The School Counselor and Multitiered System of Supports
(Adopted 2008; revised 2014, 2018)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position
School counselors are stakeholders in the development and implementation of a multitiered system of supports (MTSS) including but not limited to response to intervention (RTI) and culturally responsive positive behavioral interventions and supports (CR PBIS). School counselors align their work with MTSS through the implementation of a comprehensive school counseling program designed to improve student achievement and behavior.

The Rationale
MTSS is an evidence-based framework implemented in K-12 schools utilizing data-based problem solving to integrate academic and behavioral instruction and intervention at tiered intensities to improve students’ learning, behavioral and social/emotional functioning (Sink, 2016). Guided by student-centered data, MTSS teams engage in cyclical data-based problem solving; make informed decisions about general, compensatory and special education; and assist in the creation of a well-integrated and seamless system of instruction and intervention (Ehren, B, et. al., 2006). Within the framework of a data-driven, comprehensive school counseling program school counselors augment their collaboration and coordination skills (Shepard et al., 2013) to meet the needs of all students and identify students who are at risk for not meeting academic and behavioral expectations. School counselors collaborate across student service disciplines with teachers, administrators and families to design and implement plans to address student needs and to promote students’ academic, career, social/emotional success (American School Counselor Association [ASCA], 2012). Data are collected and analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the learning supports for continual improvement efforts over time.

The School Counselor’s Role
The use of MTSS offers school counselors opportunities to have a lasting impact on student academic success and behavior development while integrating the framework within a comprehensive school counseling program (Ziomek-Daigle et al., 2016). The application of MTSS is highly consistent with a comprehensive school counseling program and can be utilized across the academic, college/career and/or social/emotional domains at any grade level (ASCA, 2012). The ASCA National Model also serves as the foundation that assists school counselors in the academic and behavioral development of students through the implementation of a comprehensive developmental school counseling program by:

- Providing all students with a standards-based school counseling core curriculum to address universal academic, career and social/emotional development
- Analyzing academic and behavioral data to identify struggling students
- Identifying and collaborating on research-based intervention strategies implemented by school staff
- Evaluating academic and behavioral progress after interventions
- Revising interventions as appropriate
- Referring to school and community services as appropriate
- Collaborating with administrators, other school professionals, community agencies and families in MTSS design and implementation
• Advocating for equitable education for all students and working to remove systemic barriers

The following chart shows how examples of learning supports on a multitiered continuum are applied to a comprehensive school counseling program:

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<th>Tiers of School Counseling Supports</th>
<th>Examples of School Counseling Supports</th>
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| Tier 1: Universal Core Instructional Interventions for All Students, Preventive and Proactive | 1. Standards and Competencies (Foundation)  
2. School Counseling Core Curriculum (Delivery System)  
3. Individual Student Planning Direct Student Services (Delivery)  
4. School Counseling Core Curriculum Action Plan (Management)  
5. School Counseling Core Curriculum Results Report (Accountability)  
6. School Data Profile (Accountability) |
| Tier 2: Supplemental/Strategic Interventions for Students at Some Risk | 1. Standards and Competencies (Foundation)  
2. Individual Student Planning Direct Services (Delivery)  
a. Small-group action plan  
3. Responsive Services Direct Student Services (Delivery)  
a. Consultation  
b. Individual counseling  
c. Small-group counseling  
4. Closing-the-Gap Action Plan (Management)  
5. Closing-the-Gap Results Report (Accountability) |
| Tier 3: Intensive, Individual Interventions for Students at High Risk | 1. Standards and Competencies (Foundation)  
2. Responsive Services Direct Student Services (Delivery)  
a. Consultation  
b. Individual counseling  
c. Small-group counseling  
d. Referral to school or community services  
3. Closing-the-Gap Action Plan (Management)  
4. Closing-the-Gap Results Report (Accountability) |
Where MTSS interact with school counseling programs, the school counselor can serve in roles of supporter and/or intervener (Ockerman, Mason & Feiker-Hollenbeck, 2012). In the supporting role, the school counselor may provide indirect student service by presenting data or serving as a consultant to a student support team. In intervener role, the school counselor may provide direct student service through the delivery component of the ASCA National Model.

Summary
School counselors implement a comprehensive school counseling program addressing the needs of all students. Through the review of data, school counselors identify struggling students and collaborate with other student services professionals, educators and families to provide appropriate instruction and learning supports within an MTSS. School counselors work collaboratively with other educators to remove systemic barriers for all students and implement specific learning supports assisting in academic and behavioral success.

References


