

# The Importance of State Guidance Leadership for the 21st Century

## Recommendations for Improvement

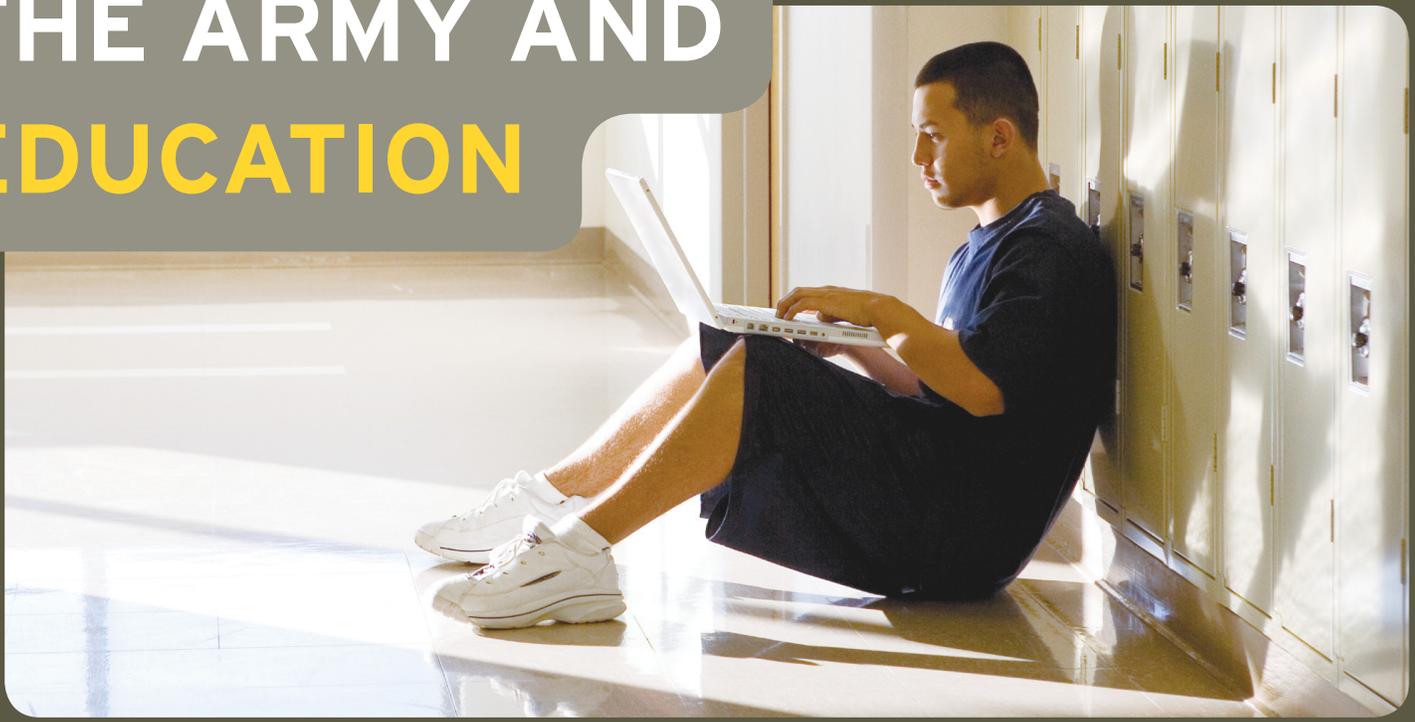
A White Paper

2011



**National Consortium  
of State Guidance Leadership**

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## **National Consortium for State Guidance Leadership Mission Statement**

The Consortium is a coalition of leaders at the state department level who have oversight responsibility for the implementation of comprehensive guidance and counseling programs within the members' respective states or territories. The organization's mission is to support leaders on the state level in their efforts to fully implement comprehensive guidance and counseling programs. Objectives of the Consortium include, but are not limited to:

- Supporting the professional development of state guidance leaders through the Leadership Academy.
- Providing opportunities that enable state leaders to collaborate on and support projects of mutual priority.
- Offering technical assistance to states in developing short- and long-term goals that support the full implementation of comprehensive school guidance and counseling programs.
- Supporting research efforts that provide evidence of guidance and counseling program effects, and disseminating that evidence to education, government, and business entities.
- Collaborating with other organizations and agencies that have common and related goals, including, but not limited to:
  - State Guidance Supervisors
  - American School Counselor Association
  - Association for Career and Technical Education
  - National Career Development Association
  - U.S. Office of Vocational and Adult Education
  - National Center for School Counseling Outcome Research
  - National Center for Transforming School Counseling
  - National Office for School Counselor Advocacy
  - State Counselor Educators
  - United States Military

## Forward

The evidence is clear and available to prove the effects of a comprehensive guidance program in the nation's schools. This white paper demonstrates clearly that when professional counselors deliver guidance and counseling, in a developmental way, students experience many positive outcomes, and their lives are improved. Likewise, successful student guidance programs are directly attributed to strong state and local program leadership, and state and local support.

This paper briefly traces the roots of guidance, and provides a glimpse at what it takes to create and operate effective programs. The paper suggests that if the nation values improved student achievement, school retention, seeks to stop self-abuse, and promote career and life sufficiency, then educational and legislative leaders need to look at the effects of such programs as a powerful solution for educational renewal. Schools with guidance programs function more effectively and deliver a higher achieving student body. Students benefiting from guidance and counseling programs have an informed vision and plan to guide their futures, have self-confidence, take advantage of educational opportunities more often, achieve better grades, stay in school, and are contributors to their communities.

What state guidance leaders call for is a national response and solution to the lack of experienced, trained, and effective counselors in schools. What is needed is a form of a national Counselor Training and Mentoring program to staff public schools, reminiscent of the guidance support programs created in the 1950s under the National Defense Education Act. The institution for such a National Leadership Academy would be both nationwide and regional. The Academy would be led by experienced guidance leaders and peers, teaching the leadership skills needed to be effective at the state and local levels. The content would be structured around national skill standards for counselors, and based upon the reality of what occurs at the state and local levels of departments of education. The National Consortium of State Guidance Leadership has a plan and a passion to achieve this goal, and is looking for partners to make the National Leadership Academy a reality.

The National Guidance Consortium has been operating for more than 28 years, and has the capabilities to work with federal and state agencies to bring about a massive skill renewal for 21st century students.

Harry Drier  
Executive Director

The Importance of  
State Guidance Leadership  
for the 21st Century:  
Recommendations for Improvement

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## **Executive Summary**

### **The Need**

In this, the second decade of the 21st century, the United States and countries around the world continue to undergo substantial changes industrially, occupationally, socially, and economically. These changes are creating real challenges for children and young people. A rapidly changing professional world and labor force in a global economy; violence in homes, schools, and communities; divorce; teenage suicide; substance abuse; and sexual experimentation are just a few examples. These challenges are real, and they are having a dramatic impact on the academic, career, and personal/social development of children and young people.

### **A Response**

Comprehensive guidance and counseling programs are effective in assisting children and young people—along with their parents—in responding to these and similar challenges. More than 20 years of empirical research have documented that when school counselors have time, resources, and the structure of a comprehensive program in which to work, good things happen. Here are just a few examples:

- Guidance interventions improve academic achievement
- Students take more demanding courses
- Students develop and use career plans
- Schools have more positive climates

### **A Key**

A key to the successful development and implementation of effective guidance and counseling programs at the local level is strong state-level leadership, which provides regular ongoing training, resources, and technical support, as well as legislative and policy advocacy at the state level.

### **The Problem**

The presence of experienced, professionally trained, state-level guidance supervisors across the country is perilously low. Too often, states allow long lapses between personnel changes or assign guidance responsibilities to individuals already overwhelmed with numerous other roles. It is the considered opinion of guidance leadership across the country that the future growth and refinement of the comprehensive guidance program movement is seriously threatened by the lack of highly trained guidance professionals at the state level.

### **A Recommendation**

Research has documented the central role guidance and counseling programs play in student achievement, school improvement, and school reform. Practical experience and common knowledge make it clear that a key to successful guidance and counseling programs at the local level is strong state-level leadership. And, since the presence of experienced, professionally trained state-level supervisors across the country is perilously low, it is our recommendation that a National Guidance Leadership Academy be established and funded to prepare state-level guidance leaders for this new millennium.

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## Chapter 1

### *State Guidance Program Leadership: Critical to Achieve Student Improvement Effects*

In a rapidly advancing world, there are many new challenges that affect the roles of state and local guidance leaders, which ultimately affect services for students and parents. International changes further influence the evolution, as well as those on the local level where students live and learn. This creates a greater need for student counseling and guidance programs.

An expanding global economy now demands higher levels of education and varied skills to compete in a new professional climate and labor force. Furthermore, students face violence in their homes, schools, and communities, shifting family structures, teen suicide, substance abuse, social networking, and the ever-increasing influence of technology. These changes are real, and have created a substantial impact on the academic, career, and personal social/development of modern students. In light of these dramatic challenges, it is imperative that all young people are “college and career ready,” prepared to make successful transitions from the K-12 educational system to higher education institutions or the workforce directly, in order to become productive citizens in the world they will inherit.

What knowledge, skills, and attitudes will be required of students for these purposes? The Partnership for 21st Century Skills developed a unified, collective vision for learning known as the Framework for 21st Century Learning (2009). The framework identified “Core Subjects and 21st Century Themes” that form the foundation on which

“Life and Career Skills,” “Learning and Innovation Skills,” and “Information, Media, and Technology Skills” are taught.

Core subjects include:

- English, Reading, or Language Arts
- World Languages
- Arts
- Mathematics
- Economics
- Science
- Geography
- History
- Government and Civics

The themes that are woven into the core subjects include:

- Global Awareness
- Financial, Economic, Business, and Entrepreneurial Literacy
- Civic Literacy
- Health Literacy
- Environmental Literacy

The core subjects and themes are designed to teach skill sets in the following areas:

*Learning and Innovation Skills*

- Creativity and Innovation
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Communication and Collaboration

*Information, Media, and Technology Skills*

- Information Literacy
- Media Literacy
- ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) Literacy

*Life and Career Skills*

- Flexibility and Adaptability
- Initiative and Self-direction
- Social and Cross-cultural Skills
- Productivity and Accountability
- Leadership and Responsibility

Knowledge, skills, and attitudes such as these do not appear suddenly on the day students are ready to leave school. On the contrary, the tools require substantial time and attention from the earliest grades to develop, be assimilated, and used by students.

Comprehensive guidance and counseling programs provide essential support in the development of 21st Century Skills. Fully implemented programs address the academic, career, and personal/social development of all students through a guidance curriculum with clearly identified student competencies and grade-level expectations that align with the Partnership's framework. Comprehensive guidance and counseling programs also assist students in developing rigorous and relevant individualized academic plans that support them in developing a course of study to lead to successful post-secondary experiences. Comprehensive guidance and counseling programs also help address barriers to learning. Many students come to school facing developmental and personal challenges that prevent them from learning the essential knowledge and

skills needed to be successful. Comprehensive guidance and counseling programs provide services that respond to the immediate needs of students and families to help remove these barriers so that students can come to school better prepared to learn and be successful in their classrooms.

Leadership at the state level to support the full implementation of comprehensive guidance and counseling programs in school districts is essential if schools are truly going to move forward in redesigning curricular frameworks that address the new educational standards required by the nation. A strong curriculum that focuses on academic, career, and technical education, along with fully implemented comprehensive guidance and counseling programs can help ensure that all students will be college and career ready, equipped with the essential skills for success in the 21st century.

School counselors have been and are in the forefront of responding to these challenges, working to alter programs to meet students' needs, and using different methods for increased effectiveness. Local counselors' performance is a direct reflection of how they are trained, continually in-serviced, guided with technical assistance, and given new standards, methods of delivery, and evaluation from their state guidance leadership. Their performance is also a reflection of their ability to communicate with other local schools, as well as to learn from best practices, technology training, and specialized events sponsored by state departments of education.

The current status of state guidance leadership has been greatly affected over the past 10 years due to federal and state legislation, the economy, and local school board priorities. There are many states that do not have a single fully trained and

experienced guidance supervisor, while others benefit from a trained individual that has only part-time assignments in the area. At the federal level, there is no longer professional development for new and experienced state guidance leaders. Often, such personnel advance from a local district into the state department with little or no preparation for this unique position.

There currently is a severe shortage of experienced, professionally trained persons who can provide state leadership. There are no national efforts through counselor training academies, workshops, or technical assistance programs to generate a cadre of prepared state guidance leaders. The National Guidance Consortium is willing to provide such services, but resources from the federal and state levels are not available. There were periods since the 1950s where the federal government viewed guidance and counseling for youth as a key solution to national issues, such as military defense, a shortage of engineers, and eventually the period of high investments in Career Education and School-to-Work programs, which included trained staff members. Current legislation no longer holds the same commitment and funding.

What is the role of a state guidance leader driven by the needs of quality programs in schools? The following are but a few:

1. Providing ongoing guidance program and counseling skills for counselors, teachers, and principals.
2. Developing and disseminating state guidance program models and standards through training.
3. Providing special technical assistance to large district student services directors.

4. Developing and monitoring the accreditation standards for guidance programs.
5. Working with educators who train counselors for state certification requirements.
6. Advocating guidance program improvements for new legislation, school boards, and parent groups.
7. Setting the standards and outcomes to measure local program performance.
8. Assisting local schools in measuring the effects of their guidance and counseling programs.

A comprehensive guidance and counseling program—like any other program in education—needs direction and leadership. Seen across the nation at A-level performing schools, a constant associated with their achieved success is a well-performing guidance program, supported by seasoned guidance leaders in sufficient numbers, within the state departments of education.

## Chapter 2

### *State and Federal Legislation: A Key to State and Local Guidance and Counseling Leadership and Program Effectiveness*

A critical task for state-level guidance and counseling leaders is leveraging state and federal funds that enable individuals to carry out their important leadership roles. One of these leadership roles is to foster local full implementation of effective comprehensive guidance and counseling programs as a vital part of a school's total educational program. Other roles include providing professional development for school counselors, advocating for the work of school counselors, providing technical assistance, improving school counselor training standards, and conducting state impact and effects studies.

How important are state and federal legislation and policies in supporting state guidance and counseling leaders who carry out these roles, including fostering the local full implementation of effective guidance and counseling programs? Martin, Carey, and DeCoster (2009) conducted a national survey to investigate the status of guidance and counseling programs in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. They identified nine criteria that they felt influenced the implementation of school guidance and counseling programs, one of which was supportive legislation.

In order for states to meet this criterion, they had to show a history of supportive legislation related to the state guidance and counseling program model (e.g., mandated school counseling programs at the elementary, middle, and high school levels; mandated career development

guidelines at all levels; mandated career plans; and mandated students-per-counselor ratios). (p. 383)

What the investigators found is that 17 states had established guidance and counseling models, 24 states were progressing in establishing a guidance and counseling program model, and 10 states were beginning to develop a model that met the criterion of having legislation that supported state model development. Interestingly, Martin, Carey, and DeCoster (2009) also discovered:

The most common legislation was related to mandated career plans. Fifty-three percent of the participants indicated that their state mandated career plans (or some variation, such as individual learning plans, graduation plans, or 4-year plans). (p. 383)

The investigators also stated that having a written guidance and counseling model without supporting legislation and related policies is likely to be ineffective.

#### *Federal and State Legislation*

At the federal level, the investigators found that career and technical education legislation has been a consistent source of support for state programs over many years. The current version of that legislation is the *Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006* (Pub. L. 109-270). While guidance and counseling programs are not mandated in the act, the legislation can be a source of funding at the state level to provide adequate personnel, staff training, and necessary equipment and materials to local districts. The funding allows state-level guidance leaders the necessary resources for statewide leadership to develop strongly supported school counselors and counselor educators.

In addition to career and technical education legislation at the federal level, another important federal act is the *No Child Left Behind Act* (Pub. L. 107-10). In it, Part D, Subpart 2, Section 5421, titled “Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Programs,” provided grants to local educational agencies to establish or expand elementary and secondary school counseling programs. The legislation required that the programs be comprehensive, addressing the counseling and educational needs of all students. It also specified the use of a developmental, preventive approach to guidance and counseling. Such provisions need to be strengthened when this law is extended or a replacement bill is crafted.

A number of states also have been active in passing legislation or rules for guidance and counseling in the schools. For example, Utah’s State Board of Education passed a rule (R227-462) defining a comprehensive guidance program as well as providing qualification criteria by which to distribute Comprehensive Guidance Funds. The Utah State Board of Education also passed its *Resolution Regarding the Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance Program* on November 9, 2007. The State Board resolved that upon the appropriation of ongoing funding for comprehensive guidance and counseling programs by the Utah State Legislature and Governor in the amount of \$9 million, the State Board of Education shall require that counselor-to-student ratios be reduced to 1:350 in schools (grades 7th-12th) that accept funding for comprehensive guidance and counseling programs. The State Board further resolved that local district and building level policies and practices free school counselors from activities or assignments that lead to a service deficit for students, parents, or guardians.

In another example, the Texas Legislature enacted SB 518, which made Education Code Sections 33.003-33.006 applicable to all school districts (“An Act Relating to Public School Counselor,” 2001). These sections stated that Texas school counselors shall plan, implement, and evaluate developmental guidance and counseling programs. Similarly, in West Virginia, the Board of Education enacted a legislative rule for comprehensive developmental guidance and counseling in 2002. Finally, as a last example, the State of Florida enacted a bill titled *An Act Relating to Career Education* in 2004. In Section 5, Section 1006.025, the Florida bill states each district School Board shall annually submit a district guidance report to the Commissioner of Education, which includes the degree to which a district has adopted or implemented a guidance model program.

Federal and state legislation and policies have had a substantial impact on providing state leadership and local school guidance and counseling program support when used for that purpose. The next step would be legislative and policy provisions where all states are required to provide adequate state Department of Education professional guidance and counseling leaders. To achieve this goal, federal and state legislation must require all states to develop and fully implement comprehensive guidance and counseling programs. Such legislation should also require that all states set standards for school counselor preparation, as well as guidance and counseling program design and implementation guidelines. In addition, such legislation needs to establish sound accountability measures and procedures to assess the impact of guidance and counseling programs on students’ academic, career, and personal/social

development. Finally, such legislation should require ongoing professional development for state and local guidance and counseling staff.

The guidance profession has undisputable evidence that youth who participate in comprehensive guidance and counseling programs perform much better in their personal lives, stay in school longer, and achieve better academically. Therefore, it is imperative that our nation ensures all youth have the opportunity to participate fully in these programs.

### **Reference**

Martin, I., Carey, J., & DeCoster, K. (2009). A national study of the current status of state school counseling models. *Professional School Counseling, 12*, 378-386.

## Chapter 3

### *Business/Guidance Partnerships*

The second decade of the 21st century brings increased demands for schools to do more to prepare students for the workforce and for academic experiences beyond high school. School counselors—acting within the framework of comprehensive guidance and counseling programs—can play an important role in responding to these demands, but they cannot do it alone. Guidance leaders recognize they do not work in isolation.

But in response, we must ask: How do we meet the increasing demands to form effective business/guidance partnerships? These alliances can provide a vehicle by which school counselors and the business community can come together. Through a mutual sharing of resources, these partnerships can strengthen comprehensive guidance and counseling programs in our schools, improve student achievement, and enhance economic growth in our communities.

The overall goal of business/guidance partnerships is to build bridges between the world of business and the world of education, specifically through general and comprehensive guidance and counseling programs. These partnerships can serve four purposes:

- To strengthen and enhance comprehensive guidance and counseling programs in our schools.
- To create a climate of involvement and interaction between businesses and guidance and counseling programs.

- To provide opportunities for students to develop attitudes and skills that enhance their success in the worlds of education and career.
- To create an environment of success for all students.

Collaboration is an essential ingredient in any effective partnership. Nowhere is this more apparent than the partnership of educators, the business community, and the military. Yet, the worlds in which each of these partners function are vastly different. Despite their common goal of workforce and student development, the relationship of these entities has at times been marred by misunderstandings, miscommunications, and myths regarding each other's values and goals. However, an effective partnership between two governmental agencies working together for the purpose of helping schools and students is not impossible. In October 2008, the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) and the U.S. Department of Education brought together a group of national military and education leaders called the Education and Military Collaboration Committee. The purpose of this committee was to improve the military's involvement and understanding of federal career clusters and pathways surrounding career and technology education.

As a byproduct of this committee, South Carolina's Office of Career and Technology Education formulated a state-level version of this national committee in order to enhance its understanding of career options in the military, while improving the collaboration between recruiters and educators. This committee focused on providing to South Carolina military recruiters and educators a forum through which they could explore collaborative approaches to the common goal of student career development, and to facilitate a common understanding of military career pathways as they related to

the 16 federal Career Clusters. The South Carolina committee presented a proposal to the national committee at OVAE, seeking to provide high-quality, professional development in the form of recertification credit for a pilot group of South Carolina educators, focusing on military career pathways. The committee believed this approach could empower South Carolina educators to better assist high school students with their academic and career planning. In a short period of time, this partnership has produced other partnerships, especially at the state level, with employers or groups representing employers. These arrangements have enriched and extended the information and services employers bring to counselors and students.

Businesses are always looking for ways to give back to their communities. However, they need to know who will be their partners, and the priorities of the guidance and counseling leadership. The guidance and counseling community also needs to learn how to more effectively partner. Today there are four national groups representing counselors (the National Career Development Association, the American School Counselor Association, the Guidance Division of ACTE, and the American Counselor Association), and more than 100 state affiliate organizations. None are large enough to tackle alone the great need of training tomorrow's guidance and counseling leaders. The organizations need to come together and combine their expertise and resources.

In the past—especially during the days of the National Defense Education Act in the 1950s—legislation required that the U.S. Department of Education provide leadership to improve school counselor training. The partnership between Congress, the U.S. Department of Education, and university counselor education programs

effectively created an army of trained school counselors and school counselor leaders, which led to outstanding improvements that continue today. But currently, there is no legislative language or resources that give a similar focus and priority to guidance and counseling leadership training for the next generation.

The guidance and counseling community needs to create and/or become partners with employers and organizations if they seek to be effective and informed advisors for parents and youth. We need the private sector to embrace the work of guidance and counseling leaders, and to provide a place at the corporate table for our representatives. We also need state and national organizations to welcome guidance and counseling leadership to their planning meetings. If school counselors and guidance counseling programs are to remain comprehensive, current, and reliable, then the community must partner with business leaders to ensure effective life career planning for our nation's youth.

## Chapter 4

### *Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Programs: Contents and Capabilities*

As the guidance and counseling movement (then called *vocational guidance*) began to unfold in the United States at the turn of the 20th century, teachers—often part-time or with no reduced time during the school day—and administrators were appointed as counselors and given a list of duties to perform. By the 1920s, the guidance and counseling movement had spread across the country. Educational guidance became a priority along with vocational guidance. From the late 1920s to the early 1930s, efforts were made to identify what the activities of guidance and counseling should be, to establish “the standard setup” for guidance and counseling. During this same period of time, personal/social guidance and counseling emerged in schools, as did the services model under the banner of Pupil Personnel. Thus, by the 1930s, the three aspects of guidance and counseling (academic, career, and personal/social) and the services model with the position of counselor had been established. With the aid of federal legislation in the 1940s and 1950s, guidance and counseling in the schools continued to expand and became a part of overall education in the United States.

In the 1960s and 1970s, owing to concerns about the efficacy of the position-services model of guidance and counseling, a program model began to emerge. While not a new concept, the program model has become—during the 1980s, 1990s, and the early years of the 21st century—the standard way of organizing and managing guidance and counseling in schools. The position-services model has since been transformed and incorporated into a developmental, comprehensive program. In 2003, the American

School Counselor Association (ASCA) endorsed the program concept for guidance and counseling by publishing the ASCA National Model.

A comprehensive guidance and counseling program consists of four elements: content, organizational framework, resources, and development, management, and accountability. The *content* element contains knowledge and skills (cast as standards) considered important for students to acquire as a result of their participation in school districts' comprehensive guidance and counseling programs. The *organizational framework* element contains three structural components (definition, rationale, and assumptions), four program components (guidance curriculum, individual student planning, responsive services, and system support), along with a suggested distribution of school counselor time by grade levels across the four program components. The *resources* element consists of the human, financial, and political resources required to fully implement the program. Finally, the *development, management, and accountability* element describes the five transition phases required to fully operationalize a comprehensive guidance and counseling program, along with the management tasks involved, as well as the three types of accountability: program, personnel, and results.

### *Content*

The content of the program identifies student outcomes (cast as standards) considered important by school districts for students to master as a result of their participation in districts' comprehensive guidance and counseling programs. The standards are often organized around areas or domains, such as academic, career, and personal/social.

### *Organizational Framework*

The organizational framework contains structural components and program components. The *structural components* define the guidance program, provide a rationale for it, and list basic assumptions that undergird the program. The *program components* identify the four parts of the delivery system that organize the program's guidance activities and interventions. The program components are guidance curriculum, individual student planning, responsive services, and system support.

The *guidance curriculum* systematically imparts guidance content to all students. *Individual student planning* focuses on the increasing need for all students to work closely with their parents and then with school counselors to plan, monitor, and manage their development. This leads to informed action for their academic, career, and personal/social goals, and to develop personalized plans of study. *Responsive services* react to the immediate needs and concerns of students, whether these needs and concerns involve individual counseling, small group counseling, referral, or consultation with parents, teachers, or other specialists. Finally, *system support* includes activities such as staff development, research, and curriculum development to make sure the comprehensive guidance program operates effectively. System support also includes activities that provide assistance to other programs in a school.

How school counselors use their professional time within the comprehensive guidance program is important. The four program components provide the structure for making decisions about the appropriate allocations of school counselors' time. One criterion that is used is program balance. School counselors' time must be allocated across all program components, but especially the first three. As least 80 percent of a

school counselor's time should be in direct service to students, parents, teachers, and administrators through the program components of guidance curriculum, individual planning, and responsive services. Twenty percent should be devoted to indirect services in system support.

### *Resources*

Human resources for comprehensive guidance programs include: school counselors, teachers, administrators, parents, students, community members, and business and labor personnel. All have key roles to play. While school counselors are the main providers of guidance and counseling services to students—and are the coordinators of the program—the involvement, cooperation, and support of teachers, administrators, parents, community members, and business and labor personnel are just as critical for program achievement. Adequate financial resources are also required if a comprehensive guidance program is to be successful. Financial resources include materials, equipment, and facilities. Finally, the mobilization of political resources in a school district is key to any guidance program. Full endorsement of the guidance program by the Board of Education of a school district as a “district program of studies” is essential, as well as the adoption of a school district policy that highlights the integral and central nature of the district's comprehensive guidance program.

### *Development, Management, and Accountability*

Five transition phases are required to fully implement comprehensive guidance programs. These transition phases are planning, designing, implementing, evaluating, and enhancing. As programs are being implemented following these five transition phases, various management tasks are required to be performed by school counselors

and administrators, including establishing steering and community advisory committees, designing the program framework, allocating professional school counselor time, and developing and using job descriptions to guide the work of school counselors and provide for their evaluation.

For the comprehensive guidance program to be accountable, the following formula is used: Program + Personnel = Results. This means that the program must be in place and functioning fully, and the personnel involved must be working full-time to carry out the program, to produce results in student academic achievement and in important student behaviors that affect academic achievement.

### *Five Basic Premises*

Five basic premises undergird the organization and management of guidance and counseling in schools. These premises are the point of departure for developing, managing, and evaluating comprehensive school guidance and counseling programs.

1. Guidance and counseling is a program. Its characteristics are similar to other programs in education, and includes the following:
  - Student standards
  - Activities and processes to assist students in achieving these standards
  - Professionally certificated personnel
  - Materials and resources
  - Program, personnel, and results evaluation
2. Guidance and counseling programs are developmental and comprehensive.

They are developmental in that guidance and counseling activities are conducted on a regular, planned, and systematic basis to assist students in their academic,

career, and personal/social development. Although immediate and crisis needs of students are to be met, a major focus of a developmental program is to provide all students with experiences to help them grow and develop. Guidance and counseling programs are comprehensive in that a full range of activities and services are provided.

3. Guidance and counseling programs feature a team approach. A comprehensive, developmental program of guidance and counseling is based on the assumption that all members of a school's staff are involved. At the same time, it is understood that professionally certified school counselors are central to the program. School counselors not only provide direct services to students, but also work in consultative and collaborative relations with other members of the guidance team, members of the school staff, parents, and members of the community.
4. Guidance and counseling programs are developed through a systematic process of planning, designing, implementing, evaluating, and enhancing. This process ensures intentional delivery of a program designed to address established priorities.
5. Guidance and counseling programs have established leadership. This ensures accountability for the program and for the quality of the performance of the program staff.

## Chapter 5

### *Evidence Proves Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Programs*

#### *Contribute to Student Success*

More than 40 years of empirical research provides clear and substantial evidence that comprehensive guidance and counseling programs do contribute to overall student success, including student achievement. This conclusion is reached through an analysis of various sources.

Wellman and Moore (1975) reported on a three-year experimental-control study, in which four experimental schools implemented a comprehensive guidance and counseling program, while four control schools did not. The educational achievement of pupils in the experimental schools was better than that of concurrent control and baseline criterion groups. The experimental pupils excelled over the control pupils in 66 percent of all comparisons of educational achievement during the three years, while the controls failed to excel in a single comparison. Furthermore, the superior achievement attained by the experimental pupils during the first year was maintained through the following two years (Wellman & Moore, 1975).

Gerler (1985) analyzed a decade of research on the results of elementary school guidance and counseling program interventions in the affective, behavioral, and interpersonal domain of students' lives, and found that these programs positively affected students' academic achievement. St. Claire (1989) found similar results in her review of the impact of guidance and counseling program interventions at the middle-school level. Evans and Burck (1992) conducted a meta-analysis of 67 studies

concerning the impact of career education interventions (career guidance) on students' academic achievement. The results supported the value of these interventions as contributors to the academic achievement of students. Finally, in a major review of the literature in school guidance, Borders and Drury (1992) found that guidance and counseling program interventions have a substantial impact on students' success in the classroom.

While some student results may appear early in the implementation of a comprehensive guidance program, most occur only after the program has been fully operational for a period of time. In a study conducted in high schools in Missouri, Lapan, Gysbers, and Sun (1997) found that students in high schools with more fully implemented guidance programs were more likely to report that they had earned higher grades, their education was better preparing them for the future, their school provided them with more career and college information, and their school had a more positive climate. In Utah, Nelson and Gardner (1998) found that students in schools with more fully implemented guidance programs rated their overall education as better, took more advanced mathematics and science courses, and had higher scores on every scale of the ACT.

In their review of outcome research in school counseling, Sexton, Whiston, Bleuer, and Walz (1997, p. 125) made the following points:

- Reviews of outcome research in school counseling are generally positive about the effects of school counseling.
- Research results do indicate that individual student planning interventions can have a positive impact on the development of students'

career plans. There is some support for responsive services activities such as social skills training, family support programs, and peer counseling.

- Consultation activities are also found to be an effective school counseling activity.

In this first decade of the 21st century, specifically since the passage of the *No Child Left Behind Act (P.L. 107-110)* in 2001, student academic achievement has become a major concern in schools (McGannon, Carey, & Dimmitt, 2005). Studies conducted in this time period have demonstrated outcomes similar to studies conducted in the 1980s and 1990s. For example, Lapan, Gysbers, and Petroski (2001) found that when 4,868 middle school classroom teachers in Missouri—in 184 small-, medium-, and large-size middle schools—rated guidance programs in their schools as more fully implemented, 22,601 7th graders in these schools reported that they earned higher grades, school was more relevant for them, they had positive relationships with teachers, they were more satisfied with their education, and they felt safer in school. Sink and Stroh (2003)—in a comparison of elementary students (grades 3rd and 4th) enrolled for several years in schools in the state of Washington with well-established comprehensive counseling programs to students enrolled in schools without such programs—found that students enrolled in schools with well-established programs have significantly higher academic achievement test scores on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills—Form M and the Washington Assessment of Student Learning.

In another study in Missouri, Lapan, Gysbers, and Kayson (2007) found that when school counselors in Missouri work in schools that have more fully implemented

guidance programs, they make significant contributions to overall student academic achievement and are involved in important student behaviors that affect academic achievement. In high schools with more fully implemented programs, students had higher 10th grade MAP mathematics scores and higher 10th grade communications arts scores. They were also more likely to attend school, have fewer discipline problems, and receive fewer out-of-school suspensions (Lapan, Gysbers, and Kayson, 2007).

Nelson, Fox, Haslam, and Gardner (2007) conducted the fourth major study of Utah's comprehensive counseling and guidance program. Four major findings were:

- Comprehensive counseling and guidance has fostered more targeted course selection for students and has resulted in more students taking a greater number of higher-level English, science, math, and technology-oriented courses.
- The percentage of students who describe their own program of study as "general" has fallen precipitously in the nine years between evaluations.
- Students in high-implementing comprehensive counseling and guidance schools achieve higher levels of academic achievement and make better decisions about education and career planning than do students in matched lower-implementing schools. The importance of this finding cannot be overstressed. Even more powerful is the fact that this same pattern of results was evident in both the 1997 Utah evaluation and the most recent study reported here.

- These studies show that the comprehensive counseling and guidance program is more effectively implemented with adequate counselor-to-student ratios in Utah's schools, whether urban, suburban, or rural. (p. 2)

A study in Washington state, by Sink, Akos, Turnbull, and Mvududu (2008), which compared middle school students' academic achievement in schools with at least five years of comprehensive school counseling program implementation, versus students in non-program schools, found:

When CSCP versus non-CSCP schools were compared, there were largely nonsignificant mean differences on Grade 6 ITBS and Grade 7 WASL scores. Only Grade 7 WASL math scores showed significant group differences, favoring the non-CSCP students. However, high-CSCP-implementation schools significantly outperformed non-CSCP schools on Grade 6 ITBS language, math and core total scores and on Grade 7 reading and math WASL scores. Additionally, students in the high-SCSP-implementation schools tended to perform better than their peers in the low-CSCP-implementation group. (pp. 49-50)

Sink, Akos, Turnbull, and Mvududu (2008) ended their article by stating that the empirical results from their study provided "provisional evidence for the linkage between long-term CSCPs and the educational development of middle school students" (p. 51).

Do comprehensive guidance and counseling programs contribute to student success, including high student academic achievement? The answer is YES! It is important to understand, however, that in order to see results from comprehensive guidance and counseling programs, school counselors must be well trained and have

the time and the resources to succeed. They also must have the necessary organizational framework—a comprehensive guidance and counseling program—in which to do their work.

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## Chapter 6

### *A National Guidance Leadership Academy to Train State-Level Guidance Leaders*

Research evidence is beginning to accumulate that suggests states with more fully implemented guidance and counseling programs in schools have improved student achievement, lowered dropout rates, and resulted in fewer discipline problems.

Research evidence also suggests that these states are more likely to have identified state-level leadership for guidance. As a result of these findings, one of the most significant and urgent needs relative to developing and implementing comprehensive guidance and counseling programs in every school district in the nation is establishing in every state a workforce of highly trained and experienced guidance leaders at the state level.

Further understanding of the critical need for state-level guidance leadership can be gained by reviewing the nature of other education programs. Education programs are defined by structural elements, which include the required preparation of teachers, the scope and sequence of the subject(s) to be taught, the needed resource materials, and the space/lab requirements. Consistency and continuity of a program are achieved only when sufficient structure is built around the program to ensure the program maintains stability and is improved over time. It is important to recognize that most education programs are fragile and subject to the shifting whims of time, place, and personnel. This is certainly true of comprehensive guidance and counseling programs. Stability for comprehensive guidance programs can be gained only when these required

elements are incorporated in state accreditation standards, expressed in state-level policy, and most importantly supported by strong state-level guidance leadership.

We call on the United States Department of Education, the nation's governors, the chief state school officers, the state legislatures, and the state boards of education to recognize this need and to provide adequate staffing for guidance through appropriate funding of state departments of education. We further call on these groups and others, including business and industry, and public and private foundations, to respond to our urgent call for the establishment and funding of a National Guidance Leadership Academy, which would address the critical need of strengthening state-level guidance leadership in this, the second decade of the 21st century.

The National Guidance Leadership Academy targets three groups. The first group includes current state-level guidance leaders who need continued professional development opportunities. The second group is individuals who aspire to become state-level guidance leaders. The third group of individuals is current state leaders who determine and allocate resources and personnel at the state level, and who have direct impact on the nature and structure of the work of state-level guidance personnel.

While each targeted group requires specific knowledge, skills, and information, there are a number of common areas of training, including how to:

1. Conduct conferences, workshops, symposiums, and institutes on contemporary leadership issues.
2. Access and use effectively local, state, and national research on effective guidance and counseling.
3. Partner and network with leaders in private and public arenas.

4. Manage time and resources effectively.
5. Use technology to teach and communicate with personnel in local schools.
6. Measure the contributions of guidance to student academic achievement, life skills, and attitudes.
7. Effectively communicate to parents, principals, and teachers how guidance adds value to all other curriculums in school.

The National Consortium of State Guidance Leadership has taken the first few steps in setting up a national training agenda, and in determining what needs to be covered. It has conducted studies, a national summit on the topic, and has prepared proposals for possible federal and foundation sponsors.

The Academy would have a national advisory group representing private and public agencies, institutions, and companies. It would advise the Academy concerning direction and the content for leadership development. Training by the Academy would take place regionally and nationally. Travel is expensive, so every method of convening and teaching via technology will be used. The Academy would also have the ability to connect new and experienced state leaders, and institute peer mentoring and job shadowing as needed.

It is proposed that the National Guidance Consortium of State Guidance Leadership forge partnerships with the following organizations for the purpose of establishing a National Guidance Leadership Academy:

Chief State School Boards Associations

National Association of State Boards of Education

National Conference of State Legislators

American Association of School Administrators  
Association for Career and Technical Education  
U.S. Chamber of Commerce  
Department of Defense (Recruitment and Accessions)  
U.S. Department of Education  
U.S. Department of Labor  
National Alliance of Business  
National Association of Elementary School Principals  
National Association of Secondary School Principals  
American Association of Community Colleges  
American School Counselor Association  
National Career Development Association  
American Counseling Association  
National Center for Research in Vocational Education  
National Governors Association

Leaders need to learn the ways in which to effectively lead, as well as the process for developing training programs. Evidence proves states do not have the individual ability to do this. It takes a national effort to set effective guidance leadership as a high priority. It takes state holders, such as state government leaders, the U.S. Department of Education, state and federal legislators, counselor educators, and regional leaders within industry and business, to create such a training academy. Quality guidance and counseling programs do translate into better-performing students.

Therefore, it is natural that those who care about the youth of America would partner together for this training endeavor.

## Chapter 7

### *A Recommendation*

Currently, guidance and counseling at the state level is a mixed picture. In some states the dual system of state supervisors exists (career and technical education funding versus funding from other sources). In some states there are one or more full-time leaders. In some states there is one person identified as a guidance leader, but that person is only part-time due to other assigned duties. Finally, in some states there is no one designed as a state-level guidance supervisor. What all states need are well-trained full-time professional state-level guidance supervisors in sufficient numbers to serve their constituents. But how do we reach this goal? We believe there must be a mechanism in place to provide state-level guidance leaders with the necessary initial and ongoing training and support. The mechanism we recommend is a National Guidance Leadership Academy.

The establishment of a National Guidance Leadership Academy will require the support of the U.S. Department of Education, the nation's governors, chief state school officers, state legislators, and state boards of education. We call on these groups, as well as businesses, industries, and public and private foundations to support and fund such an Academy. For specific information about a plan to create and operate a National Academy, including the necessary funding, please contact the National Consortium of State Guidance Leadership.

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