOR SECONDARY COUNSELOR (GRADES 7-12) *Revised Oct. 2005***

I. PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS: The secondary school counselor, initial student services certificate, valid for a period of four (4) years from the effective date on the certificate, will be issued to those persons meeting the following requirements:

A. Recommendation for certification from the designated official of a college or university approved to train secondary school counselors by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

B. The applicant must possess either:

1. Completion of a master's degree with a major emphasis in guidance and counseling from a college or university meeting approval of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education based upon the completion of a planned program of at least twenty-four (24) semester hours of approved graduate credit in courses in guidance and counseling with at least twelve (12) semester hours focused upon guidance in the secondary schools.

a. Complete one (1) course in each of the following areas:

- 1)** Orientation to the Personal and Professional Development in Counseling;
- 2)** Foundations of Elementary and Secondary School Guidance;
- 3)** Theories and Techniques of Elementary and Secondary School Counseling;
- 4)** Theories and Techniques of Group Counseling; and
- 5)** Practicum in Counseling;

b. Supervised practice in a Secondary School Guidance Program for at least three (3) semester hours; and

c. Knowledge and/or competency in each of the following areas:

- 1)** Theories of human development;
- 2)** Theories of learning;
- 3)** Theories of personality;
- 4)** Theories of career development;
- 5)** Assessment materials and techniques;
- 6)** Analysis of school learning and school adjustment;
- 7)** Utilization of information services and community resources;
- 8)** Research methods and statistics;
- 9)** Consulting with parents and staff;
- 10)** Development of positive mental health in the school environment;
- 11)** Process of staffing with other professionals to develop instruction strategies;
- 12)** Program development including needs assessment, implementation, evaluation;
- 13)** Time management with attention to priority setting for goals and objectives; and
- 14)** Professional organization and ethical standards;

OR

2. A master's degree or higher degree in education, school counseling, counseling, counseling psychology, rehabilitation counseling, or a closely related mental health discipline; and complete additional graduate course work specific to school counseling, as designated by the state-approved recommending certification official, including a supervised internship or field experience of at least three hundred (300) hours in an appropriate school setting.

C. The applicant must either:

1. Possess a bachelor's degree in education from a state-approved teacher preparation program;
or

2. Complete a curriculum in teaching methods and practices, classroom management and the psychology of the exceptional child, as specified by the recommending certification officer of a state-approved program; and
- D. Must achieve a score equal to or greater than the Missouri qualifying score on the assessments designated by the State Board of Education not to include the principles of learning and teaching.

II. CAREER CONTINUOUS STUDENT SERVICES CERTIFICATE

- A. The secondary school counselor, career continuous student services certificate will be issued upon completion and verification of the following:
1. Four (4) years of state-approved school counseling experience;
 2. Participation in two (2) years of district-provided mentoring (during the first two (2) years of student services experience);
 3. The development, implementation and completion of a professional development plan of at least forty (40) contact hours of professional development, or three (3) semester hours of graduate credit toward an advanced degree; and
 4. Successful participation in an annual performance-based evaluation.
- B. The secondary school counselor, career continuous student services certificate will remain valid upon verification of the following:
1. Participation in a performance-based system of evaluation; and
 2. Participation in twenty (20) contact hours of professional development annually.
- C. The secondary school counselor, career continuous student services certificate holder is exempt from additional professional development if the holder has a local professional development plan in place with the school and meets at least two (2) of the following:
1. Ten (10) years of state-approved school counselor experience;
 2. An educational specialist's degree in school counseling; and/or
 3. Certification from a board-approved nationally recognized professional school counseling organization.

Revised

APPENDIX C

MOSTEP SCHOOL COUNSELING COMPETENCIES (8/13/08)

The beginning (pre-service) School Counselor will demonstrate knowledge of and/or competency in the following **School Counseling** areas of study:

1. Human Growth and Development

1. theories of individual and family development to transitions across the life span and the range of human developmental variation.
2. strategies for applying knowledge of developmental stages of individual growth.
3. strategies for applying theories of learning and development in working with all students in a variety of school counseling activities.
4. theories of individual, family, cultural, and community resilience.
5. factors that affect behavior, including but not limited to crises, trauma, disaster, disability, addiction, psychopathology, and environmental factors, in assisting all students to develop healthy life and learning styles.
6. a framework for understanding exceptional abilities and strategies for differentiated interventions.
7. strategies for facilitating optimal development and wellness over the life span.

2. Social and Cultural

8. multicultural and pluralistic theories, issues, and trends.
9. attitudes and behaviors related to diversity, and how the diversity in families impacts all students.
10. strategies for educating students, colleagues, and others about diversity and its impact on learning, growth, and family and community relationships.
11. strategies for facilitating the development of all students' respect for and valuing of human diversity, social justice, advocacy, conflict resolution, and other culturally supported behaviors that promote optimal wellness and growth of the human spirit, mind, and body.
12. counselors' roles in eliminating biases, prejudices, processes of intentional and unintentional oppression and discrimination.
13. strategies for applying knowledge of how culture affects human relationships and demonstrating cultural awareness and sensitivity in counseling.
14. strategies for demonstrating cultural awareness and sensitivity in the implementation of comprehensive guidance programs.
15. individual, family, group, and community strategies for working with and advocating for diverse populations.

3. Assessment

16. theoretical and historical bases for assessment techniques, including basic concepts of standardized and non-standardized testing and other assessment techniques including norm-referenced and criterion-referenced assessment, environmental assessment, performance assessment, individual and group test and inventory methods, psychological testing, and behavioral observations.
17. concepts of reliability (i.e., theory of measurement error, models of reliability, and the use of reliability information), validity (i.e., evidence of validity, types of validity), and the relationship between reliability and validity.

18. selecting, administering, and interpreting qualitative and quantitative assessments typically used in comprehensive guidance programs to assess the academic, career, and personal/social development of all students.
19. statistical concepts, including scales of measurement, measures of central tendency, indices of variability, shapes and types of distributions, and correlations.
20. social and cultural factors related to the assessment and evaluation of individuals, groups, and specific populations.
21. ethical principles in assessment.

4. Career Development and Planning

22. theories of career development, decision-making and planning with all students.
23. strategies for promoting and supporting the career decision-making and planning of all students through comprehensive guidance program planning, organization, implementation, administration, and evaluation.
24. career assessment instruments and techniques to assist all students in understanding their abilities and career interests.
25. interrelationships among work, family, and other life roles and factors, including the role of multicultural issues in career development.
26. impacts of diversity on career development.
27. using current educational, career, and labor market information as well as career information delivery systems to assist all students in understanding the worlds of education and work in making career plans and choices.

5. Helping Relationships

28. essential interviewing and counseling skills.
29. counseling theories to conceptualize student issues and concerns and select appropriate counseling interventions to respond to these issues and concerns.
30. strategies for applying a school, family and community systems perspective to the counseling process.
31. a framework for understanding and practicing professional consultation, including counselor characteristics and behaviors that influence helping processes.

6. Group Work

32. principles of group dynamics, including group process components, developmental stage theory, group member roles and behaviors, and therapeutic factors of group work.
33. group leadership or facilitation styles and approaches, including characteristics of various types of group leaders and leadership roles.
34. theories of group counseling, including commonalities, distinguishing characteristics, and pertinent research and literature.
35. planning, managing, and evaluating groups, including group counselor orientations and behaviors and appropriate selection criteria and methods.

7. Structural Components of a Comprehensive Guidance Program

36. beliefs and philosophy for comprehensive guidance programs that align with current school improvement plans and student success initiatives at the school, district and state levels.
37. facilities, resources, budget, and staffing patterns necessary to ensure the full implementation of comprehensive guidance programs.

38. establishment, facilitation, and use of advisory councils to support the full implementation of comprehensive guidance programs.

8. Comprehensive Guidance Program Components: *Guidance Curriculum*

39. role and development of guidance curriculum planning surveys to inform the planning and implementation of the guidance curriculum.

40. design and implementation of culturally sensitive and developmentally appropriate guidance activities demonstrated to meet student needs and school goals, including closing-the-gap activities.

41. collaboration with teachers and other school personnel in the delivery and full implementation of the guidance curriculum through alignment of guidance grade level expectations with the grade-level expectations of other programs.

42. effective curriculum design, classroom management skills, and instructional strategies.

9. Comprehensive Guidance Program Components: *Individual Planning*

43. planning, goal setting, and decision making strategies and processes demonstrated to help all students develop personal plans of study (e.g., appraisal, advisement, goal-setting, decision making, social-skills, transition, or post-secondary-planning).

44. tools, including technology, to assist all students in developing personal plans of study in collaboration with parents or guardians and other school personnel.

45. the relationship of academic performance to the world of work, family, life and community service and strategies demonstrated to assist students in monitoring and managing their own academic, career, and personal/social development.

10. Comprehensive Guidance Program Components: *Responsive Services*

46. understand and use individual and small group counseling theories and techniques for students during times of transition, separation, heightened stress, and critical change.

47. systems theories, models and processes of consultation within school system settings, including family and community.

48. the role of school counselors and comprehensive guidance programs in school crisis/emergency management plans, including team leadership and collaboration models for schools, communities, and families before, during, and after a crisis.

49. construction and use of databases for compiling community agencies, resources, and service providers for student referrals in collaboration with parents or guardians and appropriate school personnel.

11. Comprehensive Guidance Program Components: *System Support*

50. designing and managing a fully implemented, district-wide comprehensive guidance program.

51. advocacy, leadership, collaboration and acting as a systems change agent for the success of all students through the full implementation of comprehensive guidance programs.

52. advocacy for the full implementation of comprehensive guidance programs at the local, state, and national level.

53. evaluate, monitor, and improve comprehensive guidance programs, informed by data, using the formula Program + Personnel = Results.

54. designing and implementing a professional development plan that includes. participation in local, state, and national professional organizations and other professional growth opportunities.

- 55. distinguishing between non-guidance and fair-share responsibilities and participating in those identified as being fair share.
- 56. establishing and using annual, monthly, and weekly calendars to ensure the effective implementation of comprehensive guidance programs.
- 57. conducting and interpreting time-and-task analyses to determine utilization of professional school counselor time.

12. Comprehensive Guidance Program Components: *Technology*

- 58. technologies available for the delivery of guidance and counseling activities.
- 59. technologies available for the management and evaluation of a comprehensive guidance program.

13. Professional Relationships in the School, Family, and Community

- 60. using systems theories, models, and processes of consultation within school system to enhance student development, well being, and learning through family-school collaboration.
- 61. consultation strategies.
demonstrated to improve communication and promote teamwork.
- 62. using consultation strategies to coordinate resources and the efforts of staff (teachers, administrators, and other school personnel) to promote school-home relationships through the involvement of parents and other family members, and to involve private and public community agencies in students' academic, career, and personal/social development.

14. Ethical Standards

- 63. practicing in accordance with the ethical standards of the counseling profession (e.g., ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors), with those of credentialing bodies, and within local school district policies and procedures.
- 64. employing ethical decision-making models to recognize and resolve ethical dilemmas.
- 65. modeling ethical behavior in one's work.
- 66. adhering to the ethical standard of confidentiality in relationships with students, parents, administrators and teachers.

15. Legal Standards

- 67. school district policies; and local, state, and federal statutory requirements pertaining to the practice of school counseling, including limits of confidentiality.
- 68. legal resources and professional development available to inform and guide professional practice.

16. Professional Orientation, Identity and Well-Being

- 69. the history and philosophy of the school counseling profession.
- 70. professional organizations, competencies, preparation standards, credentials, and accreditation policies appropriate to professional school counselors.
- 71. using personal reflection, consultation, supervision, and feedback from others to create and implement professional development plans for continued professional growth.
- 72. advocacy processes needed to address institutional and social barriers that impede access, equity, and success for students and to advance the profession.
- 73. self-care strategies.

APPENDIX D

ASCA School Counselor Competencies

School Counselor Competencies

History and Purpose

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) supports school counselors' efforts to help students focus on academic, personal/social and career development so they achieve success in school and are prepared to lead fulfilling lives as responsible members of society. In recent years, the ASCA leadership has recognized the need for a more unified vision of the school counseling profession. "The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs" was a landmark document that provided a mechanism with which school counselors and school counseling teams could design, coordinate, implement, manage and enhance their programs for students' success. The ASCA National Model® provides a framework for the program components, the school counselor's role in implementation and the underlying philosophies of leadership, advocacy, collaboration and systemic change.

The School Counselor Competencies continue the effort for a unified vision by outlining the knowledge, attitudes and skills that ensure school counselors are equipped to meet the rigorous demands of our profession and the needs of our Pre-K-12 students. These competencies are necessary to better ensure that our future school counselor workforce will be able to continue to make a positive difference in the lives of students.

Development of the Competencies

The development of the School Counselor Competencies document was a highly collaborative effort among many members of the school counseling profession.

A group of school counseling professionals that included practicing school counselors, district school counseling supervisors and counselor educators from across the country met in January 2007 to discuss ways to ensure that school counselor education programs adequately train and prepare future school counselors to design and implement comprehensive school counseling programs. The group agreed that the logical first task should be the development of a set of competencies necessary and sufficient to be an effective professional school counselor.

The group created a general outline of competencies and asked ASCA to form a task force to develop draft school counselor competencies supporting the ASCA National Model. The task force used sample competencies from states, universities and other organizations to develop a first draft, which was presented to the whole group for feedback. After comments and revisions were incorporated, the revised draft was released for public review and comment. Revisions through the public comment were incorporated to develop the final version. The school counselor competencies document is unique in several ways. First, this set of competencies is organized around and consistent with the ASCA National Model. Second, the competencies are comprehensive in that they include skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for meritoriously performing the range of school counselor responsibilities (e.g., counseling, coordinating, consulting, etc.) in all four components of comprehensive school counseling programs: foundation, management, delivery and accountability. These

competencies have been identified as those that will equip new and experienced school counselors with the skills to establish, maintain and enhance a comprehensive, developmental, results-based school counseling program addressing academic achievement, personal and social development and career planning.

Applications

ASCA views these competencies as being applicable along a continuum of areas. For instance, school counselor education programs may use the competencies as benchmarks for ensuring students graduate with the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed for developing comprehensive school counseling programs. Professional school counselors could use the School Counselor Competencies as a checklist to self-evaluate their own competencies and, as a result, formulate an appropriate professional development plan. School administrators may find these competencies useful as a guide for seeking and hiring highly competent school counselors and for developing meaningful school counselor performance evaluations. Also, the School Counselor Competencies include the necessary technological competencies needed for performing effectively and efficiently in the 21st century.

I. School Counseling Programs

School counselors should possess the knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes necessary to plan, organize, implement and evaluate a comprehensive, developmental, results-based school counseling program that aligns with the ASCA National Model.

I-A: KNOWLEDGE

ASCA's position statement, The Professional School Counselor and School Counseling Preparation Programs, states that school counselors should articulate and demonstrate an understanding of:

- I-A-1 The organizational structure and governance of the American educational system as well as cultural, political and social influences on current educational practices
- I-A-2 The organizational structure and qualities of an effective school counseling program that aligns with the ASCA National Model
- I-A-3 Impediments to student learning and use of advocacy and data-driven school counseling practices to act effectively in closing the achievement/opportunity gap
- I-A-4 Leadership principles and theories
- I-A-5 Individual counseling, group counseling and classroom guidance programs ensuring equitable access to resources that promote academic achievement; personal, social and emotional development; and career development including the identification of appropriate post-secondary education for every student
- I-A-6 Collaborations with stakeholders such as parents and guardians, teachers, administrators and community leaders to create learning environments that promote educational equity and success for every student
- I-A-7 Legal, ethical and professional issues in pre-K—12 schools
- I-A-8 Developmental theory, learning theories, social justice theory, multiculturalism, counseling theories and career

counseling theories

- I-A-9. The continuum of mental health services, including prevention and intervention strategies to enhance student success

I-B: ABILITIES AND SKILLS

An effective school counselor is able to accomplish measurable objectives demonstrating the following abilities and skills.

- I-B-1. Plans, organizes, implements and evaluates a school counseling program aligning with the ASCA National Model
- I-B-1a. Creates a vision statement examining the professional and personal competencies and qualities a school counselor should possess
- I-B-1b. Describes the rationale for a comprehensive school counseling program
- I-B-1c. Articulates the school counseling themes of advocacy, leadership, collaboration and systemic change, which are critical to a successful school counseling program.
- I-B-1d. Describes, defines and identifies the qualities of an effective school counseling program
- I-B-1e. Describes the benefits of a comprehensive school counseling program for all stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, administrators, school boards, department of education, school counselors, counselor educators, community stakeholders and business leaders
- I-B-1f. Describes the history of school counseling to create a context for the current state of the profession and comprehensive school counseling programs
- I-B-1g. Uses technology effectively and efficiently to plan, organize, implement and evaluate the comprehensive

school counseling program

- I-B-1h. Demonstrates multicultural, ethical and professional competencies in planning, organizing, implementing and evaluating the comprehensive school counseling program

- I-B-2. Serves as a leader in the school and community to promote and support student success

- I-B-2a. Understands and defines leadership and its role in comprehensive school counseling programs

- I-B-2b. Identifies and applies a model of leadership to a comprehensive school counseling program

- I-B-2c. Identifies and demonstrates professional and personal qualities and skills of effective leaders

- I-B-2d. Identifies and applies components of the ASCA National Model requiring leadership, such as an advisory council, management system and accountability

- I-B-2e. Creates a plan to challenge the non-counseling tasks that are assigned to school counselors

- I-B-3. Advocates for student success

- I-B-3a. Understands and defines advocacy and its role in comprehensive school counseling programs

- I-B-3b. Identifies and demonstrates benefits of advocacy with school and community stakeholders

- I-B-3c. Describes school counselor advocacy competencies, which include dispositions, knowledge and skills

- I-B-3d. Reviews advocacy models and develops a personal advocacy plan

- I-B-3e. Understands the process for

- development of policy and procedures at the building, district, state and national levels
-
- I-B-4. Collaborates with parents, teachers, administrators, community leaders and other stakeholders to promote and support student success
 - I-B-4a. Defines collaboration and its role in comprehensive school counseling programs
 - I-B-4b. Identifies and applies models of collaboration for effective use in a school counseling program and understands the similarities and differences between consultation, collaboration and counseling and coordination strategies.
 - I-B-4c. Creates statements or other documents delineating the various roles of student service providers, such as school social worker, school psychologist, school nurse, and identifies best practices for collaborating to affect student success
 - I-B-4d. Understands and knows how to apply a consensus-building process to foster agreement in a group
 - I-B-4e. Understands how to facilitate group meetings to effectively and efficiently meet group goals
-
- I-B-5. Acts as a systems change agent to create an environment promoting and supporting student success
 - I-B-5a. Defines and understands system change and its role in comprehensive school counseling programs
 - I-B-5b. Develops a plan to deal with personal (emotional and cognitive) and institutional resistance impeding the change process
 - I-B-5c. Understands the impact of school, district and state educational policies, procedures and practices supporting and/or impeding student success

I-C: ATTITUDES

School counselors believe:

- I-C-1. Every student can learn, and every student can succeed
- I-C-2. Every student should have access to and opportunity for a high-quality education
- I-C-3. Every student should graduate from high school and be prepared for employment or college and other post-secondary education
- I-C-4. Every student should have access to a school counseling program
- I-C-5. Effective school counseling is a collaborative process involving school counselors, students, parents, teachers, administrators, community leaders and other stakeholders
- I-C-6. School counselors can and should be leaders in the school and district
- I-C-7. The effectiveness of school counseling programs should be measurable using process, perception and results data

II: Foundations

School counselors should possess the knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes necessary to establish the foundations of a school counseling program aligning with the ASCA National Model.

II-A: KNOWLEDGE

School counselors should articulate and demonstrate an understanding of:

- II-A-1 Beliefs and philosophy of the school counseling program that align with current school improvement and student success initiatives at the school, district and state level
- II-A-2 Educational systems, philosophies and theories and current trends in education, including federal and state legislation
- II-A-3 Learning theories
- II-A-4 History and purpose of school counseling, including traditional and transformed roles of school counselors
- II-A-5 Human development theories

- and developmental issues affecting student success
- II-A-6 District, state and national student standards and competencies, including ASCA Student Competencies
 - II-A-7 Legal and ethical standards and principles of the school counseling profession and educational systems, including district and building policies
 - II-A-8 Three domains of academic achievement, career planning, and personal and social development

II-B: ABILITIES AND SKILLS

An effective school counselor is able to accomplish measurable objectives demonstrating the following abilities and skills.

- II-B-1. Develops the beliefs and philosophy of the school counseling program that align with current school improvement and student success initiatives at the school, district and state level
 - II-B-1a. Examines personal, district and state beliefs, assumptions and philosophies about student success, specifically what they should know and be able to do
 - II-B-1b. Demonstrates knowledge of a school's particular educational philosophy and mission
 - II-B-1c. Conceptualizes and writes a personal philosophy about students, families, teachers, school counseling programs and the educational process consistent with the school's educational philosophy and mission
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- II-B-2. Develops a school counseling mission statement aligning with the school, district and state mission.
 - II-B-2a. Critiques a school district mission statement and identifies or writes a mission statement aligning with beliefs
 - II-B-2b. Writes a school counseling mission statement that is specific, concise, clear and comprehensive, describing a

- school counseling program's purpose and a vision of the program's benefits every student
- II-B-2c. Communicates the philosophy and mission of the school counseling program to all appropriate stakeholders
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- II-B-3. Uses student standards, such as ASCA Student Competencies, and district or state standards, to drive the implementation of a comprehensive school counseling program
- II-B-3a. Crosswalks the ASCA Student Competencies with other appropriate standards
- II-B-3b. Prioritizes student standards that align with the school's goals
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- II-B-4. Applies the ethical standards and principles of the school counseling profession and adheres to the legal aspects of the role of the school counselor
- II-B-4a. Practices ethical principles of the school counseling profession in accordance with the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors
- II-B-4b. Understands the legal and ethical nature of working in a pluralistic, multicultural, and technological society.
- II-B-4c. Understands and practices in accordance with school district policy and local, state and federal statutory requirements.
- II-B-4d. Understands the unique legal and ethical nature of working with minor students in a school setting.
- II-B-4e. Advocates responsibly for school board policy, local, state and federal statutory requirements that are in the best interests of students
- II-B-4f. Resolves ethical dilemmas by employing an ethical decision-making model appropriate to work in schools.
- II-B-4g. Models ethical behavior
- II-B-4h. Continuously engages in

- professional development and uses resources to inform and guide ethical and legal work
- II-B-4i. Practices within the ethical and statutory limits of confidentiality
- II-B-4j. Continually seeks consultation and supervision to guide legal and ethical decision making and to recognize and resolve ethical dilemmas
- II-B-4k. Understands and applies an ethical and legal obligation not only to students but to parents, administration and teachers as well

II-C: ATTITUDES

School counselors believe:

- II-C-1. School counseling is an organized program for every student and not a series of services provided only to students in need
- II-C-2. School counseling programs should be an integral component of student success and the overall mission of schools and school districts
- II-C-3. School counseling programs promote and support academic achievement, personal and social development and career planning for every student
- II-C-4. School counselors operate within a framework of school and district policies, state laws and regulations and professional ethics standards

III: Delivery

School counselors should possess the knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes necessary to deliver a school counseling program aligning with the ASCA National Model.

III-A: KNOWLEDGE

School counselors should articulate and demonstrate an understanding of:

- III-A-1. The concept of a guidance curriculum
- III-A-2. Counseling theories and techniques that work in school, such as solution-

- focused brief counseling, reality therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy
- III-A-3. Counseling theories and techniques in different settings, such as individual planning, group counseling and classroom guidance
- III-A-4. Classroom management
- III-A-5. Principles of career planning and college admissions, including financial aid and athletic eligibility
- III-A-6. Principles of working with various student populations based on ethnic and racial background, English language proficiency, special needs, religion, gender and income
- III-A-7. Responsive services
- III-A-8. Crisis counseling, including grief and bereavement

III-B: ABILITIES AND SKILLS

An effective school counselor is able to accomplish measurable objectives demonstrating the following abilities and skills.

- III-B-1. Implements the school guidance curriculum
- III-B-1a. Crosswalks ASCA Student Competencies with appropriate guidance curriculum
- III-B-1b. Develops and presents a developmental guidance curriculum addressing all students' needs, including closing-the-gap activities
- III-B-1c. Demonstrates classroom management and instructional skills
- III-B-1d. Develops materials and instructional strategies to meet student needs and school goals
- III-B-1e. Encourages staff involvement to ensure the effective implementation of the school guidance curriculum
- III-B-1f. Knows, understands and uses a variety of technology in the delivery of guidance curriculum activities
- III-B-1g. Understands multicultural and pluralistic trends when developing and choosing guidance curriculum

- III-B-1h. Understands the resources available for students with special needs
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- III-B-2. Facilitates individual student planning
- III-B-2a. Understands individual student planning as a component of a comprehensive program.
- III-B-2b. Develops strategies to implement individual student planning, such as strategies for appraisal, advisement, goal-setting, decision-making, social skills, transition or post-secondary planning
- III-B-2c. Helps students establish goals, and develops and uses planning skills in collaboration with parents or guardians and school personnel
- III-B-2d. Understands career opportunities, labor market trends, and global economics, and uses various career assessment techniques to assist students in understanding their abilities and career interests
- III-B-2e. Helps students learn the importance of college and other post-secondary education and helps students navigate the college admissions process
- III-B-2f. Understands the relationship of academic performance to the world of work, family life and community service
- III-B-2g. Understands methods for helping students monitor and direct their own learning and personal/social and career development
-
- III-B-3. Provides responsive services
- III-B-3a. Understands how to make referrals to appropriate professionals when necessary
- III-B-3b. Lists and describes interventions used in responsive services, such as consultation, individual and small-group counseling, crisis counseling, referrals and peer facilitation
- III-B-3c. Compiles resources to utilize with students, staff and families to effectively address issues through responsive services
- III-B-3d. Understands appropriate individual and small-group counseling theories and techniques such as rational emotive behavior therapy, reality therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy, Adlerian, solution-focused brief counseling, person-centered counseling and family systems
- III-B-3e. Demonstrates an ability to provide counseling for students during times of transition, separation, heightened stress and critical change
- III-B-3f. Understands what defines a crisis, the appropriate response and a variety of intervention strategies to meet the needs of the individual, group, or school community before, during and after crisis response
- III-B-3g. Provides team leadership to the school and community in a crisis
- III-B-3h. Involves appropriate school and community professionals as well as the family in a crisis situation
- III-B-3i. Develops a database of community agencies and service providers for student referrals
- III-B-3j. Applies appropriate counseling approaches to promoting change among consultees within a consultation approach
- III-B-3k. Understands and is able to build effective and high-quality peer helper programs
- III-B-3l. Understands the nature of academic, career and personal/social counseling in schools and the similarities and differences among school counseling and other types of counseling, such as mental health, marriage and family, and substance abuse counseling, within a continuum of care
- III-B-3m. Understands the role of the school counselor and the school counseling program in the school crisis plan
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- III-B-4. Implements system support activities for the comprehensive school counseling program
- III-B-4a. Creates a system support planning document addressing school counselor's responsibilities for professional development, consultation and collaboration and program management
- III-B-4b. Coordinates activities that establish, maintain and enhance the school counseling program as well as other educational programs
- III-B-4c. Conducts in-service training for other stakeholders to share school counseling expertise
- III-B-4d. Understands and knows how to provide supervision for school counseling interns consistent with the principles of the ASCA National Model
- III-C: ATTITUDES**
School counselors believe:
- III-C-1. School counseling is one component in the continuum of care that should be available to all students
- III-C-2. School counselors coordinate and facilitate counseling and other services to ensure all students receive the care they need, even though school counselors may not personally provide the care themselves
- III-C-3. School counselors engage in developmental counseling and short-term responsive counseling
- III-C-4. School counselors should refer students to district or community resources to meet more extensive needs such as long-term therapy or diagnoses of disorders

IV: Management

School counselors should possess the knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes necessary to manage a school counseling program aligning with the ASCA National Model.

IV-A: KNOWLEDGE

School counselors should articulate and demonstrate an understanding of:

- IV-A-1. Leadership principles, including sources of power and authority, and formal and informal leadership
- IV-A-2. Organization theory to facilitate advocacy, collaboration and systemic change
- IV-A-3. Presentation skills for programs such as teacher in-services and results reports to school boards
- IV-A-4. Time management, including long- and short-term management using tools such as schedules and calendars
- IV-A-5. Data-driven decision making
- IV-A-6. Current and emerging technologies such as use of the Internet, Web-based resources and management information systems

IV-B: ABILITIES AND SKILLS

An effective school counselor is able to accomplish measurable objectives demonstrating the following abilities and skills.

- IV-B-1. Negotiates with the administrator to define the management system for the comprehensive school counseling program
- IV-B-1a. Discusses and develops the components of the school counselor management system with the other members of the counseling staff
- IV-B-1b. Presents the school counseling management system to the principal, and finalizes an annual school counseling management agreement
- IV-B-1c. Discusses the anticipated program results when implementing the action plans for the school year
- IV-B-1d. Participates in professional

organizations

- IV-B-1e. Develops a yearly professional development plan demonstrating how the school counselor advances relevant knowledge, skills and dispositions
- IV-B-1f. Communicates effective goals and benchmarks for meeting and exceeding expectations consistent with the administrator-counselor agreement and district performance appraisals
- IV-B-1g. Uses personal reflection, consultation and supervision to promote professional growth and development
- IV-B-2. Establishes and convenes an advisory council for the comprehensive school counseling program
- IV-B-2a. Uses leadership skills to facilitate vision and positive change for the comprehensive school counseling program
- IV-B-2b. Determines appropriate education stakeholders who should be represented on the advisory council
- IV-B-2c. Develops meeting agendas
- IV-B-2d. Reviews school data, school counseling program audit and school counseling program goals with the council
- IV-B-2e. Records meeting notes and distributes as appropriate
- IV-B-2f. Analyzes and incorporates feedback from advisory council related to school counseling program goals as appropriate
- IV-B-3. Collects, analyzes and interprets relevant data, including process, perception and results data, to monitor and improve student behavior and achievement
- IV-B-3a. Analyzes, synthesizes and disaggregates data to examine student outcomes and to identify and implement interventions as needed
- IV-B-3b. Uses data to identify policies,

practices and procedures leading to successes, systemic barriers and areas of weakness

- IV-B-3c. Uses student data to demonstrate a need for systemic change in areas such as course enrollment patterns; equity and access; and the achievement, opportunity and information gap
- IV-B-3d. Understands and uses data to establish goals and activities to close the achievement, opportunity and information gap
- IV-B-3e. Knows how to use and analyze data to evaluate the school counseling program, research activity outcomes and identify gaps between and among different groups of students
- IV-B-3f. Uses school data to identify and assist individual students who do not perform at grade level and do not have opportunities and resources to be successful in school
- IV-B-3g. Knows and understands theoretical and historical bases for assessment techniques
- IV-B-4. Organizes and manages time to implement an effective school counseling program
- IV-B-4a. Identifies appropriate distribution of school counselor's time based on delivery system and school's data
- IV-B-4b. Creates a rationale for school counselor's time to focus on the goals of the comprehensive school counseling program
- IV-B-4c. Identifies and evaluates fair-share responsibilities, which articulate appropriate and inappropriate counseling and non-counseling activities
- IV-B-4d. Creates a rationale for the school counselor's total time spent in each component of the school counseling program
- IV-B-5. Develops calendars to ensure the effective implementation of the school counseling program

- IV-B-5a. Creates annual, monthly and weekly calendars to plan activities to reflect school goals
- IV-B-5b. Demonstrates time management skills including scheduling, publicizing and prioritizing time and task

IV-B-6. Designs and implements action plans aligning with school and school counseling program goals

IV-B-6a. Uses appropriate academic and behavioral data to develop guidance curriculum and closing-the-gap action plan and determines appropriate students for the target group or interventions

IV-B-6b. Identifies ASCA domains, standards and competencies being addressed by the plan

IV-B-6c. Determines the intended impact on academics and behavior

IV-B-6d. Identifies appropriate activities to accomplish objectives

IV-B-6e. Identifies appropriate resources needed

IV-B-6f. Identifies data-collection strategies to gather process, perception and results data

IV-B-6g. Shares results of action plans with staff, parents and community.

IV-C: ATTITUDES

School counselors believe:

IV-C-1. A school counseling program and guidance department must be managed like other programs and departments in a school

IV-C-2. One of the critical responsibilities of a school counselor is to plan, organize, implement and evaluate a school counseling program

IV-C-3. Management of a school counseling program must be done in collaboration with administrators.

V: Accountability

School counselors should possess the knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes necessary to monitor and evaluate the processes and results of a school coun-

seling program aligning with the ASCA National Model.

V-A: KNOWLEDGE

School counselors should articulate and demonstrate an understanding of:

V-A-1. Basic concept of results-based school counseling and accountability issues

V-A-2. Basic research and statistical concepts to read and conduct research

V-A-3. Use of data to evaluate program effectiveness and to determine program needs

V-A-4. Program audits and results reports

V-B: ABILITIES AND SKILLS

An effective school counselor is able to accomplish measurable objectives demonstrating the following abilities and skills.

V-B-1. Uses data from results reports to evaluate program effectiveness and to determine program needs

V-B-1a. Uses formal and informal methods of program evaluation to design and modify comprehensive school counseling programs

V-B-1b. Uses student data to support decision making in designing effective school counseling programs and interventions

V-B-1c. Measures results attained from school guidance curriculum and closing-the-gap activities

V-B-1d. Works with members of the school counseling team and with the administration to decide how school counseling programs are evaluated and how results are shared

V-B-1e. Collects process, perception and results data

V-B-1f. Uses technology in conducting research and program evaluation

V-B-1g. Reports program results to professional school counseling community

V-B-1h. Uses data to demonstrate the value the school counseling program adds to student achievement

V-B-1i. Uses results obtained for program improvement

V-B-2. Understands and advocates for appropriate school counselor performance appraisal process based on school counselors competencies and completion of the guidance curriculum and agreed-upon action plans

V-B-2a. Conducts self-appraisal related to school counseling skills and performance

V-B-2b. Identifies how school counseling activities fit within categories of performance appraisal instrument

V-B-2c. Encourages administrators to use performance appraisal instrument reflecting appropriate responsibilities for school counselors

V-B-3. Conducts a program audit

V-B-3a. Completes a program audit to compare current school counseling program implementation with the ASCA National Model

V-B-3b. Shares the results of the program audit with administrators, the advisory council and other appropriate stakeholders

V-B-3c. Identifies areas for improvement for the school counseling program

V-C: ATTITUDES

School counselors believe:

V-C-1. School counseling programs should achieve demonstrable results

V-C-2. School counselors should be accountable for the results of the school counseling program

V-C-3. School counselors should use quantitative and qualitative data to evaluate their school counseling program and to demonstrate program results

V-C-4. The results of the school counseling program should be analyzed and presented in the context of the overall school and district performance

APPENDIX E

ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors

ASCA's Ethical Standards for School Counselors were adopted by the ASCA Delegate Assembly, March 19, 1984, revised March 27, 1992, June 25, 1998 and June 26, 2004. For a PDF version of the Ethical Standards, [click here](#). For a Spanish version, [click here](#).

Preamble

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) is a professional organization whose members are certified/licensed in school counseling with unique qualifications and skills to address the academic, personal/social and career development needs of all students. Professional school counselors are advocates, leaders, collaborators and consultants who create opportunities for equity in access and success in educational opportunities by connecting their programs to the mission of schools and subscribing to the following tenets of professional responsibility:

- Each person has the right to be respected, be treated with dignity and have access to a comprehensive school counseling program that advocates for and affirms all students from diverse populations regardless of ethnic/racial status, age, economic status, special needs, English as a second language or other language group, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity/expression, family type, religious/spiritual identity and appearance.
- Each person has the right to receive the information and support needed to move toward self-direction and self-development and affirmation within one's group identities, with special care being given to students who have historically not received adequate educational services: students of color, low socio-economic students, students with disabilities and students with nondominant language backgrounds.
- Each person has the right to understand the full magnitude and meaning of his/her educational choices and how those choices will affect future opportunities.
- Each person has the right to privacy and thereby the right to expect the counselor-student relationship to comply with all laws, policies and ethical standards pertaining to confidentiality in the school setting.

In this document, ASCA specifies the principles of ethical behavior necessary to maintain the high standards of integrity, leadership and professionalism among its members. The Ethical Standards for School Counselors were developed to clarify the nature of ethical responsibilities held in common by school counseling professionals. The purposes of this document are to:

- Serve as a guide for the ethical practices of all professional school counselors regardless of level, area, population served or membership in this professional association;
- Provide self-appraisal and peer evaluations regarding counselor responsibilities to students, parents/guardians, colleagues and professional associates, schools, communities and the counseling profession; and

- Inform those served by the school counselor of acceptable counselor practices and expected professional behavior.

A.1. Responsibilities to Students

The professional school counselor:

- a. Has a primary obligation to the student, who is to be treated with respect as a unique individual.
- b. Is concerned with the educational, academic, career, personal and social needs and encourages the maximum development of every student.
- c. Respects the student's values and beliefs and does not impose the counselor's personal values.
- d. Is knowledgeable of laws, regulations and policies relating to students and strives to protect and inform students regarding their rights.

A.2. Confidentiality

The professional school counselor:

- a. Informs students of the purposes, goals, techniques and rules of procedure under which they may receive counseling at or before the time when the counseling relationship is entered. Disclosure notice includes the limits of confidentiality such as the possible necessity for consulting with other professionals, privileged communication, and legal or authoritative restraints. The meaning and limits of confidentiality are defined in developmentally appropriate terms to students.
- b. Keeps information confidential unless disclosure is required to prevent clear and imminent danger to the student or others or when legal requirements demand that confidential information be revealed. Counselors will consult with appropriate professionals when in doubt as to the validity of an exception.
- c. In absence of state legislation expressly forbidding disclosure, considers the ethical responsibility to provide information to an identified third party who, by his/her relationship with the student, is at a high risk of contracting a disease that is commonly known to be communicable and fatal. Disclosure requires satisfaction of all of the following conditions:
 - Student identifies partner or the partner is highly identifiable
 - Counselor recommends the student notify partner and refrain from further high-risk behavior
 - Student refuses
 - Counselor informs the student of the intent to notify the partner
 - Counselor seeks legal consultation as to the legalities of informing the partner
- d. Requests of the court that disclosure not be required when the release of confidential information may potentially harm a student or the counseling relationship.
- e. Protects the confidentiality of students' records and releases personal data in accordance with prescribed laws and school policies. Student information stored and transmitted electronically is treated with the same care as traditional student records.

f. Protects the confidentiality of information received in the counseling relationship as specified by federal and state laws, written policies and applicable ethical standards. Such information is only to be revealed to others with the informed consent of the student, consistent with the counselor's ethical obligation.

g. Recognizes his/her primary obligation for confidentiality is to the student but balances that obligation with an understanding of the legal and inherent rights of parents/guardians to be the guiding voice in their children's lives.

A.3. Counseling Plans

The professional school counselor:

a. Provides students with a comprehensive school counseling program that includes a strong emphasis on working jointly with all students to develop academic and career goals.

b. Advocates for counseling plans supporting students right to choose from the wide array of options when they leave secondary education. Such plans will be regularly reviewed to update students regarding critical information they need to make informed decisions.

A.4. Dual Relationships

The professional school counselor:

a. Avoids dual relationships that might impair his/her objectivity and increase the risk of harm to the student (e.g., counseling one's family members, close friends or associates). If a dual relationship is unavoidable, the counselor is responsible for taking action to eliminate or reduce the potential for harm. Such safeguards might include informed consent, consultation, supervision and documentation.

b. Avoids dual relationships with school personnel that might infringe on the integrity of the counselor/student relationship

A.5. Appropriate Referrals

The professional school counselor:

a. Makes referrals when necessary or appropriate to outside resources. Appropriate referrals may necessitate informing both parents/guardians and students of applicable resources and making proper plans for transitions with minimal interruption of services. Students retain the right to discontinue the counseling relationship at any time.

A.6. Group Work

The professional school counselor:

a. Screens prospective group members and maintains an awareness of participants' needs and goals in relation to the goals of the group. The counselor takes reasonable precautions to protect members from physical and psychological harm resulting from interaction within the group.

b. Notifies parents/guardians and staff of group participation if the counselor deems it appropriate and if consistent with school board policy or practice.

c. Establishes clear expectations in the group setting and clearly states that confidentiality in group counseling cannot be guaranteed. Given the developmental and chronological ages of minors in schools, the counselor recognizes the tenuous nature of confidentiality for minors renders some topics inappropriate for group work in a school setting.

d. Follows up with group members and documents proceedings as appropriate.

A.7. Danger to Self or Others

The professional school counselor:

a. Informs parents/guardians or appropriate authorities when the student's condition indicates a clear and imminent danger to the student or others. This is to be done after careful deliberation and, where possible, after consultation with other counseling professionals.

b. Will attempt to minimize threat to a student and may choose to 1) inform the student of actions to be taken, 2) involve the student in a three-way communication with parents/guardians when breaching confidentiality or 3) allow the student to have input as to how and to whom the breach will be made.

A.8. Student Records

The professional school counselor:

a. Maintains and secures records necessary for rendering professional services to the student as required by laws, regulations, institutional procedures and confidentiality guidelines.

b. Keeps sole-possession records separate from students' educational records in keeping with state laws.

c. Recognizes the limits of sole-possession records and understands these records are a memory aid for the creator and in absence of privilege communication may be subpoenaed and may become educational records when they 1) are shared with others in verbal or written form, 2) include information other than professional opinion or personal observations and/or 3) are made accessible to others.

d. Establishes a reasonable timeline for purging sole-possession records or case notes. Suggested guidelines include shredding sole possession records when the student transitions to the next level, transfers to another school or graduates. Careful discretion and deliberation should be applied before destroying sole-possession records that may be needed by a court of law such as notes on child abuse, suicide, sexual harassment or violence.

A.9. Evaluation, Assessment and Interpretation

The professional school counselor:

a. Adheres to all professional standards regarding selecting, administering and interpreting assessment measures and only utilizes assessment measures that are within the scope of practice for school counselors.

- b. Seeks specialized training regarding the use of electronically based testing programs in administering, scoring and interpreting that may differ from that required in more traditional assessments.
- c. Considers confidentiality issues when utilizing evaluative or assessment instruments and electronically based programs.
- d. Provides interpretation of the nature, purposes, results and potential impact of assessment/evaluation measures in language the student(s) can understand.
- e. Monitors the use of assessment results and interpretations, and takes reasonable steps to prevent others from misusing the information.
- f. Uses caution when utilizing assessment techniques, making evaluations and interpreting the performance of populations not represented in the norm group on which an instrument is standardized.
- g. Assesses the effectiveness of his/her program in having an impact on students' academic, career and personal/social development through accountability measures especially examining efforts to close achievement, opportunity and attainment gaps.

A.10. Technology

The professional school counselor:

- a. Promotes the benefits of and clarifies the limitations of various appropriate technological applications. The counselor promotes technological applications (1) that are appropriate for the student's individual needs, (2) that the student understands how to use and (3) for which follow-up counseling assistance is provided.
- b. Advocates for equal access to technology for all students, especially those historically underserved.
- c. Takes appropriate and reasonable measures for maintaining confidentiality of student information and educational records stored or transmitted over electronic media including although not limited to fax, electronic mail and instant messaging.
- d. While working with students on a computer or similar technology, takes reasonable and appropriate measures to protect students from objectionable and/or harmful online material.
- e. Who is engaged in the delivery of services involving technologies such as the telephone, videoconferencing and the Internet takes responsible steps to protect students and others from harm.

A.11. Student Peer Support Program

The professional school counselor:

Has unique responsibilities when working with student-assistance programs. The school counselor is responsible for the welfare of students participating in peer-to-peer programs under his/her direction.

B. Responsibilities to Parents/Guardians

B.1. Parent Rights and Responsibilities

The professional school counselor:

- a. Respects the rights and responsibilities of parents/guardians for their children and endeavors to establish, as appropriate, a collaborative relationship with parents/guardians to facilitate the student's maximum development.
- b. Adheres to laws, local guidelines and ethical standards of practice when assisting parents/guardians experiencing family difficulties that interfere with the student's effectiveness and welfare.
- c. Respects the confidentiality of parents/guardians.
- d. Is sensitive to diversity among families and recognizes that all parents/guardians, custodial and noncustodial, are vested with certain rights and responsibilities for the welfare of their children by virtue of their role and according to law.

B.2. Parents/Guardians and Confidentiality

The professional school counselor:

- a. Informs parents/guardians of the counselor's role with emphasis on the confidential nature of the counseling relationship between the counselor and student.
- b. Recognizes that working with minors in a school setting may require counselors to collaborate with students' parents/guardians.
- c. Provides parents/guardians with accurate, comprehensive and relevant information in an objective and caring manner, as is appropriate and consistent with ethical responsibilities to the student.
- d. Makes reasonable efforts to honor the wishes of parents/guardians concerning information regarding the student, and in cases of divorce or separation exercises a good-faith effort to keep both parents informed with regard to critical information with the exception of a court order.

C. Responsibilities to Colleagues and Professional Associates

C.1. Professional Relationships

The professional school counselor:

- a. Establishes and maintains professional relationships with faculty, staff and administration to facilitate an optimum counseling program.
- b. Treats colleagues with professional respect, courtesy and fairness. The qualifications, views and findings of colleagues are represented to accurately reflect the image of competent professionals.
- c. Is aware of and utilizes related professionals, organizations and other resources to whom the student may be referred.

C.2. Sharing Information with Other Professionals

The professional school counselor:

- a. Promotes awareness and adherence to appropriate guidelines regarding confidentiality, the distinction between public and private information and staff consultation.
- b. Provides professional personnel with accurate, objective, concise and meaningful data necessary to adequately evaluate, counsel and assist the student.
- c. If a student is receiving services from another counselor or other mental health professional, the counselor, with student and/or parent/guardian consent, will inform the other professional and develop clear agreements to avoid confusion and conflict for the student.
- d. Is knowledgeable about release of information and parental rights in sharing information.

D. Responsibilities to the School and Community

D.1. Responsibilities to the School

The professional school counselor:

- a. Supports and protects the educational program against any infringement not in students' best interest.
- b. Informs appropriate officials in accordance with school policy of conditions that may be potentially disruptive or damaging to the school's mission, personnel and property while honoring the confidentiality between the student and counselor.
- c. Is knowledgeable and supportive of the school's mission and connects his/her program to the school's mission.
- d. Delineates and promotes the counselor's role and function in meeting the needs of those served. Counselors will notify appropriate officials of conditions that may limit or curtail their effectiveness in providing programs and services.
- e. Accepts employment only for positions for which he/she is qualified by education, training, supervised experience, state and national professional credentials and appropriate professional experience.
- f. Advocates that administrators hire only qualified and competent individuals for professional counseling positions.
- g. Assists in developing: (1) curricular and environmental conditions appropriate for the school and community, (2) educational procedures and programs to meet students' developmental needs and (3) a systematic evaluation process for comprehensive, developmental, standards-based school counseling programs, services and personnel. The counselor is guided by the findings of the evaluation data in planning programs and services.

D.2. Responsibility to the Community

The professional school counselor:

a. Collaborates with agencies, organizations and individuals in the community in the best interest of students and without regard to personal reward or remuneration.

b. Extends his/her influence and opportunity to deliver a comprehensive school counseling program to all students by collaborating with community resources for student success.

E. Responsibilities to Self

E.1. Professional Competence

The professional school counselor:

a. Functions within the boundaries of individual professional competence and accepts responsibility for the consequences of his/her actions.

b. Monitors personal well-being and effectiveness and does not participate in any activity that may lead to inadequate professional services or harm to a student.

c. Strives through personal initiative to maintain professional competence including technological literacy and to keep abreast of professional information. Professional and personal growth are ongoing throughout the counselor's career.

E.2. Diversity

The professional school counselor:

a. Affirms the diversity of students, staff and families.

b. Expands and develops awareness of his/her own attitudes and beliefs affecting cultural values and biases and strives to attain cultural competence.

c. Possesses knowledge and understanding about how oppression, racism, discrimination and stereotyping affects her/him personally and professionally.

d. Acquires educational, consultation and training experiences to improve awareness, knowledge, skills and effectiveness in working with diverse populations: ethnic/racial status, age, economic status, special needs, ESL or ELL, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity/expression, family type, religious/spiritual identity and appearance.

F. Responsibilities to the Profession

F.1. Professionalism

The professional school counselor:

a. Accepts the policies and procedures for handling ethical violations as a result of maintaining membership in the American School Counselor Association.

b. Conducts herself/himself in such a manner as to advance individual ethical practice and the profession.

- c. Conducts appropriate research and report findings in a manner consistent with acceptable educational and psychological research practices. The counselor advocates for the protection of the individual student's identity when using data for research or program planning.
- d. Adheres to ethical standards of the profession, other official policy statements, such as ASCA's position statements, role statement and the ASCA National Model, and relevant statutes established by federal, state and local governments, and when these are in conflict works responsibly for change.
- e. Clearly distinguishes between statements and actions made as a private individual and those made as a representative of the school counseling profession.
- f. Does not use his/her professional position to recruit or gain clients, consultees for his/her private practice or to seek and receive unjustified personal gains, unfair advantage, inappropriate relationships or unearned goods or services.

F.2. Contribution to the Profession

The professional school counselor:

- a. Actively participates in local, state and national associations fostering the development and improvement of school counseling.
- b. Contributes to the development of the profession through the sharing of skills, ideas and expertise with colleagues.
- c. Provides support and mentoring to novice professionals.

G. Maintenance of Standards

Ethical behavior among professional school counselors, association members and nonmembers, is expected at all times. When there exists serious doubt as to the ethical behavior of colleagues or if counselors are forced to work in situations or abide by policies that do not reflect the standards as outlined in these Ethical Standards for School Counselors, the counselor is obligated to take appropriate action to rectify the condition. The following procedure may serve as a guide:

1. The counselor should consult confidentially with a professional colleague to discuss the nature of a complaint to see if the professional colleague views the situation as an ethical violation.
2. When feasible, the counselor should directly approach the colleague whose behavior is in question to discuss the complaint and seek resolution.
3. If resolution is not forthcoming at the personal level, the counselor shall utilize the channels established within the school, school district, the state school counseling association and ASCA's Ethics Committee.
4. If the matter still remains unresolved, referral for review and appropriate action should be made to the Ethics Committees in the following sequence:
 - state school counselor association
 - American School Counselor Association

5. The ASCA Ethics Committee is responsible for:

- educating and consulting with the membership regarding ethical standards
- periodically reviewing and recommending changes in code
- receiving and processing questions to clarify the application of such standards; Questions must be submitted in writing to the ASCA Ethics chair.
- handling complaints of alleged violations of the ethical standards. At the national level, complaints should be submitted in writing to the ASCA Ethics Committee, c/o the Executive Director, American School Counselor Association, 1101 King St., Suite 625, Alexandria, VA 22314.

APPENDIX F

Ashton & Webb Survey

- 2. I am very satisfied with teaching as my occupation.
 - 3. I am more satisfied than not with teaching as my occupation.
 - 4. I am equally satisfied and dissatisfied—I guess I'm in the middle.
 - 5. I am more dissatisfied than satisfied with teaching as my occupation.
 - 6. I am very dissatisfied with teaching as my occupation.
 - 7. I am extremely dissatisfied with teaching as my occupation.
30. Assume that a circle divided into eight sections represents your total life interests. How many of the eight sections would you say "belong" to your work as a teacher? _____
31. Some teachers seem to emphasize the importance of warmth and closeness to students while others seem to stress the importance of the teacher's getting students to work effectively. Which of the two do you consider more important? (circle one)
1. Warmth and closeness
 2. Getting work done
32. If you could choose your students in the coming year, which of the following would you select? (circle one)
1. A group of students whose emotional needs are a challenge to the teacher.
 2. A group of nice kids from average homes who are respectful and hard working.
 3. A group of creative and intellectually demanding students calling for special effort.
 4. A group of underprivileged children from difficult homes for whom school can be a major opportunity.
 5. Children of limited ability who need unusual patience and sympathy—sometimes they're called "slow learners."
- Which would be your second choice? _____
33. Do you feel you work harder, about the same, or a little less than most teachers? (circle one)
- 1 Harder
 - 2 About the same
 - 3 A little less
34. In your teaching situation, how much freedom do you feel you have to do what you think is best? (circle number)
- 1
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5
 - 6
 - 7
- Complete freedom
35. When my students fail to learn a lesson that I have taught, their failure is probably due to _____
- All of us have certain things about our own role performance which we think are important. There are 10 numbered blanks on the page below. In the blanks, please write 10 verbs or short descriptive phrases, each referring to the simple statement, "As a middle school teacher, I do the following things."
- Answer as if you're giving the answers to yourself, not to somebody else. Write the answers in the order that they occur to you. We are interested in both positive and negative aspects. Don't worry about logic but try to be as clear as possible. Write each descriptive word or phrase as rapidly as possible. Your first impressions are good enough.

- 4. 31 to 35
 - 5. 36 to 40
 - 6. 41 to 50
 - 7. 51 or above
 - 1. Male
 - 2. Female
 - 1. Elementary
 - 2. Secondary
 - 3. Other _____ (specify)
14. Subject taught: _____
- Professional training beyond the bachelor's degree? (circle one)
1. No.
 2. Yes. If yes, please describe degree and give date degrees(s) conferred.
15. _____
16. _____ Degree _____ Date _____
17. _____ Degree _____ Date _____
19. Professional organizations to which you belong?
20. Subscriptions to educational literature you are presently receiving.
21. I would be willing to have an observer visit my classes once a week for five weeks—for which I would receive a stipend of \$25.
Yes _____ No _____
22. I would be interested in participating in a summer workshop designed to discover ways to improve middle school teaching (for Teacher Center credit).
Yes _____ No _____
23. I would be interested in serving as a teacher consultant to your project from time to time.
Yes _____ No _____
24. When it comes right down to it, a teacher really can't do much because most of a student's motivation and performance depends on his or her home environment. (circle one)
- 1 Strongly agree
 - 2 Agree
 - 3 Neither agree nor disagree
 - 4 Disagree
 - 5 Strongly disagree
25. If I really try hard, I can get through to even the most difficult or unmotivated students. (circle one)
- 1 Strongly agree
 - 2 Agree
 - 3 Neither agree nor disagree
 - 4 Disagree
 - 5 Strongly disagree
26. In general how stressful do you find being a middle school teacher?
- 1
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5
- Not at all stressful Mildly stressful Moderately stressful Very stressful Extremely stressful
27. I feel excessive stress as a teacher when _____
28. People have a variety of approaches to dealing with stress. Describe what you do when you feel stress from teaching.
29. Which of these statements comes closest to describing your feelings about teaching.
1. I am extremely satisfied with teaching as my occupation.

Ashton, P., & Webb, R. (1986). *Making a difference: teachers' sense of efficacy and student achievement*. New York: Longman.

APPENDIX G

Barrow et al. Survey

Survey

Instructions:

Please answer the following questions as completely as possible.

1. Are you certified by the state of Missouri as a guidance counselor?
 Yes
 No (Do not complete this survey, please mail back in the enclosed envelope.)

2. What is your current employment?
 Teacher
 Counselor (agency)
 Retired
 Administrator
 Not employed outside of the home
 Other, please specify title and position _____

3. Have you ever sought employment as a guidance counselor?
 Yes, how many times _____, in the state of Missouri _____

4. Have you ever been employed as a guidance counselor?
 Yes
 No

5. Explain why you are **not** currently employed as a school guidance counselor.
 Currently employed in another school position
 Too many school responsibilities
 Not enough salary
 Liability
 Lack of support from administration or staff
 Problems with administration
 No jobs available in my location
 Not safe enough in schools
 My health
 Family problems/family health
 Student problems too severe
 Don't want to do classroom guidance
 Too much paperwork and non-counseling requirements
 Too much hassle to keep certification current
 Other, please specify _____

6. What was your reason for getting certified as a school counselor?
 Prestige/Status
 Degree, which would lead to an increase on salary schedule
 Improve my classroom performance as a teacher
 To get out of classroom
 Would be fun to do
 Future goal
 Personal satisfaction
 Other, please specify _____

7. What factors are necessary for you to work as a school guidance counselor?
 More money
 More prestige
 Job availability in your location
 Incentives for employment of significant other, please specify _____
 Safer schools, please specify _____
 Job satisfaction
 Administrative support
 Other, please specify _____
8. Does the job description for a school counseling position meet your expectations?
 Yes
 No (Please fill in the ones that apply to you.)
 Not enough time for individual/group counseling
 Too much paperwork
 Too much time spent testing
 Too much time spent working with special education students
 Lack of support
 Other, please specify _____
9. If you had to do it again, would you get your master's degree which certified you to be a school counselor?
 Yes
 No
 What school did you attend to obtain your degree? _____
10. Please fill in the following demographic information that best describes you.
 Sex: Male Female
 Age: under 30 30-39 40-49 50-59
 60-69 over 70 retired
- Please mark the region of Missouri in which you are currently living:
 N.W. N.E. S.E. St. Louis K.G.
 S.W. Central West Central East Central
- Number of years since you finished your master's which certified you to be a school counselor:
 1 2 3 4 5
 6-10 11-15 16-20 more than 20
11. Please describe your ideal job if you were to use your master's in counseling? _____

12. Do you wish to receive a summary of this research?
 Yes
 No
13. Other comments? _____

Barrow, R., Wooldridge, S., Buckley-Rohrer, L., & Shaver, A. (2000). Missouri certified school counselors: reasons for not being employed in counseling positions. *The Counseling Interviewer*, 32(4), 18-28.

APPENDIX H

Standards and Criteria for Performance-Based Professional School Counselor Evaluation

Standards and Criteria for Performance-Based Professional School Counselor Evaluation

Standard 1: The professional school counselor implements the Guidance Curriculum Component through the use of effective instructional skills and the careful planning of structured group sessions for all students.

Criterion 1: The professional school counselor teaches guidance units effectively.

Criterion 2: The professional school counselor encourages staff involvement to ensure the effective implementation of the guidance curriculum.

Standard 2: The professional school counselor implements the Individual Planning Component by guiding individuals and groups of students and their parents through the development of educational and career plans.

Criterion 3: The professional school counselor, in collaboration with parents, helps students establish goals and develop and use planning skills.

Criterion 4: The professional school counselor demonstrates accurate and appropriate interpretation of assessment data and the presentation of relevant, unbiased information.

Standard 3: The professional school counselor implements the Responsive Services Component through the effective use of individual and small group counseling, consultation, and referral skills.

Criterion 5: The professional school counselor counsels individual students and small groups of students with identified needs/concerns.

Criterion 6: The professional school counselor consults effectively with parents, teachers, administrators and other relevant individuals.

Criterion 7: The professional school counselor implements an effective referral process in collaboration with parents, administrators, teachers, and other school personnel.

Standard 4: The professional school counselor implements the System Support Component through effective guidance program management and support for other educational programs.

Criterion 8: The professional school counselor provides a comprehensive and balanced guidance program in collaboration with school staff.

Criterion 9: The professional school counselor provides support for other school programs.

Standard 5: The professional school counselor uses professional communication and interaction with the school community.

Criterion 10: The professional school counselor demonstrates positive interpersonal relations with students.

Criterion 11: The professional school counselor demonstrates positive interpersonal relations with educational staff.

Criterion 12: The professional school counselor demonstrates positive interpersonal relations with parents/patrons.

Standard 6: The professional school counselor fulfills professional responsibilities.

Criterion 13: The professional school counselor demonstrates a commitment to ongoing professional growth.

Criterion 14: The professional school counselor possesses professional and responsible work habits.

Criterion 15: The professional school counselor follows the profession's ethical and legal standards and guidelines, as well as promotes cultural diversity and inclusivity in school policy and interpersonal relationships.

Professional School Counselor Evaluation Criteria with Descriptors

Note: The descriptors provided are simply examples of student and counselor behaviors that may be used to document criteria. The descriptors provided are not intended to be an inclusive list. The observation and/or documentation of each criterion will vary based on the context.

Standard 1: The professional school counselor implements the Guidance Curriculum Component through the use of effective instructional skills and the careful planning of structured group sessions for all students

Criterion 1: The professional school counselor teaches guidance units effectively.

The professional school counselor:

1. Organizes units for student mastery based on student needs.
2. Uses effective instructional strategies.
3. Establishes an environment conducive for student learning through the use of effective classroom management techniques.
4. Other...

Criterion 2: The professional school counselor encourages staff involvement to ensure the effective implementation of the guidance curriculum.

The professional school counselor:

1. Collaborates with or assists teachers in developing and/or teaching guidance units effectively.
2. Serves as a resource regarding guidance materials appropriate to the guidance units being taught.
3. Provides in-service training for teachers on guidance-related subject matter and guidance instruction methodology.
4. Other...

Standard 2: The professional school counselor implements the Individual Planning Component by guiding individuals and groups of students and their parents through the development of educational and career plans.

Criterion 3: The professional school counselor, in collaboration with parents, helps students establish goals and develop and use planning skills.

The professional school counselor:

1. Assists students in determining their abilities, achievements, interests, and goals.
2. Encourages teachers, other professionals, and parents to participate in student educational and career planning.
3. Guides students to utilize assessment results in their educational and career plans.
4. Other...

Criterion 4: The professional school counselor demonstrates accurate and appropriate interpretation of assessment data and the presentation of relevant, unbiased information.

The professional school counselor:

1. Strives to guard against over interpretation or other inappropriate use of assessment data.
2. Attends to the confidential and private nature of individual assessment data.
3. Understands/applies the basic statistical concepts essential in the use of assessment instruments and data.
4. Understands/applies basic concepts and principles of measurement and evaluation.
5. Presents information in a clear and concise manner.
6. Organizes and makes educational and career information available.
7. Helps students and their parents become aware of the range of educational opportunities available.
8. Other...

Standard 3: The professional school counselor implements the Responsive Services Component through the effective use of individual and small group counseling, consultation, and referral skills.

Criterion 5: The professional school counselor counsels individual students and small groups of students with identified needs/concerns.

The professional school counselor:

1. Informs students, parents, teachers, and administrators about the process that can be used to refer students for individual or small group counseling.
2. Provides individual counseling and small group counseling using accepted theories and techniques appropriate for school counseling in a global society.
3. Demonstrates the use of developmentally appropriate small group and individual techniques that are relevant to the topic and to the students' needs and concerns.
4. Assists students in establishing concrete, behavioral plans aimed at problem resolution.
5. Other...

Criterion 6: The professional school counselor consults effectively with parents, teachers, administrators and other relevant individuals.

The professional school counselor:

1. Uses an effective consultation model and appropriate procedures in consulting with individuals and groups.
 - a. Interprets information and ideas effectively.
 - b. Gathers information as needed to consult effectively and efficiently.
 - c. Understands consultee's responsibility and goals.
 - d. Establishes credibility by suggesting a variety of options, alternatives, resources, or strategies.

- e. Is appreciative of ideas expressed by others.
- 2. Coordinates the development and implementation of the consultee's plan of action.
 - a. Encourages input from consultee.
 - b. Facilitates communication promoting a spirit of compromise and cooperation.
- 3. Other...

Criterion 7: The professional school counselor implements an effective referral process in collaboration with parents, administrators, teachers, and other school personnel.

The professional school counselor:

- 1. Understands and articulates the rationale and criteria for the referral process.
- 2. Develops and maintains a current list of appropriate and effective referral sources.
- 3. Determines the need for, and makes referrals when necessary.
- 4. Assists students and their parents during and after the referral process.
- 5. Keeps teachers informed about the referral process as appropriate.
- 6. Participates in the development of follow-up activities for students.
- 7. Other...

Standard 4: The professional school counselor implements the System Support Component through effective guidance program management and support for other educational programs.

Criterion 8: The professional school counselor provides a comprehensive and balanced guidance program in collaboration with school staff.

The professional school counselor:

- 1. Provides comprehensive guidance program activities consistent with identified student needs.
 - a. Conducts formal and informal needs assessments to determine needs and priorities as perceived by students.
 - b. Follows priorities established in the comprehensive guidance program framework.
- 2. Uses sound organizational skills.
 - a. Sets timelines and follows them.
 - b. Operates from a program calendar.
- 3. Uses resources effectively.
- 4. Establishes and carries out an effective comprehensive guidance program evaluation.
 - a. Evaluates effectiveness of guidance activities.
 - b. Uses results of evaluation to improve guidance program.
- 5. Explains the philosophy, priorities, and practices of the comprehensive guidance program effectively and articulately to school staff, parents, and the community.
- 6. Other...

Criterion 9: The professional school counselor provides support for other school programs.

The professional school counselor:

1. Serves on building and district committees as appropriate.
2. Works cooperatively with other school personnel in the best interest of students and for the betterment of the district.
3. Carries out "fair share responsibilities" as appropriate.
4. Other...

Standard 5: The professional school counselor uses professional communication and interaction with the school community.

Criterion 10: The professional school counselor demonstrates positive interpersonal relations with students.

The professional school counselor:

1. Promotes positive self-image in students.
2. Provides a climate which opens up communication with students.
3. Interacts with students in a mutually respectful and friendly manner.
4. Makes an effort to know students as individuals.
5. Is available to all students.
6. Uses discretion in handling confidential information and difficult situations.
7. Other...

Criterion 11: The professional school counselor demonstrates positive interpersonal relations with educational staff.

The professional school counselor:

1. Works cooperatively with colleagues in planning guidance activities.
2. Shares ideas, materials, and methods with other staff members.
3. Works well with support staff.
4. Works cooperatively with the schools' administration to implement policies and regulations for which the school is responsible.
5. Informs administrators and/or appropriate school personnel of school-related matters.
6. Other...

Criterion 12: The professional school counselor demonstrates positive interpersonal relations with parents/patrons.

The professional school counselor:

1. Cooperates with parents in the best interest of the student.
2. Provides a climate which opens up communication with parents.
3. Handles expressions of conflict in a constructive manner.

4. Promotes patron involvement with the school.
5. Initiates communication with parents as appropriate.
6. Other...

Standard 6: The professional school counselor fulfills professional responsibilities.

Criterion 13: The professional school counselor demonstrates a commitment to ongoing professional growth.

The professional school counselor:

1. Participates in professional activities such as membership and involvement in professional organizations, coursework, workshops, and conferences.
2. Seeks opportunities to learn from colleagues, students, parents, and community members.
3. Keeps abreast of developments in the counseling profession including the use of technology.
4. Other...

Criterion 14: The professional school counselor possesses professional and responsible work habits.

The professional school counselor:

1. Carries out guidance responsibilities promptly and accurately in accordance with established job description.
2. Uses available technology as a management and counseling tool.
3. Other...

Criterion 15: The professional school counselor follows the profession's ethical and legal standards and guidelines, as well as promotes cultural diversity and inclusivity in school policy and interpersonal relationships.

The professional school counselor:

1. Observes ethical standards of the American School Counselor Association and the American Counseling Association.
2. Adheres to district policies and legal guidelines.
3. Does not reveal confidential information inappropriately.
4. Does not impose personal value judgements on students, their families or on school staff.
5. Promotes equity with respect to gender, ethnicity, or the ability of students.
6. Promotes cultural diversity and inclusivity in school policy and interpersonal relationships.
7. Other...

APPENDIX I

**School Counselor Survey
University of Missouri – Columbia**

Please respond to each question below. The survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Your responses will help inform practice for School Counselors in Missouri. Return the completed survey in the enclosed postage-paid envelope by April 27, 2009.

1. Are you employed as a School Counselor?

_____ YES Please indicate number of years employed as a school counselor: _____
_____ NO Are you currently employed? _____ YES _____ NO
Job title: _____

2. If you are NOT employed as a School Counselor, please indicate reasons below. If you ARE employed as a School Counselor, please skip to question 3.

Please indicate why you are NOT employed as a school counselor. Check all that apply.

- _____ Currently employed in another school position
- _____ Too many school responsibilities
- _____ Not enough salary
- _____ Liability
- _____ Lack of support from administration or staff
- _____ Problems with administration
- _____ No jobs available in my location
- _____ Not safe enough in schools
- _____ My health
- _____ Family problems/family health/family demands
- _____ Student problems too severe
- _____ Do not want to do classroom guidance
- _____ Too much paperwork and non-counseling requirements
- _____ Too much hassle to keep certification current
- _____ Have been interviewing for a position, but have not been hired
- _____ Other, please specify _____

3. Please indicate your reason(s) for getting your Master's degree in school counseling. Check all that apply.

- _____ **Prestige/Status**
- _____ **Required to upgrade teaching certificate**
- _____ **Increase on salary schedule**
- _____ **Improve my classroom performance as a teacher**
- _____ **To get out of the classroom**
- _____ **Would be fun to do**
- _____ **Future goals**
- _____ **Personal satisfaction**
- _____ **Other, please specify _____**

For questions #4-21, please circle your responses using the rating system below of 1-5. How important would it be for you to receive professional development in each area listed below?

1	2	3	4	5
NOT	LOW	AVERAGE	ABOVE AVERAGE	HIGH
IMPORTANT	IMPORTANCE	IMPORTANCE	IMPORTANCE	IMPORTANCE

4. Understanding student’s exceptional abilities and learning strategies for differentiated interventions.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

5. Learning strategies for educating students, colleagues, and others about diversity and its impact on learning, growth, and family and community relationships.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

6. Interpreting assessments typically used in comprehensive guidance programs to assess academic, career, and personal/social development of all students.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

7. Practice working with career assessment instruments and techniques to assist all students in understanding their abilities and career interests.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

8. Learning strategies for applying a school, family, and community systems perspective to the counseling process.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

9. Learning ways to effectively plan, manage, and evaluate group processes – including group counselor orientations.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

10. Understanding how to utilize facilities, resources, budget, and staffing patterns necessary to ensure full implementation of a comprehensive guidance program.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

11. Learning collaboration techniques with teachers and other school personnel in the delivery and full implementation of the guidance curriculum through alignment of guidance grade-level expectations with grade-level expectations of other programs.

1 2 3 4 5

12. Practice using a wide variety of tools, including technology, to assist all students in developing personal plans of study in collaboration with parents, guardians, and other school personnel.

1 2 3 4 5

13. Studying team leadership and collaboration models and the role of the counselor before, during, and after a crisis.

1 2 3 4 5

14. Learn how to evaluate, monitor, and improve comprehensive guidance programs, informed by data, using the formula Program + Personnel = Results.

1 2 3 4 5

15. Learn how to distinguish between non-guidance and fair-share responsibilities and how to advocate for counselors.

1 2 3 4 5

16. Learn about technology available for the delivery of counseling activities and/or the management and evaluation of a comprehensive guidance program.

1 2 3 4 5

17. Learn consultation strategies to coordinate resources and the efforts of school staff to promote school-home relationships and family involvement, and to involve public and private agencies in students' academic, career, and personal/social development.

1 2 3 4 5

18. Learn about ethical decision-making models to recognize and resolve complex ethical dilemmas in school counseling.

1 2 3 4 5

19. Learn about updates and changes in local, state, and federal policies pertaining to the practice of school counseling and where to find legal resources and professional development to guide practice.

1 2 3 4 5

20. Learn how to use reflection, consultation, supervision, and feedback from others to develop and implement a professional development plan for continued growth.

1 2 3 4 5

21. Learn and practice self-care strategies.

1 2 3 4 5

22. Did you have an official mentor (not informal, but assigned by your district) for your first year or two as a new School Counselor?

_____ YES _____ NO, I did not have an *official* counseling mentor.
 _____ 1 YEAR
 _____ 2 YEARS

If yes, was a mentor helpful to you professionally? _____ YES _____ NO
If no, do you believe you would have benefited professionally by having a mentor?
 _____ YES _____ NO _____ UNCERTAIN

23. Does the job of a School Counselor meet your expectations?

_____ YES _____ NO (*Please indicate any that apply to you.*)
 _____ Not enough time for individual/group counseling
 _____ Too much paperwork
 _____ Too much time spent testing
 _____ Too much time spent changing schedules
 _____ Too much time spent working with special education students
 _____ Lack of department, administrative, or teacher support
 _____ Counselor/student ratio
 _____ Dealing with parents
 _____ Unclear job description or expectations
 _____ Other, please specify _____

24. When it comes right down to it, a School Counselor really can't do much because most of a student's motivation and performance depends on his or her home environment. (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5
 STRONGLY AGREE NEITHER AGREE DISAGREE STRONGLY
 AGREE NOR DISAGREE DISAGREE DISAGREE

25. If I try really hard, I can get through to even the most difficult or unmotivated students. (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5
 STRONGLY AGREE NEITHER AGREE DISAGREE STRONGLY
 AGREE NOR DISAGREE DISAGREE DISAGREE

26. In general, how stressful do you find being a School Counselor? (circle one)

1	2	3	4	5
NOT AT ALL	MILDLY	MODERATELY	VERY	EXTREMELY
STRESSFUL	STRESSFUL	STRESSFUL	STRESSFUL	STRESSFUL

27. Which one of the following statements comes closest to describing your degree of satisfaction regarding counseling as your occupation?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
EXTREMELY	VERY	MORE SATISFIED	EQUALLY	MORE DISSATISFIED	VERY	EXTREMELY
SATISFIED	SATISFIED	THAN NOT	SATISFIED	THAN SATISFIED	DISSATISFIED	DISSATISFIED

28. Does your district offer professional development opportunities designed specifically for counselors?

YES NO

29. Does your district utilize the Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Program?

YES NO

30. Your gender is:

MALE FEMALE

31. Your age group is:

under 30 30-39 40-49 50-59 60 or older

32. Year in which you earned your Master's in Counseling:

2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008

Other please specify: _____

33. Do you have a Missouri (or other state) teaching certificate?

YES NO

Subject area: _____

Level: Elementary Middle High School Other

Indicate state *if other than Missouri*: _____

34. Do you have certified teaching experience?

YES NO

Number of Years

Thank you for taking the time to complete this important survey regarding School Counselors. Please return the completed survey in the postage-paid envelope provided by April 27, 2009. If you wish to receive a summary of the results, please indicate your contact information below. Your information will be detached from the questionnaire so that your responses may remain confidential.

Name: _____

Email address: _____

Address: _____

City, State, & Zip code: _____

APPENDIX J

Letter to Participants

Dear Colleague,

The purpose of this letter is to ask for your participation in a study examining the professional development needs of **School Counselors** in the state of Missouri. My name is Laura Curran and I am a School Counselor and Secondary Guidance Curriculum Coordinator in the Fort Zumwalt School District. I am currently a doctoral candidate at the University of Missouri-Columbia working in cooperation with my advisor Dr. Peggy Placier.

It is my hope that this study will inform practice in school districts, counselor preparation programs, regional professional development centers, and professional organizations regarding the current needs of our newest School Counselors.

As a potential respondent, please be informed of the following:

- Your participation is entirely voluntary.
- Your responses, participation, or non-participation will not be used in any evaluative manner.
- You may choose not to complete the survey for any reason whatsoever.
- If you begin the survey and decide you wish to end your participation, you may do so at any time.
- You may also refuse to answer any questions that may be uncomfortable for you.
- Your responses will not be used unless you give your permission by returning the survey.
- Upon receipt of the completed surveys, all identifying information such as addresses will be deleted and destroyed to ensure that all identities are anonymous.
- Each survey is coded with a number in the upper left hand corner. The code is for identification purposes only and helps eliminate a second mailing to you once you complete and return the survey.

If you have questions about your participation in this study, please feel free to contact me at (314) 973-3921 or contact Dr. Peggy Placier at the University of Missouri – Columbia at (573) 882-9643, or the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Missouri – Columbia at (573) 882-9585.

Enclosed you will find a five-page survey and contact information sheet along with a postage-paid envelope for its return. Please complete the survey and return to me for data analysis by April 27, 2009.

Thank you in advance for your willingness to participate in this important study of School Counselors.

Sincerely,
Laura J. Curran
314 Pioneer Ridge Drive
Wentzville, Missouri 63385
(314) 973-3921

APPENDIX K

Standards & Criteria for Performance-Based School Counselor Evaluation – Six Standards

- Standard 1: Guidance Curriculum Component
- Standard 2: Individual Planning Component
- Standard 3: Responsive Services Component
- Standard 4: System Support Component
- Standard 5: Professional Communication Component
- Standard 6: Professional Responsibilities Component

Survey Item	Standard	MoStep Category
#4 Strategies for differentiated interventions	1	Human Growth & Development
#5 Diversity strategies	1	Social & Cultural Diversity
#6 Student assessments	2	Assessment
#7 Career assessment	2	Career Planning & Development
#8 School, family, & community systems perspective	3	Helping Relationships
#9 Plan, manage, & evaluate group processes	3	Group Work
#10 Utilize facilities, resource, budget, staffing	4	Structural Components of a CGP
#11 Collaboration with school personnel	1	CGP: Guidance Curriculum
#12 Technology to assist all students	2	CGP: Individual Planning
#13 Crisis team leadership & collaboration	3	CGP: Responsive Services
#14 Program + Personnel = Results	4	CGP: System Support
#15 Non-guidance & fair-share responsibilities	6	CGP: System Support
#16 Technology for management & evaluation of a CGP	4	CGP: Technology
#17 Consultation strategies	5	Professional Relationships
#18 Ethical decision-making models	6	Ethical Standards
#19 Local, state, & federal policies pertaining to school counseling	6	Legal Standards
#20 Professional development planning	6	Professional Orientation, Identity, and Well-Being
#21 Self-care strategies	6	Professional Orientation, Identity, and Well-Being

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VITA

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