

» Accountability

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To achieve the best results for students, school counselors and other counseling staff regularly evaluate their program to determine its effectiveness. School counselors use this evaluation to answer the question, “How are students different as a result of the school counseling program?” Now more than ever, school counselors are expected to demonstrate the effectiveness of their programs in measurable terms. The use of data in continuous improvement efforts supports three major objectives:

Rationale for change

- Creates urgency for change.
- Serves as a catalyst for focused action by documenting challenges and needs.
- Focuses resources and interventions where they are needed most.

Improved decisions

- Engages the community, district decision-makers and leaders, and school teams in data-driven decision making.
- Improves the quality of decisions by improving the quality of the criteria used.
- Exposes evidence of challenges and needs.
- Challenges existing policies, practices, attitudes, and mindsets.

Enhanced accountability

- Puts systems in place for monitoring student progress.
- Creates a process for evaluating progress in creating change.
- Concretely demonstrates accountability and progress toward goals.

School counselors and other counseling staff implement data-driven comprehensive school counseling programs using accountability strategies to monitor student achievement, to continually evaluate and improve their school counseling program and to demonstrate the impact their program is having on students (Dimmit, Carey, & Hatch, 2007; Dimmit 2009; Holcomb-McCoy, 2007; House & Hayes, 2002; Rowell, 2006; Ward, 2009; Ware & Galassi, 2006; Young & Kaffenberger, 2011). Accountability skills also help school counselors “garner the political clout necessary to improve school-counselor- to-student staffing ratios and redefine school counselor roles and activities...” (Hatch & Chen-Hayes, 2008, p. 39; Dimmit et al., 2007).

The purpose of this component is to analyze collected data and make program decisions based on the analysis. There are three sections:

- Data Analysis
- Program Results
- Evaluation and Improvement

Types of Student Progress Data

Standards-related Data

- ASCA/Oregon Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success
- Other student standards and competencies
- Students meeting district academic content standards
- Students with Education Plans and Profiles
- Students with documented Career-Related Learning Experiences
- Students demonstrating proficiency in Essential Skills

- Students demonstrating extended application to meet graduation requirements

Other Student Achievement Data

- Standardized test data
- SAT and ACT scores
- Graduation rates
- “Passing all classes” rates
- Promotion and retention rates
- Completion of special programs (AP, Honors, College Prep)

Achievement-related Data

- Course enrollment patterns
- Achievement gaps
- Discipline referrals
- Suspension and expulsion rates
- Alcohol, tobacco, and other drug violations
- Attendance rates
- Family involvement
- Extracurricular activity participation
- Homework completion rates

Data Analysis

Data analysis informs decisions about the school counseling program. Data are reviewed over time to inform the school counselor and other counseling staff about student needs, school and community trends. Data that can inform the program include standards-related data, student achievement data, and achievement-related data. The school data profile and the use-of-time assessment are reviewed annually to evaluate and improve the school counseling program, and they can be an effective part of end-of-year program evaluation and goal setting for the following school year.

School Data Profile Analysis

The school data profile is a summary of the school’s disaggregated achievement, attendance, and behavior over a multiyear period and can contribute to a better understanding of trends at the school. Analysis of the school data profile helps school counselors monitor student achievement, identify achievement, opportunity and attainment gaps and recognize a need for systemic change (Holcomb-McCoy, 2007; Rowell, 2006). School data profile analysis can also be used to inform school counseling program goals.

Consider the following questions when analyzing data:

- What strengths are indicated by the data at school?
- What concerns are raised about the data?
- Do achievement gaps exist?
- Have attendance rates changed?
- What can be learned from examining the safety data?



- How is the school counseling program addressing the gaps?
- How can the school counseling program contribute to closing the gaps or addressing the educational issues posed by the data?
- What additional data are needed to fully understand an educational issue and identify a school counseling intervention? (ASCA, 2008)

The first school data profile that is completed becomes the baseline from which to measure future school counseling program results. Yearly updates assess both program progress and impact. The information reveals school counseling program strengths and weaknesses as well as growth or loss in overall student success. The school data profile is also a convenient tool for sharing systemic change, programmatic successes and student needs.



Use-of-time Assessment Analysis

Analysis of the use-of-time assessment informs many components of a comprehensive school counseling program such as the annual agreement; calendars; and curriculum, small-group and closing-the-gap action plans. It is recommended that school counselors spend at least 80 percent or more of their time providing direct and indirect student services, such as school counseling core curriculum, individual student planning, responsive services, referrals, consultation and collaboration, and 20 percent or less of their time in program management tasks such as committee work, calendaring, data collection/analysis, planning and fair-share responsibilities. Completing the use-of-time assessment twice a year will help school counselors determine how their time is spent.

The analysis of the use-of-time assessment may inform many program decisions, but it is especially useful when considering the following:

1. How close am I to allocating at least 80 percent of my time to serving students?
2. Is the amount of time allocated to any particular service delivery the most effective use of my time?
3. Are the selected delivery methods and strategies the best use of school counselor time that will lead to the accomplishment of identified goals?

While spending 80 percent of time in direct and indirect student services is the general recommendation for a balanced school counseling program, use of time within the 80 percent may look different from school to school based on school data. Decisions about how to allocate school counseling

program time are based on student needs as demonstrated in the school data profile and alignment with school and school counseling program goals.

It is suggested that for two weeks each year, such as one week in the fall and one in the spring, school counselors and other counseling staff estimate the number of hours they are engaged in direct and indirect student services during those weeks to determine how close they are to the ideal of 80 percent. After determining the approximate percentage of time, school counselors and other counseling staff can reflect on the effectiveness of program delivery methods and strategies and adjust as needed. The analysis can also be used to promote a discussion about the most effective use of school counselor time with administrators. It can also be a helpful tool when completing a school counseling program evaluation, which informs program improvement.

In summary, data analysis informs the comprehensive school counseling program. Analyzing the school data profile and use-of-time assessment are strategies that can be used at any stage of program implementation or evaluation. They are also an effective part of end-of-year program evaluation and goal setting for the following school year.

For example, after analyzing the school data profile, a school counselor and other counseling staff in a high-needs school may determine it would be more effective to spend a higher percentage of time than recommended on strategies from indirect student services to best meet the needs of all students in the school.

Program Results

Analyzing school counseling program results reports ensures programs are evaluated for effectiveness and informs decisions related to program improvement. The analysis of results reports is the heart of having a data-driven school counseling program. Analyzing the data from results reports will contribute to more focused programming, more effective interventions and a more responsive school counseling program.

Three types of results reports are created based on action plans developed as part of program management activities:

1. Curriculum Results Report
2. Small-Group Results Report
3. Closing-the-Gap Results Report

Data collection provides the school counseling program with the information needed to evaluate the program as it relates to student progress. Data analysis helps school counselors and other counseling staff determine what worked and what didn't and clarifies what needs to be changed or improved.

Action plan data are collected throughout the implementation of the plan. Three types of data are reported: process, perception and outcome data. The purpose of data analysis is to determine the extent of change in student learning and behavior and to use the data to promote systemic change as needed. School

counselors demonstrate their leadership and advocacy roles as they use the findings from results reports to reduce or remove barriers to learning.

Results report data analysis follows the completion of an action plan and helps school counselors evaluate the impact of the action plan. School counselors and other counseling staff typically review results reports in the spring of each school year at a minimum and use them to inform goal setting for the following year.



| Type of Data | Definition | Examples |
|--------------|---|--|
| Process | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of participants involved ▪ Number of times the intervention took place ▪ Evidence that an event occurred | 30 students participated in six classroom lessons |
| Perception | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Asks what participants think they know, believe or can do ▪ Collected through surveys that measure self-reports of attainment of competencies, attitudes and beliefs and perceived gains in knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pre-post tests ▪ Needs assessments ▪ Program evaluation surveys ▪ Feedback surveys <p>Example – 59 percent of fifth- graders feel safe at school</p> |
| Outcome | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shows the impact of an intervention ▪ Reports the extent to which the program has had a positive impact on students' ability to utilize their knowledge, attitudes and skills to effect improvement in achievement, attendance and behavior ▪ Collected from multiple sources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promotion rates ▪ Attendance rates ▪ Number of discipline referrals ▪ Grade-point averages ▪ Student graduation rates <p>Example – 88 percent of 2016 graduates successfully completed their first year of college (four-year enrollees)</p> |

See [Program Results Data, page 42](#) for a more detailed description of process, perception and outcome data.



Analysis of the Curriculum Results Report

Analysis of the curriculum results report demonstrates the effectiveness of program and classroom activities and informs program improvement.

The curriculum results report serves as a tool for:

- Ensuring the program was carried out as planned
 - Ensuring every student was served
 - Ensuring developmentally appropriate materials were used
 - Documenting the program’s process, perception and outcome data
 - Analyzing the activities’ effectiveness
 - Sharing the impact of the curriculum
 - Improving activity or program
 - Advocating for systemic change
- The following questions may be helpful when analyzing curriculum results reports:
- Were appropriate learning goals identified? Did the choice of curriculum and/or activities support the goals?
 - What can be learned from analyzing the process data? (e.g., Did all students receive the curriculum? Were the scheduled sessions conducted?)
 - What can be learned from analyzing the perception data? (e.g., Did the curriculum meet the goals of teaching knowledge, mindsets and skills? Did students report an increase in knowledge of lesson content? Do pre- and post-test results indicate there was an increase in learning?)
 - What can be learned from analyzing the outcome data? (e.g., What impact did the curriculum have on achievement, attendance or behavioral data, such as GPA, report card data, state testing, discipline referrals, safety report and attendance?)
 - After reviewing the results report, what are the implications or recommendations?

Analysis of the Small-Group Results Report

Small-group counseling is an effective intervention school counselors and other counseling staff can implement to address specific student academic and behavioral needs (Whiston & Quinby, 2009). Analysis of the small-group results report helps school counselors and counseling staff report the impact and effectiveness of the small-group intervention.

The following questions may be helpful when analyzing small-group results reports:

- Were the right goals identified for the group of students? Did the choice of activities and/or interventions support the goals?
- What can be learned from analyzing the process data? (e.g., Did the size of the group, the amount of time or the number of sessions affect the outcome data? What changes might need to be made should this intervention be used again?)
- What can be learned from analyzing the perception data? (e.g., Did the curriculum meet the goals? Did students report an increase in knowledge of lesson content? Do pre- and post-test outcome data indicate there was an increase in learning?)
- What can be learned from analyzing the outcome data? (e.g., What impact did the curriculum have on achievement, attendance or behavioral data?)
- Reviewing the results report, what are the implications or recommendations?

Analysis of the Closing-the-Gap Results Report

Closing-the-gap activities address important issues of equity and student achievement. Therefore one of the most important aspects of program analysis rests with analyzing the closing-the-gap results. Closing-the-gap results report analysis helps school counselors and counseling staff report the impact and effectiveness of program activities and inform program improvement.

The following questions may be helpful when analyzing closing-the-gap results reports:

- What can be learned from analyzing the process data? (e.g., Did all students receive the intervention? Were the scheduled sessions conducted? How many students had access to rigorous course work? Did this number increase?)
- What can be learned from analyzing the perception data? (e.g. Did the curriculum meet the goals? Did students report an increase in knowledge of lesson content? Do pre- and post-test outcome data indicate there was an increase in learning?)
- What can be learned from analyzing the outcome data? (e.g., What impact did the intervention have on achievement, attendance or behavioral data?)
- Reviewing the results report, what are the implications or recommendations?

Collecting data and analyzing results are key strategies to assess program effectiveness. School counselors and other counseling staff must be able to determine student progress toward data-driven goals to continue to support student achievement. Results reports can be powerful advocacy tools when promoting the school counseling program.



Evaluation and Improvement

Program evaluation and improvement has four components:

1. Self-analysis of the school counseling program's strengths and areas of improvement using the school counseling program assessment. (See [Appendix D, page 80](#))
2. Review of program goals created at the beginning of the school year.
3. Self-analysis of the school counselors' strengths, areas of improvement related to knowledge, abilities and skills and mindsets necessary to meet the demands of the profession using the school counselor competencies assessment. (www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/home/SCCompetencies.pdf)
4. Evaluation of the school counselor's performance by an administrator using the school counselor performance appraisal. (www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/ASCA%20National%20Model%20Templates/SCPerformanceAppraisal.xls)

Analysis of School Counseling Program Assessment

A comprehensive school counseling program is multifaceted and designed with continuous evaluation and modification in mind. The school counseling program assessment aligns with the four components of Oregon's Framework and serves as a tool for analyzing each component. (See [School Counseling Program Assessment, page 83](#))

Each component includes the criteria for each subsection and includes benchmarks for program implementation. The primary purpose for collecting this information is to guide future actions within the program and to improve future results for students. The school counseling program assessment is used to identify gaps in the program and to identify goals for the next school year. The assessment has been written to be consistent with the Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP) application process and therefore could also be used as a tool to help a program evaluate its readiness to apply for RAMP status.



Assessment Criteria:

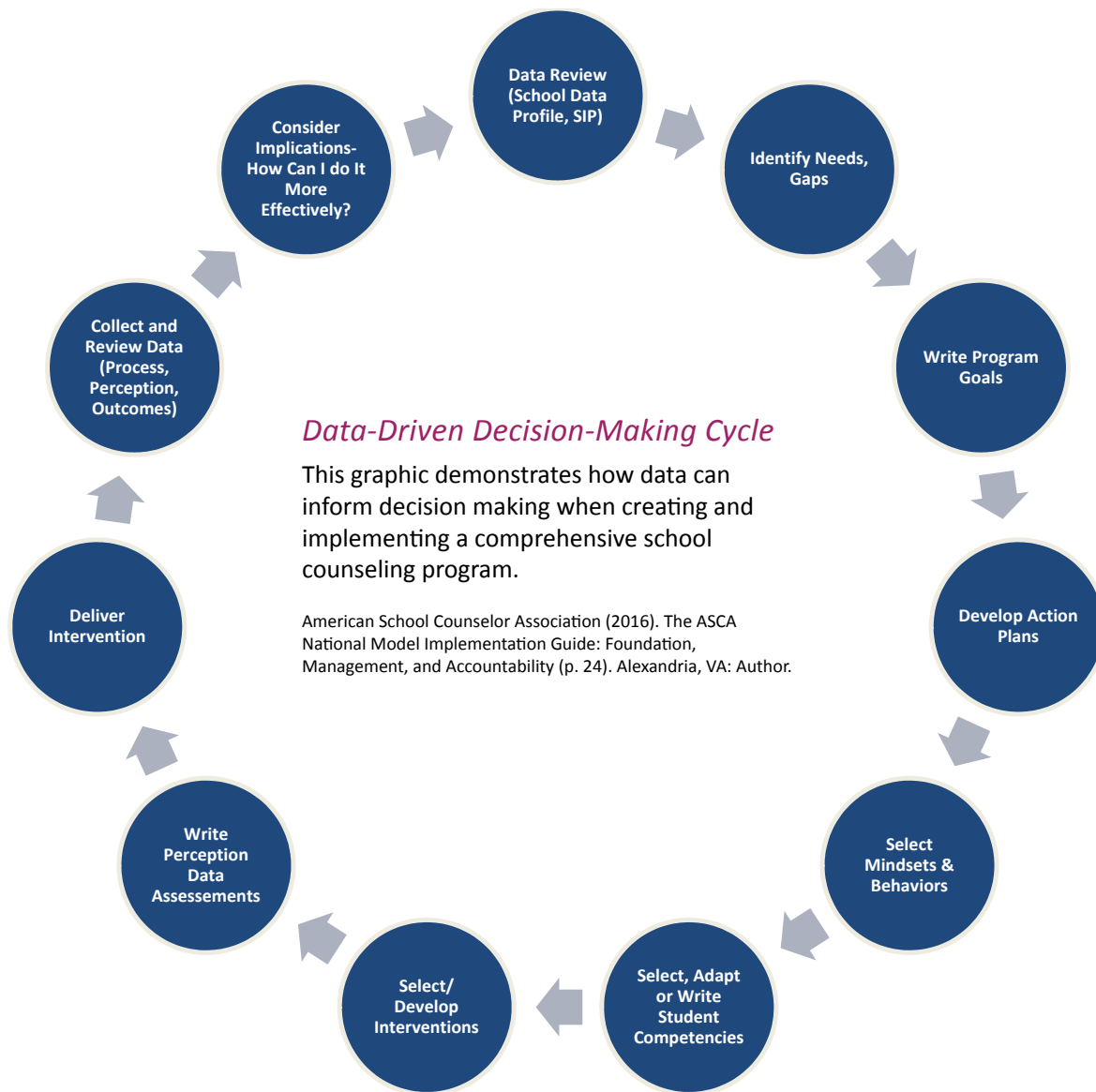
- Not yet: the criterion is not in place
- In Development: the criterion is being developed or implemented
- Complete/Implemented: the criterion is in place or implemented

The school counseling program assessment is conducted annually, typically in the spring. After completing the assessment, analyze responses to determine the following:

- Strengths of the program
- Areas for improvement
- Short-range goals for improvement
- Long-range goals for improvement

Determining baseline data prior to programmatic restructuring provides necessary information for data-based decision making. Each year data are charted indicating growth or change in the areas of concern. The data are analyzed in relation to progress made toward the school wide mission and program goals. Noticing trends over time invites reflection, discussion and participation by all stakeholders in assessing the program for continual program evaluation and improvement.

The results of the program assessment drive program goals, training and behavior for the following year. Sharing results with the building administrator and advisory council can also be an effective method of educating key stakeholders about the impact a school counseling program can have on student success.



Sharing Results

After data have been collected and analyzed, it is important to consider how to use the data and how to share it with others. Results reports can take on many forms and be disseminated in several ways such as:

- Websites
- One-page handouts
- Part of a larger report to administrators and school board members
- Presentation to faculty
- Part of the school's or district's data materials
- Newsletters to staff and/or families

Regularly sharing results reports about the impact of the school counseling program with administrators,

faculty and the school community in a document or in five- to 10-minute presentations will likely promote understanding, increase the value of and promote respect and indispensability for the work of professional school counselors (Dimmit, Carey & Hatch, 2007; Young & Kaffenberger, 2013).

When sharing results, it is important to remember that changes in student knowledge, mindsets, skills or behavior may be the result of numerous factors. School counselors are encouraged to communicate the ways they are contributing in a meaningful way to the overall academic achievement of students. However, correlation is not causation. While any program or intervention may contribute to an outcome, it is never the sole cause (Dimmit, Carey & Hatch, 2007).



Program Goal Analysis

At the conclusion of the school year, as part of the program evaluation, the school counselor reviews the program goals identified in the beginning of the school year. It is likely the program goals were considered when developing the curriculum action plan, the small-group action plan and/or the closing-the-gap action plan. Review the results reports related to the program goals and consider implications for the school counseling program and future program goals.

Here are some questions to guide review of each of the program goals.

- Was the goal a SMART goal (specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented and time-bound)?
- Was the goal a closing-the-gap goal?
- Was the goal met? If not, why not?
- What are the implications for goal setting for the following year?
- What implications do these results have for the school counseling program?

Analysis of School Counselor Competencies Assessment

The ASCA School Counselor Competencies (2007) were developed by a diverse group of practicing school counselors, district supervisors and counselor educators. The competencies were developed to align with the ASCA National Model and identify the knowledge, mindsets and skills required of a professional school counselor. These competencies have been identified as those that will best equip new and experienced school counselors with the skills to establish, maintain and enhance a comprehensive, developmental, results-based school counseling program that addresses academic achievement, career planning and social/emotional development. School counselor competencies should be utilized in order to evaluate services needed by students within specific schools and districts and should align to district goals and professional expectations. (www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/home/SCCompetencies.pdf) and examples of school counselor evaluation rubrics

The ASCA School Counselor Competencies have been identified as those that will best equip new and experienced school counselors with the skills to establish, maintain and enhance a comprehensive, developmental, results-based school counseling

program that addresses academic achievement, career planning and social/emotional development. These competencies can be used in a variety of ways. School counselor education programs can use the competencies as benchmarks for training. School administrators may find these competencies useful as a guide for seeking and hiring competent school counselors and for developing meaningful school counselor performance evaluations. These competencies should be used by school counselors as a self-assessment in order to identify areas of need or to develop professional development plans for more training and development.



School Counselor Performance Appraisal

A school counselor performance appraisal is an evaluation of the school counselor's performance. This appraisal is conducted once a year by an administrator. The appraisal document is frequently developed by school, district or state guidelines for school counselor evaluation, but it is recommended that the following criteria be considered in performance appraisal.

- The appraisal should contain three components: self-evaluation, administrative evaluation and assessment of goal attainment (Gysbers & Henderson, 2012).
- "Evaluators of school counselors' performance should be trained to understand school counselors' jobs and professional roles and in appropriate methods for gathering data to support evaluation" (Gysbers & Henderson, 2012, p. 355).
- Annual evaluation should use forms and tools specifically designed for school counselor performance evaluation.
- The school counselor performance standards from the ASCA National Model provide a sound framework for designing a school counselor evaluation.
- ASCA's School Counselor Competencies are an excellent resource for self-assessment or creating a school counselor performance evaluation form.

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