Taking Accountability to Heart

AZ ACADEMY FOR SCHOOL COUNSELORS
Thursday, June 10, 2004

Christopher Sink
Seattle Pacific University
School of Education
Department of School Counseling and Psychology
Ph: 206-281-2453
E-mail: csink@spu.edu

Where we’re going...

Today we explore together the value of accountability in the school counseling. Recent research showing the impact of comprehensive school counseling programs on achievement is discussed.

What are comprehensive school counseling programs? With an eye to accountability...

A quick review:
• Developmental, systemic, & proactive
• Equitable—serves all students
• Integrated with teaching & learning processes going on in the schools
What are comprehensive school counseling programs? (Continued)

CSCPs have…

- Organized curricula meet developmental competencies in these domains:
  - Academic-Educational
  - Personal-Social
  - Career-Vocational
- Strong accountability component
  - Evaluation of expected outcomes is key

From a program that...
- Focuses on the number of essential activities
- Measures the amount of effort spent
- Attends to the process of doing work
- Works to maintain the existing system


Are We Making Progress?

To a program that...
- Focuses on outcomes & improved results
- Measures impact related to goals
- Attends to goals, objectives, & outcomes
- Changes & adapts to be more responsive


From counselors who...
- Focus on good intentions
- Talk about how hard they work
- Generally feel little need to change their behavior or approach


Are We Making Progress?
ASCA's National Model from Entitlement to Performance

To counselors who...
• Communicate goals & objectives
• Talk about effectiveness
• Focus on accomplishments
• Know their future rests on accomplishments


Key point here
• Outcome research is vital for our profession to enhance its credibility with the public as well as to contribute to educational reform.

Why teachers and counselors are not paid enough.
National Center on Educational Outcomes

Just pie in sky?

- Is there any hard evidence that these comprehensive programs positively affect academic achievement?

Sample studies have shown positive results

  - Dropout prevention program combined with academic tutoring and group counseling can result in improvement in academic achievement, behavior, and self worth.
Sample studies have shown positive results

  - School counseling interventions focusing on cognitive, social, and self-management skills can lead to sizable gains in students’ academic achievement.

Influence of Comprehensive School Counseling Programs on Academic Achievement of Early Elementary Students in Washington State


Key aims

- To see if there were any achievement test score differences between 3rd- and 4th-grade students who were attending schools with a CSCP in place and those in schools without a CSCP.
- To add to the current body of research on CSCPs showing the effectiveness of these programs.

CSCP = comprehensive school counseling programs
Who was in the study?

- Overall,
  - Nearly 10,000 Grade 3 students
  - About 10,250 Grade 4 students
- Representing 150 elementary schools
  - 67 schools with CSCP (9,816 third-graders)
  - 83 schools with no CSCP (10,315 fourth-graders)
- Data collected 2000-2001

What were we looking for?

- Achievement test scores differences in:
  - CSCP vs non-CSCP schools regardless of length of time students attended their schools
  - High-CSCP vs non-CSCP schools regardless of length of time students attended their schools
  - High-CSCP vs non-CSCP schools taking into account length of time in school
- Economic disparities among students were statistically controlled.

What we did

- Interviewed by phone a stratified random sample of school personnel in 150 elementary buildings
- Determined whether school had
  - A certified counselor in the building?
  - A CSCP in place? How long?
- Categorized schools as either CSCP or non-CSCP school
- Students’ data were collected from a state-level database

CSCP = comprehensive school counseling programs
Measures used

- NRT: Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS)—Grade 3
  - Vocabulary, Comprehension, Reading, & Math
- CRT: Washington Assessment of State Learning (WASL)—Grade 4
  - Listening, Reading, Writing, & Math
- The Comprehensive Guidance & Counseling Programs and Student Success in Washington State Elementary Schools Telephone Survey

Washington State Guidelines

- Clarifies the school counseling role
- Updates the existing Washington state model
- Creates a seamless system to meet student needs
- Provides a set of common standards and expectations throughout the state

What we found out...

- Over time children staying in their same school for about 3 to 4 years with a well-established CSCP (3 years) sign. out-performed children in non-CSCPs on
  - ITBS Math, Comprehension, Reading & Vocab. (3rd-graders)
  - WASL Math, Listening, and Reading (4th-graders)
Graphs showing major improvement in achievement test scores for 3rd- and 4th-graders.

### Improvement in 3rd Grade ITBS Comprehension Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year First Enrolled in Building</th>
<th>High CSCP schools</th>
<th>No CSCP schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This Year</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Year Ago</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Year Ago</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Year Ago</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Improvement in 3rd Grade ITBS Math Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year First Enrolled in Building</th>
<th>High CSCP schools</th>
<th>No CSCP schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This Year</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Year Ago</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Year Ago</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Year Ago</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Improvement in 3rd Grade
ITBS Reading Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year First Enrolled in Building</th>
<th>This Year</th>
<th>1 Year Ago</th>
<th>2 Years Ago</th>
<th>3 Years Ago</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Standard Score (ITBS 300-01)</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Model Use
- High CSCP Use
- Low CSCP Use
- No CSCP

Improvement in 3rd Grade
ITBS Vocabulary Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year First Enrolled in Building</th>
<th>This Year</th>
<th>1 Year Ago</th>
<th>2 Years Ago</th>
<th>3 Years Ago</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Standard Score (ITBS 300-01)</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Model Use
- High CSCP Use
- Low CSCP Use
- No CSCP

Improvement in 4th Grade
WASL Math Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year First Enrolled in Building</th>
<th>This Year</th>
<th>1 Year Ago</th>
<th>2 Years Ago</th>
<th>3 Years Ago</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Math Scale Score (WASL 400-01)</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>380</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Model Use
- High CSCP Use
- Low CSCP Use
- No CSCP
AZ SCHOOL COUNSELOR ACADEMY

Improvement in 4th Grade WASL Listening Scores

Improvement in ITBS 4th Grade WASL Reading Scores

What does all this mean to you?

School counselors can make a significant difference in fostering students’ academic development.


C. A. Sink  June 10, 2004  11
General steps to enhance academic achievement?

1. Fully implement and refine your CSCP (align it with ASCA’s National Model)

2. Look at your accountability strategies and make sure they include helping kids achieve

3. Classroom guidance and small groups should target, in part, student academic competencies

4. Document positive impact of classroom guidance lessons and small groups have on student achievement

Specific ideas to enhance academic achievement?

- Develop a “how to succeed in school” guidance curriculum and/or course
  - study skills (e.g., self-assessment, organization, and planning),
  - positive attitudes and behaviors toward school and learning,
  - test-taking strategies,
  - effective writing,
  - homework completion skills.
More specific ideas to foster academic achievement

- Assist other educators with peer tutoring groups for students at risk for school failure.
  - Use peers, cross-age, and adult volunteers as tutors
- Provide relevant educational interventions, workshops, and in-services for parents, teachers, and staff on ways to foster student learning.
  - Examples?

Specific ideas re: academic achievement (continued)

- Conduct new and continuing student orientations emphasizing role of academics
- Assess and work on the school environment so that it contributes to academics
- Focus on cultural impediments to learning
- Upgrade technology

Suggestions (continued)

- Planning and organization
  - Think (what do I want to do? My goal?)
  - Do (begin to do the task)
  - Monitor (is it working? Am I getting what I wanted?)
  - Modify, if need be
  - Verify (am I done?)
Suggestions (continued)

• Good listening skills
• Provide activities to foster
  – Sustained attention
  – Self-monitoring or assessment
  • Logs for homework
  • Notebook organization

Suggestions (continued)

• Focus on students’ cognitive development
  – Help them with generating learning strategies
    • Self-questioning, summarization, outlining
  – Memory strategies
    • Mnemonics
    • Graphic organizers
    • Chunking
    • Decoding skills
    • Teaching vocabulary with visual cues

Visual cues for learning vocabulary

- CIRCLE
- EXPONENT
- FRACTION
Your turn

Discussion questions:

- How does the fact that you need to be accountable for your work sound?
- Is it reasonable to expect school counselors to influence student achievement?
- How might this information influence your work with students and within your program?
Resources


