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# **Empirical Research Studies Supporting the Value of School Counseling**

This document presents a number of recent journal articles that describe research examining the impact of school counselors and school counseling programs on K-12 student outcomes. The research articles support the value of school counseling for students in the domains of academic development, college and career readiness, and social/emotional development. All of the articles are data-based and drawn from national peer-reviewed journals.

## Academic Development

### School Counseling and Student Outcomes: Summary Of Six Statewide Studies

Carey, J., & Dimmitt, C. (2012). School counseling and student outcomes: Summary of six statewide studies. *Professional School Counseling, 16* (2), 146-153. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2012-16.146

**Abstract:** This article presents a summary of the six studies featured in this special issue of *Professional School Counseling*. The six statewide research studies presented in this special issue use a variety of designs, instrumentation, and measures. Nevertheless, they can be integrated at the level of results to shed light on some important questions related to effective practice in the field of school counseling. These six studies provide valuable evidence of the relationship between positive student educational outcomes and school counseling program organization, student-to-school-counselor ratios, counselor time use, and specific school counseling activities. Several of these research studies focused on whether student outcomes are influenced by how the school counseling program is organized. These studies clearly indicate that certain school counseling activities create specific and measurable results and that all school counseling activities are not equally impactful for students and for critical school-wide outcomes such as attendance and discipline. With this knowledge comes both a professional imperative and an ethical obligation to increase those activities that best support student success. The primary methodological limitation shared by all six studies is their common correlational research design. The second major limitation of these studies stems from instrumentation issues.

**Take-away:** *A growing body of research indicates comprehensive, data-driven school counseling programs improve a range of student learning and behavioral outcomes.*

### Comprehensive School Counseling Programs and Student Achievement Outcomes: A Comparative Analysis of RAMP Versus Non-RAMP Schools

Wilkerson, K., Perusse, R., & Hughes, A. (2013). Comprehensive school counseling programs and student achievement outcomes: A comparative analysis of RAMP versus non-RAMP schools. *Professional School Counseling, 16* (3), 172-184. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2013-16.172

**Abstract:** This study compares school-wide Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) results in Indiana schools earning the Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP) designation ( $n = 75$ ) with a sample of control schools stratified by level and locale ( $n = 226$ ). K-12 schools earning the RAMP designation in 2007, 2008, and 2009 comprise the experimental group. Findings indicate that school-wide proficiency rates in English/Language Arts and Math are significantly higher in RAMP-designated elementary schools compared to elementary controls. Four-year longitudinal results indicate a significant positive difference between RAMP-designated elementary schools and their controls in Math. Findings provide support for the impact of comprehensive, data-driven, accountable school counseling programs at the elementary level and suggest further research is needed at the middle and secondary levels. This article presents and discusses additional results and implications for practice.

**Take-away:** *There is strong evidence that elementary schools with comprehensive data-driven school counseling programs display higher academic outcomes compared to schools without such programs.*

## Missouri Professional School Counselors: Ratios Matter, Especially in High-Poverty Schools

Lapan, R. T., Gysbers, N. C., Bragg, S., & Pierce, M. E. (2012). Missouri professional school counselors: Ratios matter, especially in high-poverty schools. *Professional School Counseling, 16*(2), 108-116. doi:10.5330/PSC.n.2012-16.108

**Abstract:** Results link lower student-to-school-counselor ratios to better graduation rates and lower disciplinary incidents across Missouri high schools. An interaction favorable for promoting student success in school was found between increasing percentages of students receiving free or reduced-price lunch and smaller student-to-school-counselor ratios. In high-poverty schools, those schools that met the ASCA criteria of having at least one professional school counselor for every 250 students had better graduation and school attendance rates, and lower disciplinary incidents.

**Take-away:** *Students who have greater access to school counselors and comprehensive school counseling programs are more likely to succeed academically and behaviorally in school; this is particularly true for students in high-poverty schools.*

## The School Counselor's Role in Addressing the Advanced Placement Equity and Excellence Gap for African American Students

Davis, P., Davis, M. P., & Mobley, J. A. (2013). The school counselor's role in addressing the Advanced Placement equity and excellence gap for African American students. *Professional School Counseling, 17*(1), 32-39. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2013-17.32

**Abstract:** This study describes the collaboration among a school counselor, a school counselor intern, an Advanced Placement Psychology teacher, and a counselor educator to improve African American access to Advanced Placement (AP) coursework and increase success on the AP Psychology national examination. The team initiated a process that recruited African American students into AP Psychology and supported them through group and individual counseling to create an achievement-minded cohort that emphasized peer relationships and academic success.

**Take-away:** *Intentional efforts by school counselors can help reduce the racial disparities in proportions of students taking Advanced Placement courses.*

## Closing the Achievement Gap of Latina/Latino Students: A School Counseling Response

Leon, A., Villares, E., Brigman, G., Webb, L., & Peluso, P. (2011). Closing the achievement gap of Latina/Latino students: A school counseling response. *Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation, 2*(1), 73-86. doi: 10.1177/2150137811400731

**Abstract:** This article addresses the achievement gap of Latina/Latino students and evaluates the impact of a Spanish culturally translated classroom program, delivered by bilingual/bicultural school counselors in five 45-min lessons and three booster lessons. Latina/o limited English proficient (LEP) students in Grades 4 and 5 from three schools were assigned to treatment ( $n = 62$ ) and comparison ( $n = 94$ ) groups. A quasi-experimental, nonequivalent control group design was used. Significant improvement in reading and math, as measured by standardized tests, were found for students who received the treatment as compared to those who did not. This resulted in a reading and math effect size (ES) of .37.

**Take-away:** *A school counseling intervention designed to be culturally- and language-appropriate can make a significant difference in reducing the achievement gap with Latina/Latino students with limited English proficiency.*

## All Hands On Deck: A Comprehensive, Results-Driven Counseling Model

Salina, C., Girtz, S., Eppinga, J., Martinez, D., Blumer Kilian, D., Lozano, E.,...Shines, T. (2013). All hands on deck: A comprehensive, results-driven counseling model. *Professional School Counseling, 17*(1), 63-75. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2014-17.63

**Abstract:** A graduation rate of 49% alarmed Sunnyside High School in 2009. With graduation rates in the bottom 5% statewide, Sunnyside was awarded a federally funded School Improvement Grant. The "turnaround" principal and the school counselors aligned goals with the ASCA National Model through the program All Hands On Deck (AHOD), based on academic press, social support, and relational trust. In 2012, 78.8% of students graduated. This case study describes student success resulting from the counselor-led program AHOD.

**Take-away:** *School counselors can be a critical part of school improvement efforts in low-performing schools.*

## Bringing Out the Brilliance: A Counseling Intervention for Underachieving Students

Berger, C. (2013). Bringing out the Brilliance: A counseling intervention for underachieving students. *Professional School Counseling, 17*(1), 86-96. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2013-17.80

**Abstract:** This study evaluated the impact of a small group counseling intervention designed for students who underachieve. The results of the study demonstrated significant improvement for ninth- and tenth-grade underachieving students in the areas of organizational skills, time management, and motivation. The author discusses implications and recommendations for school counselors working with underachieving students.

**Take-away:** *School counselors can effectively assist underachieving students using a small group intervention.*

### At-Risk Ninth-Grade Students: A Psychoeducational Group Approach to Increase Study Skills and Grade Point Averages

Kayler, H., & Sherman, J. (2009). At-risk ninth-grade students: A psychoeducational group approach to increase study skills and grade point averages. *Professional School Counseling, 12* (6), 434-439. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2010-12.434

**Abstract:** The purpose of this article is to describe a large-scale psychoeducational study skills group for ninth-grade students whose academic performance is in the bottom 50 percent of their class. The ASCA National Model® (American School Counselor Association, 2005) was used as a framework for development, delivery, and evaluation. The authors found that a small-group counseling intervention strengthened studying behaviors as measured by pretest-posttest design. Additional results include promoting school counselor visibility and increasing and improving school counselor relationships with students, parents, and other stakeholders.

**Take-away:** *Targeted efforts by school counselors can improve students' learning behaviors, including study skills, time usage, and persistence.*

### Closing The Gap: A Group Counseling Approach to Improve Test Performance of African-American Students

Bruce, A. M., Getch, Y. Q., & Ziomek-Daigle, J. (2009). Closing the gap: A group counseling approach to improve test performance of African-American students. *Professional School Counseling, 12* (6), 450-457. doi:10.5330/PSC.n.2010-12.450

**Abstract:** This article evaluated the impact of a group counseling intervention on African-American students' achievement rates during the spring administration of high-stakes testing at a rural high school in Georgia. Eighty percent of eligible students who participated in the intervention received passing scores on the four sections tested during the spring administration of the Georgia High School Graduation Tests (GHSGT), and all participating students received passing scores on the English Language Arts and Math sections of the GHSGT. Additionally, the achievement gap between African-American students and White students on the Enhanced Math narrowed during the 2007-2008 testing period, with 63.2% of African-American students achieving pass rates as compared to 70.5% of White students. The pass rate increased from the 38.7% pass rate among African-American students from the previous school year, indicating that the intervention was successful in improving pass rates on high-stakes testing. Implications for professional school counselors include utilizing the practice of group counseling and disaggregating data to promote achievement among underachieving student subsets.

**Take-away:** *School counselors can impact the achievement gap by examining school-wide data and using the data to deliver an effective group intervention.*

### Student Success Skills: An Evidence-Based School Counseling Program Grounded in Humanistic Theory

Villares, E., Lemberger, M., Brigman, G., & Webb, L. (2011). Student Success Skills: An evidence-based school counseling program grounded in humanistic theory. *Journal of Humanistic Counseling, 50*, 42-55. doi: 10.1002/j.2161-1939.2011.tb00105.x

**Abstract:** The Student Success Skills program is an evidence-based, counselor-led intervention founded on a variety of humanistic principles. Five studies and a recent meta-analysis provide evidence that integrating human potential practices into the school by teaching students foundational learning skills strengthens the link between school counseling interventions and student achievement.

**Take-away:** *The Student Success Skills program results in substantial student gains in reading and math; school counselors can use this evidence-based program to improve students' achievement.*

## College and Career Readiness

### School Counselors As Social Capital: The Effects of High School College Counseling on College Application Rates

Bryan, J., Moore-Thomas, C., Day-Vines, N. L., & Holcomb-McCoy, C. (2011). School counselors as social capital: The effects of high school college counseling on college application rates. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 89* (2), 190-199. doi: 10.1002/j.1556-6678.2011.tb00077.x

**Abstract:** Using social capital theory as a framework, the authors examined data from the Educational Longitudinal Study of 2002 (Ingels, Pratt, Rogers, Siegel, & Stutts, 2004) to investigate how student contact with high school counselors about college information and other college-related variables influence students' college application rates. In addition to some college-related variables, the number of school counselors and student contacts were significant predictors of college application rates. Implications for school counselors and counselor training are included.

**Take-away:** *College counseling, as provided by school counselors, matters: high school students who saw their school counselor for college information were more likely to apply for college.*

## Estimating Causal Impacts of School Counselors with Regression Discontinuity Designs

Hurwitz, M., & Howell, J. (2014). Estimating causal impacts of school counselors with regression discontinuity designs. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 92* (3), 316-327. doi: 10.1002/j.1556-6667.2014.00159.x

**Abstract:** This article presents a causal regression discontinuity framework for quantifying the impact of high school counselors on students' education outcomes. To demonstrate this method, the authors used data from the National Center for Education Statistics' Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS). Using high school counselor staffing counts and 4-year college-going rates collected through the SASS, the authors found that an additional high school counselor is predicted to induce a 10 percentage point increase in 4-year college enrollment.

**Take-away:** *Increasing the number of high school counselors in schools enhances the likelihood that students go on to enroll in college.*

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## Connecticut Professional School Counselors: College and Career Counseling Services and Smaller Ratios Benefit Students

Lapan, R. T., Whitcomb, S. A., & Aleman, N. M. (2012). Connecticut professional school counselors: College and career counseling services and smaller ratios benefit students. *Professional School Counseling, 16* (2), 117-124. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2012-16.124

**Abstract:** Results connect the implementation of the college and career counseling components of a comprehensive school counseling program and lower student-to-school-counselor ratios to a reduction in suspension rates and disciplinary incidents for Connecticut high school students. Principal ratings of college and career counseling services provided in their school extended benefits for students to include better attendance and graduation rates, as well as lower disciplinary incidents and suspension rates. This article highlights the importance of college and career counseling services and smaller ratios for promoting student success.

**Take-away:** *High school students who have more access to school counselors (i.e., lower student-school counselor ratios) and related college and career counseling services are more likely to graduate and less likely to have behavioral problems.*

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## Counseling and College Matriculation: Does the Availability of Counseling Affect College-Going Decisions Among Highly Qualified First-Generation College-Bound High School Graduates?

Pham, C., & Keenan, T. (2011). Counseling and college matriculation: Does the availability of counseling affect college-

going decisions among highly qualified first-generation college-bound high school graduates? *Journal of Applied Economics and Business Research, 1* (1), 12-24.

**Abstract:** This study examined a unique angle of the relationship between high school counseling and college matriculation by investigating the association between the availability of counseling services to first-generation students and the odds of a highly qualified student not enrolling in a four year college (referred to as a mismatch between qualifications and college attended). A sample of 1,305 highly qualified students from a large urban district in the United States was analyzed. The study found that the student-counselor ratio does not predict the odds of a highly qualified student not going to a four year college, but the first-generation student-counselor ratio does. A one percent decrease in the first-generation student-counselor ratio was associated with a 0.4 percent decrease in the odds that a highly qualified student missed the opportunity to attend a four year college. This study could help districts and administrators target the limited counseling services available currently in many urban school districts to first-generation students in order to increase the college-going rate of these students.

**Take-away:** *Highly qualified first-generation students are more likely to enroll in four year colleges if they have greater access to high school counselors (i.e., lower student-school counselor ratios).*

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## Who Sees the School Counselor for College Information?

Bryan, J., Holcomb-McCoy, C., Moore-Thomas, C., & Day-Vines, N. L. (2009). Who sees the school counselor for college information? *Professional School Counseling, 12* (4), 280-291. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2010-12.280

**Abstract:** Using the 2002 Educational Longitudinal Study database, a national survey conducted by the National Center of Education Statistics, the authors investigated the characteristics of students who seek out professional school counselors in order to receive college information. Results indicated that African Americans and female students were more likely to contact the school counselor for college information. In addition, students in high-poverty, large schools and schools with smaller numbers of counselors were less likely to seek school counselors for college information. School counselors' postsecondary aspirations for students also impacted students' contact with the school counselor. Implications for school counselors and future research are included.

**Take-away:** *Students in schools with fewer school counselors (i.e., large student-to-school counselor ratios) are less likely to see the school counselor for college information.*

### School Counselors Supporting African Immigrant Students' Career Development: A Case Study

Watkinson, J. S., & Hersi, A. A. (2014). School counselors supporting African immigrant students' career development: A case study. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 62, 44-55. doi: 10.1002/j.2161-0045.2014.00069.x

**Abstract:** School counselors play a critical role in preparing adolescent immigrant students to be college and career ready by attending to the complex variables that promote and inhibit career development. This article provides an illustrative case study of a Somali immigrant student's educational journey to highlight the academic and familial challenges that she encountered while attending U.S. schools. Through this case study, the authors discuss the issues immigrant high school students experience and present culturally responsive practices that school counselors can use to address career development. These culturally responsive practices include developing a strong knowledge of students' backgrounds and cultures, designing small group interventions that are timely and sensitive to immigrant students' needs, and strengthening school-family partnerships.

**Take-away:** *School counselors can provide critical support and information to foster the career development needs of immigrant students.*

### Providing College Readiness Counseling for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders: A Delphi Study to Guide School Counselors

Krell, M., & Perusse, R. (2012). Providing college readiness counseling for students with autism spectrum disorders: A Delphi study to guide school counselors. *Professional School Counseling*, 16 (1), 29-39. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2012-16.29

**Abstract:** This study used the Delphi method to examine school counselors' roles for providing equitable college readiness counseling for students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). Participants included an expert panel of 19 individuals with experience and knowledge in postsecondary transition for students with ASD.

Expert participants identified 29 tasks of school counselors for providing equitable college readiness counseling to students with ASD, such as encourage student involvement in the transition planning process, collaborate with parents, and conduct workshops for students with ASD and their parents about college transition. This article provides practical implications and recommendations based on the study results.

**Take-away:** *Strategies exist to help school counselors prepare student with autism spectrum disorders for college.*

### Transitioning Hispanic Seniors from High School to College

Marsico, M., & Getch, Y. Q. (2009). Transitioning Hispanic seniors from high school to college. *Professional School Counseling*, 12 (6), 458-462. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2010-12.458

**Abstract:** Hispanic seniors who were on track to graduate in May 2006 were invited to participate in a program to help them make a successful transition from high school to college. Data indicated that this group might benefit from direct assistance in the college application process. The goal of the intervention was to work with the identified students during the fall semester and to increase the number of Hispanic students who applied to college. The program was evaluated by comparing the number of Hispanic students who applied to college by May 1, 2005, to those Hispanic seniors who applied to college by May 1, 2006. There was a 5% increase in the number of Hispanic seniors who applied to college by May 1, 2006, compared to May 1, 2005. Additionally, there was a 16% increase in Hispanic students who applied to a college by January 2006 compared to the previous year.

**Take-away:** *Intentional efforts from school counselors can increase the numbers of Hispanic students who apply for college.*

### Identifying Exemplary School Counseling Practices in Nationally Recognized High Schools

Militello, M., Carey, J., Dimmitt, C., Lee, V., & Schweid, J. (2009). Identifying exemplary school counseling practices in nationally recognized high schools. *Journal of School Counseling*, 7 (13), 1-26. Retrieved from <http://www.jsc.montana.edu/articles/v7n13.pdf>

**Abstract:** The National Center for School Counseling Outcome Research (CSCOR) at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst studied exemplary practices of 18 high schools that received recognition for college preparation and placement in 2004 and 2005. Through interviews with key personnel at each of the high schools, the researchers generated a set of ten domains that characterize the work of the school counselor that seem to be related to improved student enrollment in post-secondary institutions.

**Take-away:** *School counselors play an important leadership role in high schools with excellent college preparation and placement records.*

## Social-Emotional Development

### Comprehensive School Counseling in Rhode Island: Access to Services and Student Outcomes

Dimmitt, C., & Wilkerson, B. (2012). Comprehensive school counseling in Rhode Island: Access to services and student outcomes. *Professional School Counseling, 16* (2), 125-135. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2012-16.125

**Abstract:** This study explored relationships among school counseling practices, secondary school demographics, and student outcomes in the state of Rhode Island during a 2-year period. The results showed strong and consistent correlations between increased amounts of school counseling services and positive student outcomes. Schools with higher percentages of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch status and with higher percentages of minority students provided fewer comprehensive counseling services for their students.

**Take-away:** *The presence of comprehensive school counseling programs is linked to an array of positive student outcomes ranging from better attendance to a stronger sense of connection to school.*

### Outcomes of a School-Wide Positive Behavioral Support Program

Curtis, R., Van Horne, J. W., Robertson, P., & Karvonen, M. (2010). Outcomes of a school-wide positive behavioral support program. *Professional School Counseling, 13* (3), 159-164. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2010-13.159

**Abstract:** School-wide positive behavioral support (SWPBS) programs are becoming an increasingly popular and effective way to reduce behavioral disruptions in schools. Results from a 4-year study examining the effects of an SWPBS program in a public elementary school indicated significant reductions in percentages of behavioral referrals, suspensions, and instructional days lost, but the effect sizes were small. Implications for school counselors and future research are discussed.

**Take-away:** *Research supports the value of school-wide positive behavioral support programs in improving the behavior of students; school counselors can play an important role in the success of these programs.*

### Becoming Partners: A School-Based Group Intervention for Families of Young Children Who Are Disruptive

Amatea, E. S., Thompson, I. A., Rankin-Clemons, L., & Ettinger, M. L. (2010). Becoming partners: A school-based group intervention for families of young children who are disruptive. *Journal of School Counseling, 8*(36). Retrieved from <http://www.jsc.montana.edu/articles/v8n36.pdf>

**Abstract:** A multiple family discussion group program was implemented and evaluated by school counselors working with families of young children referred by their teachers for aggression and attention problems. The logic guiding construction of the program and the program's unique aspects are described. Outcome data revealed that the program was effective in reducing the children's hyperactive, defiant, and aggressive behavior and improving the parents' management skills. The advantages of school counselors conducting this program are discussed.

**Take-away:** *A family focused group intervention can be implemented by school counselors to decrease school behavior problems among young children.*

### RECOGNIZE: A Social Norms Campaign to Reduce Rumor Spreading in a Junior High School

Cross, J. E., & Peisner, W. (2009). RECOGNIZE: A social norms campaign to reduce rumor spreading in a junior high school. *Professional School Counseling, 12* (5), 365-377. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2010-12.365

**Abstract:** This article studied changes in rumor spreading and perceptions of peers' rumor spreading among students at one public junior high school following a social norms marketing campaign. Results of the study show that perceptions of peer rumor spreading fell following the campaign, but self-reports of rumor spreading did not decrease. Results suggest that a social norms marketing campaign conducted by a professional school counselor and delivered to students in a junior high can reduce misperceptions of negative social behaviors.

**Take-away:** *Through intentional efforts, school counselors can positively influence the social norms that fuel destructive rumor spreading by junior high students.*

### A High School Counselor's Leadership in Providing School-Wide Screenings for Depression and Enhancing Suicide Awareness

Erickson, A., & Abel, N. R. (2013). A high school counselor's leadership in providing school-wide screenings for depression and enhancing suicide awareness. *Professional School Counseling, 16* (5), 283-289. doi: 10.5330/psc.n.2013-16.283

**Abstract:** The prevalence of mental health issues and suicidal thoughts and actions among school-aged children and adolescents is a serious issue. This article examines the scope of the problem nationwide and provides a brief overview of the literature regarding the effectiveness of school-wide screening programs for depression and suicide risk. The authors describe a suicide prevention program that has been implemented by the first author (a high school counselor in Minnesota) that combines classroom guidance, screening,

and referrals for outside mental health services. This article includes recommendations for school counselors interested in implementing a school-wide screening and prevention program.

**Take-away:** *School counselors can provide leadership in the early identification and prevention of high school students with depression and suicidal thoughts.*

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### Use of Group Counseling to Address Ethnic Identity Development: Application With Adolescents of Mexican Descent

Malott, K. M., Paone, T. R., Humphreys, K., & Martinez, T. (2010). Use of group counseling to address ethnic identity development: Application with adolescents of Mexican descent. *Professional School Counseling, 13* (5), 257-267. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2010-13.257

**Abstract:** This article provides qualitative outcomes from a group counseling intervention whose goal was to facilitate the ethnic identity development of Mexican-origin youth. Outcomes revealed that participants perceived group participation as meaningful. Themes that emerged from the data included the importance of the relationship to engender change, growth in several aspects of ethnic identity (knowledge of culture, traits, and ethnic pride), and increased relational skills.

**Take-away:** *School counselors can assist students of Mexican descent in building relationships in school and becoming more comfortable with their ethnic identity.*

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Steen, S. (2009). Group counseling for African American elementary students: An exploratory study. *Journal for Specialists in Group Work, 34* (2), 101-117. doi: 10.1080/01933920902791929

**Abstract:** This article describes a group counseling intervention promoting academic achievement and ethnic identity development for twenty fifth grade African American elementary students. The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) scores of students participating in the treatment group improved significantly over those in the control group. Implications for school counselors and suggestions for future research are discussed.

**Take-away:** *Preliminary evidence indicates school counselors can use a culturally-sensitive group intervention to enhance the ethnic identity of African American elementary school boys.*

## Multiple Impacts

Reback, R. (2010). Schools' mental health services and young children's emotions, behavior, and learning. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 29* (4), 698-727. doi: 10.1002/pam

**Abstract:** Recent empirical research has found that children's noncognitive skills play a critical role in their own success, young children's behavioral and psychological disorders can severely harm their future outcomes, and disruptive students harm the behavior and learning of their classmates. Yet relatively little is known about widescale interventions designed to improve children's behavior and mental health. This is the first nationally representative study of the provision, financing, and impact of school-site mental health services for young children. Elementary school counselors are school employees who provide mental health services to all types of students, typically meeting with students one-on-one or in small groups. Given counselors' nonrandom assignment to schools, it is particularly challenging to estimate the impact of these counselors on student outcomes. First, cross-state differences in policies provide descriptive evidence that students in states with more aggressive elementary counseling policies make greater test score gains and are less likely to report internalizing or externalizing problem behaviors compared to students with similar observed characteristics in similar schools in other states. Next, difference-in-differences estimates exploiting both the timing and the targeted grade levels of states' counseling policy changes provide evidence that elementary counselors substantially influence teachers' perceptions of school climate. The adoption of state-funded counselor subsidies or minimum counselor-student ratios reduces the fraction of teachers reporting that their instruction suffers due to student misbehavior and reduces the fractions reporting problems with students physically fighting each other, cutting class, stealing, or using drugs. These findings imply that there may be substantial public and private benefits derived from providing additional elementary school counselors.

**Take-away:** *Multiple sources of evidence indicate that expanding school counseling services in elementary schools is associated with improvements in student learning, behavior, and mental health.*

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### Are School Counselors an Effective Educational Input?

Carrell, S. E., & Hoekstra, M. (2014). Are school counselors an effective educational input? *Economic Letters, 125*, 66-69. doi: 10.1016/j.econlet.2014.07.020

**Abstract:** We exploit within-school variation in counselors and find that one additional counselor reduces student misbehavior and increases boys' academic achievement by over one percentile point. These effects compare favorably with those of increased teacher quality and smaller class sizes.



**Take-away:** *Stronger presence of school counselors in elementary schools reduces misbehavior and significantly improves boys' academic achievement.*

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Carey, J., Harrington, K., Marin, I., & Hoffman, D. (2012). A state-wide evaluation of the outcomes of the implementation of ASCA National Model school counseling programs in rural and suburban Nebraska high schools. *Professional School Counseling, 16* (2), 100-107. doi: 10.5330/psc.n.2012-16.100

**Abstract:** A statewide evaluation of school counseling programs in rural and suburban Nebraska high schools investigated which features of the ASCA National Model were related to student educational outcomes. The authors used hierarchical linear regression and Pearson correlations to explore relationships between program characteristics and student outcomes. Analyses suggested that school counseling program features accounted for statistically significant portions of the variance in a number of important student outcomes. These findings provide support for previous studies linking benefits to students with the more complete implementation of a comprehensive developmental guidance program. Implementing features of the ASCA National Model was associated with improved student outcomes.

**Take-away:** *Fully implemented comprehensive school counseling programs with favorable student-to-school counselor ratios are associated with a range of positive student educational and behavioral outcomes.*

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### School Counseling Outcome: A Meta-Analytic Examination of Interventions

Whiston, S. C., Tai, W. L., Rahardja, D., & Eder, K. (2011). School counseling outcome: A meta-analytic examination of interventions. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 89* (1), 37-55. doi: 10.1002/j.1556-6678.2011.tb00059.x

**Abstract:** The effectiveness of school counseling interventions is important in this era of evidence-based practices. In this study, Meta-Analysis 1 involved treatment-control comparisons and Meta-Analysis 2 involved pretest-posttest differences. The overall average weighted effect size for school counseling interventions was .30. The study examined whether pertinent moderator variables influenced effect sizes. The pretest-posttest effect size was not significant, so moderator analyses were conducted on treatment-control comparisons. Analyses of moderator variables indicated school counseling program activities or interventions varied in effectiveness.

**Take-away:** *In general, school counseling interventions have a positive effect on students, though more research is needed and not all interventions appear to be equally effective.*

### Review of School Counseling Outcome Research

Whiston, S. C., & Quinby, R. F. (2009). Review of school counseling outcome research. *Psychology in the Schools, 46* (3), 267-272. doi: 10.1002/pits.20372

**Abstract:** This article is somewhat unique in this special issue as it focuses on the effectiveness of an array of school counseling interventions and not solely on individual and group counseling. In summarizing the school counseling outcome literature, the authors found that students who participated in school counseling interventions tended to score on various outcome measures about a third of a standard deviation above those who did not receive the interventions. School counseling interventions produced quite large effect sizes in the areas of discipline, problem solving, and increasing career knowledge. The effect sizes were smaller, but significant, related to school counseling interventions' impact on academic achievement. Surprisingly little school counseling research was found related to individual counseling. Concerning guidance curriculum, small groups were more effective than interventions that involved entire classrooms. Furthermore, outcome research reflects that group counseling can be effective with students who are experiencing problems and difficulties.

**Take-away:** *Research supports the value of a range of interventions delivered by school counselors, with particular value associated with group counseling interventions.*

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### Maximizing School Counselors' Efforts By Implementing School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports: A Case Study from the Field

Goodman-Scott, E. (2013). Maximizing school counselors' efforts by implementing school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports: A case study from the field. *Professional School Counseling, 17* (1), 111-119.

**Abstract:** School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) are school-wide, data-driven frameworks for promoting safe schools and student learning. This article explains PBIS and provides practical examples of PBIS implementation by describing a school counselor-run PBIS framework in one elementary school, as part of a larger, district-wide initiative. The author discusses implications for school counselors, including maximizing school counselors' efforts to best serve every student by integrating PBIS into existing school counseling programs.

**Take-away:** *School counselors can positively impact student learning and behavior in elementary schools by taking key roles in school-wide behavior support systems.*

### **The Achieving Success Everyday Group Counseling Model: Fostering Resiliency in Middle School Students**

Rose, J., & Steen, S. (2014). The Achieving Success Everyday group counseling model: Fostering resiliency in middle school students. *Professional School Counseling, 18* (1), 28-37.

**Abstract:** This article discusses a group counseling intervention used to develop and foster resiliency in middle school students by implementing the Achieving Success Everyday (ASE) group counseling model. The authors aimed to discover what impact this group counseling intervention, which focused on resiliency characteristics, would have on students' academic and personal-social success. To evaluate this, the authors used both qualitative and quantitative data. The results showed that some students achieved an increase in their GPA and personal-social functioning following the intervention. The article presents implications for practice and ideas for future research.

**Take-away:** *School counselors can use a research-supported group counseling model to improve the academic and social functioning of middle school students.*

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### **The Achieving Success Everyday Group Counseling Model: Implications for Professional School Counselors**

Steen, S., Henfield, M. S., & Booker, B. (2014). The Achieving Success Everyday group counseling model: Implications for professional school counselors. *Journal for Specialists in Group Work, 39* (1), 29-46. doi: 10.1080/01933922.2013.861886

**Abstract:** This article presents the Achieving Success Everyday (ASE) group counseling model, which is designed to help school counselors integrate students' academic and personal-

social development into their group work. We first describe this group model in detail and then offer one case example of a middle school counselor using the ASE model to conduct a group counseling intervention in a school setting. Finally, implications for school counselors are presented.

**Take-away:** *The ASE group counseling model has been well-supported by research and can be used by school counselors to improve the academic and personal-social outcomes of K-12 students.*

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### **The Brotherhood: Empowering Adolescent African-American Males Toward Excellence**

Wyatt, S. (2009). The Brotherhood: Empowering adolescent African-American males toward excellence. *Professional School Counseling, 12* (6), 463-470. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2010-12.463

**Abstract:** A review of the literature reveals that African-American males do not achieve at the same academic levels as their White counterparts. This article reports the effectiveness of a school-based male mentoring program established by a professional school counselor in an urban high school that formed a relationship of support for male students enhancing academic achievement. The program incorporates the principles of the ASCA National Model®, empowerment theory, and Nguzo Saba. Results indicate that participation in a mentoring program can improve student academic achievement and foster personal and social growth and aspirations of success.

**Take-away:** *School counselors can develop themed counseling and mentoring groups to improve outcomes for students from marginalized groups.*