Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
ISSN#: 2473-2826

Urban High School Faculty Members Speak Up: What They Need from a School Counseling Program from School Counselors and Principals

[1]Eric Graf

[2]Olcay Yavuz

Abstract

There is a growing emphasis to improve every student's academic, social-emotional, and career and college development as schools strive to design and deliver comprehensive counseling programs that support students' development in these areas. The purpose of this study is to explore a large urban high school teachers' counselors and admins' perspectives on improving a high-poverty urban school's counseling services to extend school leaders' and counselors' knowledge about delivering effective school counseling programs as, ultimately, success lies with an effective principal and school counselor partnership. Particularly, data from our study will allow urban school principals and school counselors to identify the high and low program needs of urban students to become college, career, and life ready. The next set of comparisons was conducted for social-emotional needs. Like academic development needs, the entire ANOVA summary tables showed non-significant differences. The findings indicated that some responses varied significantly across (1) special education faculty, (2) regular classroom teachers and (3) school counselors in terms of rating of students' counseling needs. School leaders and school counselors can apply the findings of this study to create systemic and comprehensive student services in their schools. Particularly, school leaders and counselors can apply the results in decision-making, discussions, and time allocation in prevention/education versus reactive/responsive academic and counseling services

Keywords: *Comprehensive school counseling, school counselor and principal partnership,*

---

[1]**Dr. Eric Graf,** Head Principal, Central High School, Bridgeport, CT
Email: principalgraf@gmail.com
[2]**Dr. Olcay Yavuz**, Associate Professor Department of Educational Leadership & Policy Studies, Southern Connecticut State University, CT
Email: yavuzo1@southernct.edu

Recommended Citation: *Graf Eric, Yavuz Olcay (2023). Urban High School Faculty Members Speak Up: What They Need from a School Counseling Program from School Counselors and Principals, Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, 7(1)*

Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
ISSN#: 2473-2826
Southern Connecticut State University

Urban High School Faculty Members Speak Up: What They Need from a School Counseling Program from School Counselors and Principals

Inequalities in high poverty urban schools exist along many dimensions and impact a variety of youth outcomes. Reducing inequality in high-poverty urban schools is a national concern (Logan, and Burdick-Will, 2017). This study was developed to identify ways to point urban educational leaders, policymakers, school counselors, and key stakeholders toward more effective responses and working strategies to improve outcomes of youth who are underrepresented and reduce achievement gaps across various disadvantaged groups including: a) socioeconomic status, b) race/ethnicity, c) gender, d) special education status, e) immigrant origins, and f) parent's education.

In this quantitative study, we investigated what factors impact urban high school students' college readiness outcomes and academic achievement. Many urban high school graduates are not adequately prepared for the transition to college (Chen, 2019). As students navigate their educational journey, it is critical for them to be ready for college and career success. Despite the known importance of college and career readiness for all, research studies continue to show a majority of students (especially students who are underrepresented in urban high schools) are not college ready and are unprepared for postsecondary success upon graduation from high school (Falcon, 2015). However, if urban high schools can identify and understand the urban students' high priority needs, they might be able to develop comprehensive school counseling services to meet all students' needs.

Therefore, we sought to explore faculty members' perspectives on improving a high poverty urban school's counseling services to extend school leaders' and school counselors' knowledge about delivering effective school counseling programs as ultimately, success lies with an effective principal and school counselor partnership. This study is significant because by identifying high academic, social, emotional, college and career development needs of the students, urban educators can develop evidence-based school counseling practices to improve all students' success.

Principals as Partners: Counselors as Collaborators

An effective relationship between the principal and school counselor is essential as we develop high-quality educational opportunity for all children, their families, and communities (Edwards et al., 2014). Dahir et al. (2010) revealed perceptions and suggests the importance of school counselor and principal collaboration to support this common goal. To have effective relationships to increase student achievement, there must be ongoing communication, trust and respect, leadership, and collaborative planning between the principal and school counselor (Mason & Perera-Diltz, 2010).

Working as allies, principals and school counselors are in a unique position to forge systemic change that promotes social justice, fosters student success, and develops partnerships with the school community to directly support the school's vision and mission (Dahir et al., 2010; Janson et al., 2008). For ASCA standards to be realized, principals are recommended to have the knowledge and skills to effectively support counselors in their appropriate roles. School administrators are recommended to understand the roles and function of school counselors to improve students' academic, social, emotional and career development (Clemens et al., 2009).

The success of a school counseling program, like all vital programs within a school, is contingent upon support from the school leader (Duslak & Geier, 2018). A positive partnership between the principal and school counselor may enhance outcomes in many areas, for example, increased support for at-risk and disadvantaged students (Johnson & Perkins, 2009), establishment of an achievement-oriented school climate (College Board, 2008), and heightened social justice advocacy (Crawford et al., 2014).

Principals' unclear role perceptions and their lack of understanding about the ASCA national model can present challenges for school counselors by placing barriers to the effective implementation of comprehensive school counseling programs and also by reducing the amount of time counselors have available to spend on appropriate duties (ASCA, 2012). As education programs in the United States shift to better meet students' needs, the responsibilities and roles of school counselors have changed. In addition to addressing academic, socioemotional and college and career readiness goals of students, critically conscious school counselors "use their position to affect systemic change in school to address inequities" (Hines, Lemons, and Crews, 2011). However, organizational structures to support these changes often do not exist. Possible reasons for this include a lack of principal knowledge about the roles and ethical responsibilities of counselors, staff shortages, and lack of funding for counselor positions (Kimber & Campbell, 2014).

Increased principal capacity to understand and collaborate with counselors will likely create changes in this area. School administrators are in a position to support school counselors by sharing their value of the profession with others, actively engaging in activities to learn more about the school counseling profession, and having conversations with counselors about their role (Dahir et al., 2010; Desimone & Roberts, 2016). Therefore, principals and counselors are encouraged to engage in a continuing dialogue that ensures a continuous loop of free-flowing information (Riddile, 2008). Working as a team, counselors and principals can ensure that the school is responsive to student, parent, and teacher needs and that the school has the capacity to link students' current academic preparation to their future goals (Riddile, 2008).

The need for school counselors and principals to work effectively together helps to foster a collaborative relationship that leads to more effective practice and improved educational outcomes for students (Finkelstein et al., 2009). In another study regarding the relationship and perspectives of school counselors and principals, the importance of collaboration and having a synergistic relationship was identified. Intentional collaborative relationship between school counselors and principals has the potential to foster systemic and sustained change for school improvement (Janson et al., 2008). Collaboration between the school counselor and principal can play a critical role in impacting both the school as a whole and students individually.

Overall, research suggests that efforts to increase educational opportunities and collaboration between administrators, school counselors, and school stakeholders should take place to better prepare P-12 students to be college and career ready (DeSimone & Roberts, 2016). Therefore, school principals and counselors need to work together to encourage students to see postsecondary education as an essential part of their future, supporting their career and life goals. Multiple community sectors should collaborate and share data to assist underserved students and families, providing services that address financial, emotional, and social challenges. Easing the transition to college includes helping students enhance key skills such as time management, self-awareness, and goal setting (Gao, 2016).

There is sufficient evidence on the importance of the school administrator and counselor having an effective partnership. Research also indicates school achievement, opportunity, and equity improve when the school has a strong comprehensive counseling program (Carey & Dimmitt, 2012). The ASCA National Model calls for comprehensive school counseling to become an integral part of the school's academic mission and provides a framework with four essential components: foundation, management, delivery, and accountability. The roles of school counselors in addressing student academic, career, personal, and social development are also outlined in the ASCA Model (ASCA, 2012).

Academic Development

School success depends on the degree to which students have opportunities to engage in learning activities that gradually lead to knowledge acquisition as well as skills and dispositions development (Li & Lerner, 2013). To that effect, both academic and school counseling curricula should be structured in a way

that strikes a balance between academic and non-academic foci designed to meet the needs of all students by taking into account their "varying needs and abilities" (Sedlacek, 2004)

Schools and postsecondary institutions are encouraged to work closely to align standards for high school graduation and placement in credit-bearing college courses by offering all students a rigorous, college-ready curriculum, starting in middle school. This includes equitable access to high-level math courses and opportunities to earn early college credit (e.g., dual enrollment and Advanced Placement courses). It is also crucial to assess students' readiness regularly and to intervene early to remediate academic needs before college enrollment (Gao, 2016).

A previous study found that participants in dual enrollment programs were more likely to graduate from high school, more likely to transition to a four-year college, less likely to take basic skills courses in college, more likely to persist in postsecondary education and more likely to accumulate college credits than comparison students (Roderick et al., 2009). It is also noted that students who participated in dual enrollment programs also developed a greater awareness of the requirements of college and socialization skills conducive to college success, such as navigating complex college tasks and taking responsibility for their academic progress (Roderick et al., 2009). Moreover, the first-generation students who participated in dual enrollment were more likely to attain any postsecondary degree and earn a bachelor's degree compared to non-participants (Fulton et al., 2014).

Since connecting high school coursework to postsecondary coursework through programs such as dual enrollment or early college high schools has proven to be an effective strategy to prepare students academically and socially for college, school leaders and counselors are encouraged to collaborate to provide all students with opportunities to do college-level work (such as AP or IB) or to participate in dual-enrollment classes (Speroni, 2011). The rigorous college-level courses offered in the high school educational system helps to show students' ability to comprehend and handle the demanding and complex subjects covered in college level courses (Akmel, 2018).

Regarding academic development, research indicates that strong comprehensive school counseling programs favorably advance important school goals like improved student achievement, opportunity, and equity (Carey & Dimmitt, 2012; Wilkerson et al., 2013). Particularly, school counselors play a major role in making sure that the student is placed in the proper courses to improve their college and career readiness (Dervarics, 2011).

Since there is an achievement gap among different race and ethnicity groups, in terms of promoting social justice, school counselors have a very crucial role to support African American and Hispanic students taking advanced mathematics courses beyond the minimum required for graduation (Reid & Moore, 2008). Without proper guidance and counseling services, students often do not realize that not taking rigorous high school courses hurts their college prospects (Reid & Moore, 2008). Therefore, school counselors are encouraged to help students build a strong academic foundation by motivating and guiding students to take advanced placement courses. These courses might enable students to obtain college credit and provide exposure to college-level materials, and to develop intellectual and career capacity in terms of creative problem solving, communication skills, technology skills, and critical thinking (Peterson, 2013). Moreover, school principals and counselors, as well as other stakeholders, are responsible for making sure that both academic curricula and counseling services are conducive to supporting students' academic development both in school and out (Welton & Martinez, 2014; Yavuz, 2014).

Social-Emotional Development

Besides academic development, social-emotional learning (SEL) is also a large part of helping to make students college and career ready. SEL involves the processes through which students and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive

relationships, and make responsible decisions (Durlak et al., 2011). The five SEL Core Competencies are generally identified as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning [CASEL], n.d.).

One of the key components of self-awareness is the ability to identify, describe, and understand emotions as well as the causes of these emotions (Mayer et al., 2004). This skill relates to an individual's perception of his or her own ability to accomplish a goal or execute a plan and has been shown to shape long-term aspirations and career trajectories (Bandura et al., 2001). A core aspect of this competency is emotion regulation, which involves learning to manage feeling overwhelmed and to adopt strategies that help reestablish a state of balance after feeling overwhelmed (Gullone et al., 2010). This aspect is particularly important as students experience more challenging coursework in high school and college settings and have to handle emotions such as test anxiety (Bradley et al., 2010). Students who can cope with stress have been found to transition to college more successfully and perform better academically (DeBerard et al., 2004). Another core aspect of social awareness is the ability to understand and respect others' perspectives in social interactions. Social skills and responsible decision making to academic and social situations become increasingly important as adolescents navigate college and other settings independent from their parents (Steinberg, 2012).

School counselors serve as a first line of defense in identifying and addressing student social-emotional needs within the school setting. School counselors have unique training in helping students with social-emotional issues that may become barriers to academic success. Within the context of a comprehensive school counseling program, school counselors develop school counseling core curriculum, deliver small-group counseling and provide individual student planning directed at improving students' social-emotional well-being (ASCA, 2017). Moreover, the social-emotional domain is composed of standards to help students manage emotions and learn and apply interpersonal skills as early as preschool and kindergarten (ASCA, 2014). School counselors promote mindsets and behaviors in all grade levels that enhance the learning process and create a culture of college and career readiness for all students in the area of social-emotional development (ASCA, 2017).

The school counselor is key to identifying students' social-emotional needs (VanVelsor, 2009). School counselors play a critical role in supporting social/emotional development as they collaborate with classroom teachers to provide the school counseling core curriculum to all students through direct instruction, team-teaching or providing lesson plans for learning activities or units in classrooms aimed at social/emotional development (ASCA, 2012). Both school leaders and school counselors are committed to supporting students' social/emotional needs by utilizing school counseling theories to inform both direct and indirect services related to the K–12 students' social/emotional development. As advocates for students, school counselors promote SEL of all students that include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

College and Career Readiness

The College Board identifies eight components of college and career counseling for school counselors seeking to inspire and prepare students: college aspirations; academic planning for college and career readiness; enrichment and extracurricular engagement; college and career exploration and selection processes; college and career assessments; college affordability planning; college and career admission processes; and transition from high school graduation to college enrollment (College Board, 2010). School counselors can be highly effective advocates, helping students identify their best options based on their potential and goals (Ward, 2006). Counselors must have high expectations for all students and work collaboratively to ensure their success (Reid & Moore, 2008). In their roles as advocates, school counselors work with low-income African American students and their families to address marginality, culture, and power relationships that limit college preparedness (Holcomb-McCoy, 2010).

Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
ISSN#: 2473-2826

The ASCA Professional School Counseling Journal presented its findings on the implementation of comprehensive counseling programs and associated benefits for students in six different states: Connecticut, Missouri, Nebraska, Rhode Island, Utah, and Wisconsin (Lapan, 2012). These six state-level studies focusing on measuring the impacts of comprehensive school counseling programs 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 such as individual and group counseling (Carey & Dimmitt, 2012).

In general, it is reported that even though very large implementation gaps exist between schools in delivering a comprehensive program to all students, comprehensive school counseling interventions have the capacity to improve a wide range of student outcomes that include higher ACT test scores, higher state scores in math and reading, higher percentage of ACT takers, lower disciplinary incidents, better school attendance rates, lower suspension rates, and better graduation rates (Carey & Dimmitt, 2012; Lapan, 2012). According to the findings of these six major state studies, when highly trained, professional school counselors deliver ASCA National Model comprehensive school counseling program services, students receive measurable benefits in academic, personal, social, and career development (Yavuz, 2014). By creating a community-wide effort, professional school counselors are in a critical position to help students understand the options they have after high school and maximize their post-secondary opportunities (Dahir & Stone, 2012).

School counselors are expected to offer comprehensive, developmental, and empirically-based programs that emphasize the social, emotional, academic, and career development for all students (Morgan et al., 2014). School counselors can help to foster college opportunity, readiness, and access for students, as they provide academic, social-emotional, and vocational counseling services on a regular basis. Moreover, school counselors can provide personalized school counseling sessions and classroom guidance workshops that address college exploration, the college admissions process, and career readiness to help students determine the college majors and qualifications that will enable them to pursue their future career (Yavuz, 2014).

School counselors are critical key stakeholders in the college and career readiness process as they understand the importance of building relationships with post-secondary schools and community agencies, as well as the need to collaborate with other educators, family members, and students on helping them to set and achieve their goals (Bryan et al., 2015). It is also important to note that having a collective responsibility in students' college readiness from teachers, counselors, parents, students, and superintendents are very crucial (Yamamura et al., 2010).

Research has also shown the instrumental role that school counselors play in college exploration, college choice, and career readiness of all students, especially minority and low-income students (Bryan et al., 2011). One of the most important aspects of college and career counseling involves assisting students in appropriate course selection, as these choices impact their overall preparedness and readiness for post-secondary endeavors. School leaders and counselors are expected to work together to ensure that schools to have the necessary resources for minority population to help prepare for college and learn skills necessary for success while in college (Reid & Moore, 2008).

Methods

There is a growing emphasis to improve every student's academic, social-emotional, and career and college development and schools strive to design and deliver comprehensive counseling programs that support students. In this quantitative study, we explored faculty members' perspectives on improving a high poverty urban school's counseling services to extend school leaders' and school counselors' knowledge about delivering effective school counseling programs.

We employed a comprehensive school counseling needs assessment survey to broadly explore perceptions of principals, school counselors, and classroom teachers regarding priorities and expectations to inform school counseling services. We investigated the following research questions:

1. Based on urban educator's perspective, what are the high academic, social, emotional, and career development needs of the students?
2. How are the perceptions of principals, school counselors, and classroom teachers similar and different related to students' counseling needs?

We sought to gain an understanding of the urgent needs of urban high school students to inform school counseling services. The study design allowed for urban school principals and school counselors to identify the high and low program needs of urban students to improve their academic, social, emotional, and career development. Particularly, school leaders and counselors can apply the results to consider time allocation in prevention/education versus reactive/responsive academic and counseling services.

Setting and Participants

This study was conducted at a large urban high school in Connecticut with over 1500 students. The composition of the students in the urban high school are 40.6% Black or African American, 40.8% Hispanic or Latino, 12.6% White, 3.8% Asian, and 2.2% other. Special education students make up 16% of the population and English Language Learners make up 12.6% of the students. At the time of the study, all 107 classroom teachers, school counselors, and supervisors in this urban school were invited to complete the needs assessment survey.

One hundred and five educators from this large urban high school in Connecticut voluntarily participated in the study (Response rate: 98.13%). Based on the survey results, most of the educators self-identified as Caucasian Americans (73.9%), with African Americans (12.1%), Hispanic or Latino (11.3%), and Asian Americans (2.2%). The composition of the staff who took the comprehensive needs assessment survey are general education teachers (78.09%), special education teachers (12.38%), school counselors (4.76%), 3 social workers (2.86%) and school psychologists (1.90%).

Survey Instrument

The matrix comprehensive school counseling need assessment survey was composed of questions in 3 domains: 1) academic development needs, (2) social and emotional development needs, and 3) college readiness and career development needs. Urban high school educators were instructed to rate responses to questions related to the school counseling services needed by the school in order to meet the needs of each domain. Participants determined the level of need for each school counseling service by indicating "4"- Strongly Agree, "3"- Agree, "2"- Disagree, "1"- Strongly Disagree.

The Comprehensive School Counseling Needs Assessment Survey was reviewed by an expert panel consisting of certified school counselors and certified school administrators, and university professors. College readiness and career development goals provide the foundation for the acquisition of skills, habits of mind, and knowledge that enable students to make a successful transition from school to the world of work and as careers changes across the lifespan. Career development goals and competencies ensure that students participate in a comprehensive plan of

career awareness, exploration, and preparation activities (CCSCF, 2021). The first domain of the Needs Assessment Survey was comprised of 11 questions regarding the college and career readiness of the urban high school students. These items had the respondents reflect on the college readiness and career development needs of their students. First, the authors conducted a reliability analysis to determine the internal consistency of the items. Fourteen items were included (N = 105) in the analysis. The results of the analysis indicated a Cronbach's alpha of .91, which was well above the conventionally acceptable Cronbach's alpha of .70 for social science research (Cohen, 1998).

Table 1
Urban Students' College Readiness and Career Development Needs

1. Understanding their post-secondary options (colleges, career and technical schools)
2. Learning what education, trainings and skills are required for different jobs
3. Gaining early career experiences
4. Understanding and using the accessible college and career readiness resources
5. Receiving support during their college application and college admission process
6. Identifying their personal interests, abilities and values
7. Receiving information about paying for college, grant, financial aid and loans
8. Receiving support for a job search and job application (cover letter, resume writing, etc.)
9. Planning their college and career path based on their personal interests and skills
10. Receiving support during their college enrollment and college transition process
11. Having easy access to school counselor to get help with their college and career concerns

Cronbach's alpha= .91

The second domain of the Needs Assessment Survey was comprised of 18 questions regarding the social and emotional development of the urban high school students they teach. Social-Emotional Development goals provide the foundation for social-emotional growth as students progress through school and into adulthood. Social-emotional development contributes to academic and career success by helping students understand and respect themselves and others, acquire effective interpersonal skills, understand safety and survival skills, and develop into contributing members of society. These items had the respondents reflect on the social and emotional development needs of their students. The results of the internal consistency analysis indicated a Cronbach's alpha of .87.

Table 2
Urban Students' Social and Emotional Development Needs

1. Getting along better with their friends, family members, teachers, and others
2. Recognizing, expressing, and managing their emotions
3. Improving their self-confidence and self-esteem
4. Dealing with peer pressure, harassment and bullying
5. Understanding and accepting their personal strengths and weaknesses
6. Dealing with their gender identity and sexual orientation
7. Improving my communication and relationship skills

8. Dealing with dating and relationships issues
9. Improving their leadership and self-advocacy skills
10. Dealing with my own personal issues and health problems
11. Participating in enrichment and extracurricular activities (art, clubs, sports, etc.)
12. Understanding the balance between school, work and leisure
13. Learning about community service and volunteer projects
14. Dealing with alcohol and drug addition
15. Dealing with their home, family, divorce, and parent separation issues
16. Feeling safe at school
17. Dealing with self-harm and suicidal thoughts
18. Having easy access to school counselor to get help with their social and emotional concerns

Cronbach's alpha= .87

The third domain of the Needs Assessment Survey was comprised of 11 questions regarding the academic development of the urban high school students. Academic Development goals provide the foundation for acquisition of skills, habits of mind, and knowledge that contribute to effective learning in school; employing strategies to achieve success in school; and understanding the relationship of academics to the world of work, and to life at home and in the community (CCSCF, 2021). These items had the respondents reflect on the academic development and school success needs of their students. The results of the internal consistency analysis indicated a Cronbach's alpha of .88.

Table 3
Urban Students' Academic Development Needs

1. Improving their self-motivation and interest toward learning and schoolwork
2. Exploring their academic strength and weaknesses
3. Improving their effective study and organizational skills
4. Understanding the graduation requirements
5. Learning standardized state tests and college entrance exams requirements
6. Understanding what their test scores mean in relation to academic and career planning
7. Improving their test-taking skills
8. Tracking their academic progress toward graduation and college readiness
9. Improving their academic weaknesses
10. Learning how to manage their time
11. Use computer, social media, and technology effectively to improve their learning
12. Setting academic goals based on their strength and weaknesses
13. Reducing their test anxiety
14. Having easy access to their school counselor to get help with their academic concerns

Cronbach's alpha= .88

Procedures

The authors obtained Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval prior to distributing the survey to a convenience sample of urban classroom teachers, school leaders who were employed in large Connecticut urban school. The main goal of the survey was to understand the urgent needs

of urban high school students to inform school counseling services Participants were emailed a link with instructions to complete the Comprehensive School Counseling Needs Assessment Survey, with multiple reminders during Sprin 2020. The educators were composed of general education teachers, special education teachers, guidance counselors, and social workers. As previously mentioned, questions posed to the respondents included demographics about school counseling setting; years of experience; gender; grade level; and current job title. Participants completed the survey anonymously.

Data Analysis

An overall description of the data analysis in this study was explorative using quantitative analysis descriptive and inferential statistics. Specifically, to address the first specific research question examining the perceptions of urban school leaders of the perceptions regarding high academic, social, emotional, and career development needs of the students? The researchers calculated descriptive statistics. Analyses included frequency distributions, measures of central tendency (i.e., mean, median), and dispersion (i.e., standard deviation) measured by survey item in three main constructs.

In addition to the descriptive stats, to examine how are the perceptions of principals, school counselors and classroom teachers similar and different related to students' counseling needs in the second specific research question, we used inferential statistics. The independent variable, measured at the three-level categorical level, was the participant's position (i.e., 1. school admins, 2. school counseling staff and 3. classroom teachers). The dependent variable, measured at the interval level, was participants' survey responses as measured by the survey. Because of the study's relatively large sample size (N=105) and normal distribution, the authors utilized the parametric one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to test the following null hypothesis: There is no statistically significant difference between principals and school counselors in terms of their perceptions of the priorities related to students' counseling needs. In the findings, one-way analysis of variance results were reported when comparing whether three samples means are significantly different or not.

Results

Urban Educators' View of the Academic Needs of High School Students

Teachers, school counselors and administrators from the large urban high school surveyed demonstrated their views on students' academic and social-emotional needs as well as their college and career readiness. Urban Educators rated students' specific areas of academic developmental needs. Table 10 presents the descriptive statistics for individual items. According to the educators, students' highest needs include "Improving their self-motivation and interest toward learning and schoolwork (M=3.41, SD=0.68)." "Exploring their academic strengths and weaknesses (M=3.40, SD=0.76)." "Improving their effective study and organizational skills (M=3.38, SD=0.77)." Understanding the graduation requirements (M=3.32, SD=0.87)." and learning standardized state tests and college entrance exam requirements (M=3.27, SD=0.76)." The full list of urban educators' view of the academic needs of students are listed below.

Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
ISSN#: 2473-2826

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics for Academic Needs Survey Rated by Urban Educators

	M	*SD*	*N*
Improving their self-motivation and interest toward learning	3.41	0.68	101
Exploring their academic strengths and weaknesses	3.40	0.76	103
Improving their effective study and organizational skills	3.38	0.77	102
Understanding the graduation requirements	3.32	0.87	103
Learning standardized state and college entrance exam requirements	3.27	0.76	102
Understanding what their test scores mean in relation to career planning	3.18	0.68	99
Improving their test-taking skills	3.13	0.81	103
Tracking their academic progress toward graduation and college	3.12	0.75	101
Improving their academic weaknesses	3.08	0.88	103
Learning how to manage their time	3.01	0.81	102
Use social media, and technology effectively to improve their learning	3.00	0.81	101
Setting academic goals based on their strengths and weaknesses	2.95	0.92	102
Reducing their test anxiety	2.94	0.76	101
Having easy access to their counselor to get help with their academic concerns	2.94	0.88	102

Social-Emotional Needs

Urban educators have also rated students for their social and emotional needs. As seen in Table 11, students need to improve most in "Getting along better with their friends, family members, teachers, and others (*M*=3.24, *SD*=0.70)." "Recognizing, expressing, and managing their emotions (*M*=3.19, *SD*=0.70)." "Improving their self-confidence and self-esteem (*M*=3.14, *SD*=0.80)." Dealing with peer pressure, harassment, and bullying (*M*=3.14, *SD*=0.80)." Understanding and accepting their personal strengths and weaknesses (*M*=3.11, *SD*=0.80)." The full list of urban educators' view of the social and emotional needs of high school students are listed on Table 5.

Table 5
Descriptive Statistics for Social-Emotional Needs Survey Rated by Urban Educators

	M	*SD*	*N*
Getting along better with their friends, family, teachers, and others	3.24	0.7	102
Recognizing, expressing, and managing their emotions	3.20	0.8	102
Improving their self-confidence and self-esteem	3.19	0.7	102
Dealing with peer pressure, harassment, and bullying	3.14	0.8	102
Understanding and accepting their personal strengths and weaknesses	3.11	0.8	102
Dealing with their gender identity and sexual orientation	3.11	0.9	100
Improving their communication and relationship skills	3.09	0.8	102
Dealing with dating and relationship issues	3.08	0.7	101
Improving their leadership and self-advocacy skills	3.01	0.8	102
Dealing with their own personal issues and health problems	3.00	0.8	102
Participating in enrichment and extracurricular activities	2.99	0.8	100
Understanding the balance between school, work, and leisure	2.94	0.8	100
Learning about community service and volunteer projects	2.90	0.9	102
Dealing with alcohol and drug addiction	2.89	0.8	102
Dealing with their home, family, divorce, and parent separation issues	2.88	0.8	101
Feeling safe at school	2.84	0.8	100

Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
ISSN#: 2473-2826

Dealing with self-harm and suicidal thoughts	2.80	0.8	101
Having easy access to their school counselor to get help with their social and emotional concerns	2.72	0.8	101

College and Career Readiness Needs

Urban educators next rated students' college and career readiness needs. As seen in Table 12, "Having easy access to their school counselor to get help with their college and career readiness concerns (*M*=3.23, *SD*=0.80)," "Learning what education, training, and skills are required for different jobs (*M*=3.20, *SD*=0.90)," "Understanding their post-secondary options" (*M*=3.19, *SD*=0.90), "Receiving information about paying for college, grant, financial aid and loans (*M*=3.18, *SD*=0.80)," and "Receiving information about paying for college, grant, financial aid and loans (*M*=3.18, *SD*=0.80)," were the highest identified needs; however, students' needs in this area were stable across the individual items and none of the items stood out as particularly higher than others.

Table 6
Descriptive Statistics for College & Career Readiness Needs Survey Rated by Urban Educators

	M	*SD*	*N*
Having easy access to their school counselor to get help with their college and career readiness concerns	3.23	0.8	102
Learning what training, and skills are required for different jobs	3.20	0.9	102
Understanding their post-secondary options	3.19	0.9	102
Receiving information about paying for college, grant, and financial aid	3.18	0.8	101
Receiving support for a job search and job application	3.16	0.8	100
Identifying their personal interests, abilities, and values	3.15	0.8	100
Planning their post-secondary education and career path	3.14	0.9	101
Gaining early career experiences	3.12	0.9	101
Receiving support during their college enrollment and transition process	3.10	0.9	101
Receiving support during their college application and admission process	3.09	0.8	102
Understanding and using accessible college/career readiness resources	3.05	0.8	101

Exploring the Comprehensive Needs of High School Students from Three Perspectives

Teachers, school counselors, and administrators from the large urban high school surveyed demonstrated their views on students' academic and social-emotional needs as well as their college and career readiness. In the second part of the study, those comprehensive ratings were compared across (1) special education faculty, (2) regular classroom teachers and (3) school counselors. As indicated in Table 7, the ratings among those three groups regarding academic are listed below. The entire ANOVA summary tables showed non-significant differences. In other words, responses did not vary significantly across these three groups in terms of rating of students' academic needs $p>.05$.

Table 7
Group Differences in the Ratings of Academic Needs

			SS	*df*	MS	*F*	*p*
Improving their self-motivation and interest toward learning and schoolwork	Between Groups	3.03		2.00	1.52	2.59	.08
	Within Groups	56.76		97.00	0.59		
	Total	59.79		99.00			

Exploring their academic strengths and weaknesses	Between Groups	1.21	2.00	0.60	1.32	.27
	Within Groups	43.49	95.00	0.46		
	Total	44.69	97.00			
Improving their effective study and organizational skills	Between Groups	1.73	2.00	0.87	1.54	.22
	Within Groups	54.46	97.00	0.56		
	Total	56.19	99.00			
Understanding the graduation requirements	Between Groups	0.29	2.00	0.15	0.25	.78
	Within Groups	56.21	96.00	0.59		
	Total	56.51	98.00			
Learning standardized state tests and college entrance exam requirements	Between Groups	0.00	2.00	0.00	0.00	1.00
	Within Groups	66.00	96.00	0.69		
	Total	66.00	98.00			
Understanding what their test scores mean in relation to academic and career planning	Between Groups	2.49	2.00	1.24	1.61	.21
	Within Groups	75.71	98.00	0.77		
	Total	78.20	100.00			
Improving their test-taking skills	Between Groups	0.73	2.00	0.36	0.62	.54
	Within Groups	56.98	97.00	0.59		
	Total	57.71	99.00			
Tracking their academic progress toward graduation and college readiness	Between Groups	2.75	2.00	1.37	2.49	.09
	Within Groups	53.03	96.00	0.55		
	Total	55.78	98.00			
Improving their academic weaknesses	Between Groups	1.99	2.00	0.99	2.17	.12
	Within Groups	43.85	96.00	0.46		
	Total	45.84	98.00			
Learning how to manage their time	Between Groups	3.03	2.00	1.51	2.03	.14
	Within Groups	73.19	98.00	0.75		
	Total	76.22	100.00			
Use computer, social media, and technology effectively to improve their learning	Between Groups	0.23	2.00	0.11	0.13	.88
	Within Groups	84.52	97.00	0.87		
	Total	84.75	99.00			
Setting academic goals based on their strengths and weaknesses	Between Groups	1.22	2.00	0.61	0.91	.40
	Within Groups	65.36	98.00	0.67		
	Total	66.57	100.00			
Reducing their test anxiety	Between Groups	0.15	2.00	0.08	0.11	.89
	Within Groups	64.84	97.00	0.67		
	Total	64.99	99.00			
Having easy access to their school counselor to get help with their academic concerns	Between Groups	2.69	2.00	1.34	1.76	.18
	Within Groups	73.83	97.00	0.76		
	Total	76.51	99.00			

The next set of comparisons were conducted for the social-emotional needs. Like academic development needs, the entire ANOVA summary tables showed non-significant differences. As shown in Table 8, again responses did not vary significantly across (1) special education faculty, (2) regular

Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
ISSN#: 2473-2826

classroom teachers and (3) school counselors in terms of rating of students' social and emotional needs p>.05.

Table 8
Group Differences in the Ratings of Social-Emotional Needs

		SS	*df*	MS	*F*	*P*
Getting along better with their friends, family members, teachers, and others	Between Groups	0.56	2.00	0.28	0.47	.63
	Within Groups	58.00	97.00	0.60		
	Total	58.56	99.00			
Recognizing, expressing, and managing their emotions	Between Groups	0.89	2.00	0.44	0.72	.49
	Within Groups	60.44	98.00	0.62		
	Total	61.33	100.00			
Improving their self-confidence and self-esteem	Between Groups	0.13	2.00	0.07	0.11	.90
	Within Groups	58.88	98.00	0.60		
	Total	59.01	100.00			
Dealing with peer pressure, harassment, and bullying	Between Groups	1.68	2.00	0.84	1.55	.22
	Within Groups	53.11	98.00	0.54		
	Total	54.79	100.00			
Understanding and accepting their personal strengths and weaknesses	Between Groups	0.17	2.00	0.09	0.15	.86
	Within Groups	55.19	97.00	0.57		
	Total	55.36	99.00			
Dealing with their gender identity and sexual orientation	Between Groups	0.91	2.00	0.46	0.77	.47
	Within Groups	57.25	97.00	0.59		
	Total	58.16	99.00			
Improving their communication and relationship skills	Between Groups	0.25	2.00	0.13	0.23	.80
	Within Groups	54.04	98.00	0.55		
	Total	54.30	100.00			
Dealing with dating and relationship issues	Between Groups	1.88	2.00	0.94	1.62	.20
	Within Groups	56.12	97.00	0.58		
	Total	58.00	99.00			
Improving their leadership and self-advocacy skills	Between Groups	2.69	2.00	1.34	2.04	.14
	Within Groups	64.74	98.00	0.66		

Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
ISSN#: 2473-2826

	Total	67.43	100.00			
Dealing with their own personal issues and health problems	Between Groups	0.78	2.00	0.39	0.64	.53
	Within Groups	60.21	98.00	0.61		
	Total	60.99	100.00			
Participating in enrichment and extracurricular activities (art, clubs, sports, etc.)	Between Groups	0.19	2.00	0.10	0.14	.87
	Within Groups	69.81	98.00	0.71		
	Total	70.00	100.00			
Understanding the balance between school, work, and leisure	Between Groups	0.36	2.00	0.18	0.28	.76
	Within Groups	63.01	98.00	0.64		
	Total	63.37	100.00			
Learning about community service and volunteer projects	Between Groups	0.15	2.00	0.08	0.12	.89
	Within Groups	62.86	98.00	0.64		
	Total	63.01	100.00			
Dealing with alcohol and drug addiction	Between Groups	3.05	2.00	1.52	2.32	.10
	Within Groups	63.03	96.00	0.66		
	Total	66.08	98.00			
Dealing with their home, family, divorce, and parent separation issues	Between Groups	0.16	2.00	0.08	0.13	.88
	Within Groups	58.35	96.00	0.61		
	Total	58.51	98.00			
Feeling safe at school	Between Groups	1.78	2.00	0.89	1.24	.29
	Within Groups	70.03	98.00	0.72		
	Total	71.80	100.00			
Dealing with self-harm and suicidal thoughts	Between Groups	1.17	2.00	0.58	0.95	.39
	Within Groups	58.79	96.00	0.61		
	Total	59.96	98.00			
Having easy access to their school counselor to get help with their personal and social emotional concerns	Between Groups	1.07	2.00	0.53	0.71	.49
	Within Groups	71.92	96.00	0.75		
	Total	72.99	98.00			

Finally, the next set of comparisons were conducted for the college-career readiness needs. Again, the ANOVA summary table showed non-significant differences across the groups $p>0.05$ (See Table 9). The groups differed only in one item: "Understanding and using the accessible college and career readiness resources." A one-way ANOVA is used to determine whether or not there is a statistically significant

Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
ISSN#: 2473-2826

difference between the means of three independent groups. (F(2, 97) = [3.89], p = 0.02). The ratings were significantly higher (*M* = 3.15, *SD* = .80) for the regular educators than special education (*M* = 2.75, *SD* = .87) and school counselors (*M* = 2.44, *SD* = .88). The measure of effect size, partial eta-squared was calculated and $\eta^2 = 0.74$ indicates a large effect.

Table 9
Group Differences in the Ratings of College-Career Readiness Needs

		SS	*df*	MS	*F*	*p*
Understanding their post-secondary options (colleges, career, and technical schools)	Between Groups	4.17	2.00	2.08	2.97	.06
	Within Groups	68.63	98.00	0.70		
	Total	72.79	100.00			
Learning what education, training, and skills are required for different jobs	Between Groups	3.18	2.00	1.59	2.14	.12
	Within Groups	72.86	98.00	0.74		
	Total	76.04	100.00			
Gaining early career experiences (participating in career fairs, job shadowing, internships and/or apprenticeship, etc.)	Between Groups	2.57	2.00	1.28	1.60	.21
	Within Groups	77.99	97.00	0.80		
	Total	80.56	99.00			
Understanding and using the accessible college and career readiness resources	Between Groups	5.19	2.00	2.60	3.89	.02
	Within Groups	64.65	97.00	0.67		
	Total	69.84	99.00			
Receiving support during their college application and college admission process	Between Groups	2.94	2.00	1.47	2.11	.13
	Within Groups	68.42	98.00	0.70		
	Total	71.37	100.00			
Identifying their personal interests, abilities, and values	Between Groups	3.26	2.00	1.63	2.76	.07
	Within Groups	56.76	96.00	0.59		
	Total	60.02	98.00			
	Between Groups	1.32	2.00	0.66	0.93	.40

Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
ISSN#: 2473-2826

Receiving information about paying for college, grant, financial aid and loans	Within Groups	68.79	97.00	0.71		
	Total	70.11	99.00			
Receiving support for a job search and job application (cover letter, resume writing, interviewing, etc.)	Between Groups	1.83	2.00	0.92	1.31	.27
	Within Groups	66.90	96.00	0.70		
	Total	68.73	98.00			
Planning their post-secondary education and career path based on their personal interests and skills	Between Groups	1.73	2.00	0.86	1.16	.32
	Within Groups	72.32	97.00	0.75		
	Total	74.04	99.00			
Receiving support during their college enrollment and college transition process	Between Groups	1.59	2.00	0.79	1.08	.34
	Within Groups	71.41	97.00	0.74		
	Total	73.00	99.00			
Having easy access to their school counselors to get help with their college and career readiness concerns	Between Groups	3.49	2.00	1.75	2.53	.09
	Within Groups	67.72	98.00	0.69		
	Total	71.21	100.00			

Discussion

Urban Educators View of the Needs of High School Students: **Academic Development**

In this study, teachers, school counselors and administrators from a large urban high identified student self-motivation and interest toward learning as the top academic need of the students. Students being aware of their academic strengths and weakness and overall academic style was the next identified need. The third major need identified by the educators was students being able to have effective study and organizational skills. The fourth major academic need identified by the educators was the students needing an understanding of the graduation requirements. These findings support the college readiness studies conducted by Conley (2008). A comprehensive college preparation program must address four distinct dimensions of college readiness: cognitive strategies, content knowledge, self-management skills, and knowledge about postsecondary education (Conley, 2008).

The top four needs related to the academic needs of urban students identified by the educators all tie into one another and demonstrate that the educators feel most of what the students need can come from within. Self-motivation and interest toward learning and schoolwork are not items that need to be built into a budget. The cognitive strategies and academic behaviors chosen by the staff are on par with Conley's four dimensions of college readiness.

Self-management is a form of metacognition—the act of thinking about how one is thinking. Research on the thinking of effective learners has shown that such individuals tend to monitor actively,

regulate, evaluate, and direct their own thinking (Ritchhart, 2002). As the students improve their motivation, they will be able to explore their academic strengths and weaknesses and develop an awareness of one's current level of mastery and understanding of a subject; the ability to reflect on what worked and what needed improvement regarding a particular academic task; the ability to persist when presented with a novel, difficult, or ambiguous task; the tendency to identify and systematically select among and employ a range of learning strategies; and the capability to transfer learning and strategies from familiar settings and situations to new ones (Bransford et al., 2000).

Student mastery of study skills is also necessary for college success. College courses require that significant amounts of time be devoted to out-of-class study. Since the study skills encompass active learning strategies that go far beyond reading the text and answering the homework questions. School counselors can consider integrating these important study-skill behaviors into their classroom guidance lessons including time management, stress management, task prioritizing, using information resources, taking class notes, and communicating with teachers and advisers (Yavuz, 2014).

Students having an understanding of the graduation requirements is connected to motivation of the students wanting to be aware of what they need to do and it is also connected to role of the counselor in helping to educate the students and the staff on the graduation requirements to help create a college culture. Students with college knowledge understand college admission criteria including high school course requirements, know how to complete an application, understand that different colleges have different missions, can state approximate tuition costs and the likelihood of financial aid from various types of colleges, and know admissions testing requirements and deadlines (Venezia et al., 2004). Therefore, it is crucial that the school counseling program delivery system helps underrepresented students' understanding of the graduation requirements

Social-Emotional Development

Based on the urban educators' view of the needs of high school students, the top social-emotional need of students is getting along better with their friends, family, teachers and others. The educators also identified recognizing, expressing, and managing their emotions as an essential need. Improving self-confidence and self-esteem was the third most important social-emotional need. Faculty responses indicated that they believe the students feel safe at school, as it scored towards the bottom of needs for the students.

College and career readiness depends on academic readiness, but this is only part of the equation. Social and emotional learning (SEL) is also important for a whole child development. Improving students' social-emotional skills has been shown to improve academic performance and provide students with a solid foundation for achieving success in post-secondary environments and in the workplace (Mahoney et al., 2020). Schools and educators can better prepare their students for life after high school by teaching the social-emotional skills that students need to thrive in post-secondary and workplace settings. Implementing SEL strategies can be very instrumental to lay the groundwork for long-term success. Therefore, in addition to direct SEL classroom guidance lessons, school counselors can help classroom teachers in social emotional education by providing resources and trainings to academic staff for incorporating SEL into their classrooms and everyday interactions.

SEL involves the processes through which students understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions (Durlak et al., 2011). Particularly, self-awareness involves the ability to make accurate self-judgments, have a sense of internal motivation, and have a sense of satisfaction when goals are attained. This skill relates to an individual's perception of his or her own ability to accomplish a goal or execute a plan and has been shown to shape long-term aspirations and career trajectories (Bandura et al., 2001). Since social emotional skills are important for a student success, it is crucial that school counselors,

teachers and educational leaders work collaboratively to integrate social-emotional learning throughout the school day.

Besides academic achievement, school leaders can collaborate with school counselors to promote SEL and soft skills by teaching students to interact with one another in appropriate and respectful ways. For instance, some school leaders and counselors collaborate to implement the RULER approach to social and emotional learning which involves a series of evidence-based SEL programs focused on emotional literacy at the elementary, middle, and high school levels (Brackett et al., 2012). This model assumes that teaching children and adults how to recognize, understand, label, express, and regulate (RULER) emotions leads to enhanced personal, social, and academic outcomes for students and the adults involved in their education (Brackett et al., 2010). In the RULER approach, both adults and children learn specific "anchor tools" that help to develop the RULER skills, create a positive school climate, and promote school success. The RULER curriculum can be considered as only one part of the overarching districtwide approach to promote SEL. Since the process of developing the self-awareness, self-control, and interpersonal skills are vital for school, work, and life success, school districts need a long-term systematic SEL implementation process, including training for school leaders, teachers, support staff, and families (Brackett et al., 2009)

College and Career Readiness

The data from the survey of urban educators found that having easy access to their school counselor to get help with their college and career readiness concerns was the top college and career readiness need for the students. In addition to having access to the counselors, students have the need to learn what education, training, and skills are required for different jobs and understand their post-secondary options. Based on the urban educators' view of the needs of high school students, receiving information about paying for college also was identified as a significant need. School counselors can provide classroom and parent workshops that address college exploration, the college admissions process, and career exploration to help students determine the college majors and qualifications that will enable them to pursue their future career (Yavuz, 2014). The researcher expected that access to the counselor for college and career needs would rank high but was surprised that urban educators did not rank access to the counselor at the top of their academic and social-emotional needs.

The college and career needs identified by the urban educators in this study would fall heavily on the school counselors. The school counselors play an integral role in helping the students to prepare for their postsecondary goals. Research has shown the instrumental role that school counselors play in college exploration, college choice, and career readiness of all students, especially minority and low-income students (Bryan et al., 2011).

School counselors have the key roles for assisting students in choosing the appropriate courses in order to help them obtain the necessary education and skills to be prepared for life after high school. School counselors can help to foster college opportunity, readiness, and access for students, as they provide academic, social/emotional, and vocational counseling services on a regular basis. School counselors are data-driven practitioners who work with administrators to resolve issues and promote equity among all students, which is a critical element for success (Hines et al., 2011).

School counselors can provide classroom and parent workshops that address college exploration, the college admissions process, and career exploration to help students determine the college majors and qualifications that will enable them to pursue their future career. School counselors can increase college readiness opportunities, as well as help develop a school-wide culture that promotes college readiness (Bryan et al., 2009).

National Office of School Counselor Advocacy identified eight components of college and career readiness that counselors were responsible for addressing. Perusse et al. (2015) studied the importance of the NOSCA's eight components of college and career readiness and characterized them to include: (1)

engaging students in planning and enrichment activities, (2) motivating students to enroll in challenging courses, (3) encouraging students to engage in college exploration activities so that they make informed decisions when selecting a school or career, (4) providing students and their families with college information and resources, (5) collaborating with students and parents in order to enhance their knowledge about college costs, financial aid, and the admissions process, so that students and their families are aware of scholarship processes, eligibility requirements, and options regarding college payment, and (6) making sure that students understand the college application and enrollment process so that they can choose the school or career that is most aligned with their passions and interests. School counselors are critical key stakeholders in the implementation of the NOSCA's eight components of college and career readiness by using the ASCA Model's four themes of leadership, advocacy, collaboration, and systemic change.

School counselors also play an important role to help students build a strong academic foundation by motivating them to take advanced placement and honor courses. These courses enable students to obtain college credit and provide exposure to college-level materials, and to develop intellectual and career capacity in terms of creative problem solving, communication skills, technology skills, and critical thinking (Peterson, 2013). School counselors can also help students evaluate their progress for college by meeting with students and discussing their degree of college readiness skills and by using college exploration programs (e.g., Naviance). Further, school counselors can encourage students to visit college campuses to get a realistic understanding of what life would be like if they were to attend a specific college or university. School counselors are also encouraged to facilitate workshops addressing Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) processes and college entrance exams, so students are familiar with the test format, process, and scoring (Peterson, 2013). Fear of being unable to afford college is one of the greatest impediments for students (Paulsen & St. John, 2002). Therefore, school counselor can also inform both students and parents on the various ways to pay for a college education through running FASFA and financial aid workshops.

After completing this study, the data has encouraged the researcher and the school leadership team to develop programs to meet the identified high needs. Based off the ASCA National Model's recommendation to develop an advisory council to review and monitor the counseling program activities and make recommendations to improve the quality of the counseling services, the researcher developed an Advisory Board with five counselors, four administrators, four teachers from 12th grade, as well as an external expert, student and parent representatives when needed. The Advisory Board was developed in November of 2019 and met to review the data obtained from this study. The Advisory Board is planning to utilize the ASCA Model for developing shaping the school's plan to meet the academic, social-emotional, and college and career needs of the students.

Implications for Policy and Practice

In order to guide practice, the school leadership team and advisory board will further develop a Vision of the Graduate that includes the attainment of transferrable skills, knowledge, understandings and dispositions necessary for future success and provides feedback to learners and parents on each learner's progress in achieving this vision. The Vision of the Graduate will assist in providing opportunities for students to learn the desired skills and necessary dispositions. It will also serve as a guide for the students in the academic and career planning process. As part of the vision, both academic and school counseling curriculum will be aligned to a variety of post-secondary opportunities. The major student academic, social-emotional, and college and career needs will also be incorporated into the Vision of the Graduate.

Moreover, the school leadership team and advisory board is planning to use the ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success as a framework to design a college and career curriculum containing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes students need to achieve academic success, college and career readiness and social-emotional development. School counselors will work with students in groups and individually

to help them develop the mindset and behavior standards to be successful. The counseling curriculum will provide career counseling, standardized test preparation, academic advising, mentoring, financial aid information, college admissions and effective post-secondary education transition information (ASCA, 2012; Carey & Dimmitt, 2012; Lapan, 2012).

Improving student motivation and persistence has been identified as being an important need for improving achievement. Peer tutoring and peer advising programs will be implemented to provide support to students and reduce the workload of the school counselor. The strongest effects for mentees appear to be increases in school attitudes (e.g., connectedness), relationships with adults (both teachers and parents) and peers, and improvements in internal affective states (e.g., self-esteem) (Petosa & Smith, 2014). The school leadership team will assist counselors by providing the necessary training to obtain the skills, resources, and knowledge to meet the needs of the diverse population. The school administrators will collaborate and consult with school counselors to make sure students are gaining the necessary skills and knowledge to be prepared for post-secondary success.

School counselors play a large role in helping to create a college and career climate. Counselors need to connect with students in all three broad ASCA domains: academic, career, and social-emotional development (ASCA, 2014). Counselors will work with school administrators to organize events such as SAT/ACT info nights, college application days and instant decision days. These will help to bring a focus on college to the school and help students to see the connection from school to postsecondary education

It is critical for high school counselors to provide parents with knowledge on the college application process for low income students and students of color who will likely be first-generation college students (Holcomb-McCoy, 2010). African American parents are less likely to have attended college; therefore, they need more access to information, resources, and support to assist their children in college enrollment, especially in the areas of applications, admissions processes, financial aid, testing, tours, and other key elements (Holcomb-McCoy, 2010; Reid & Moore, 2008). Counselors will provide students and parents support with completing FAFSA and making them aware of available scholarships. The counselors need to be a lead figure in helping urban families navigate the college application process.

ASCA recommends that the school balances counseling and non-counseling duties to maximize effectiveness. The ASCA Model recommends a counselor ratio of 250 to 1; however, in urban high schools needing a more intensive program, one counselor for every 160 students is recommended. Administrators and counselors need to work together to make sure counselors are not assigned non-counseling duties. School counselors and school administration need to work together regularly to plan college and career readiness activities. In addition, administration needs to assist in scheduling time for counselors to be able to engage in individual, intensive college and career counseling with students in order to develop college and career plans. The counselors are accountable for developing an integrated and comprehensive college and career readiness plan for each student, but they will also need help from administration in providing a structure for this to happen.

Limitations and Implications for Future Research

In this study, 80 percent of the students in the study are African American or Hispanic, as White and Asian not adequately represented. The sample comes from one school. Students' characteristics and unique institutional factors might account for some of the outcomes. Student and family background characteristics, as well as unique factors to the school may also account for some of the outcomes. Another methodological limitation of the study is the survey data and whether respondents gave honest answers to survey questions the researcher used. In addition, only 1 cohort was used. Following consecutive cohorts over a period would allow the researcher to see if there are differences beyond what was found with this one cohort.

Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
ISSN#: 2473-2826

It is recommended that the study is replicated at other urban high schools to investigate whether the same or similar results are found. Future research can also involve mixed-methods or qualitative methods to approach to investigate students' individual experiences regarding the course of study and interaction with their counselor. In terms of gathering data from the urban educators, in addition to the survey, interviews could be used to get further details on why they identified the academic, social-emotional, and college and career needs that they did. This could possibly lead to further insight which would assist in developing plans for the school.

Conclusion

Results from this study provide school administrators, school counselors, teachers, and policy makers practical information and strategies in designing and implementing comprehensive academic and counseling services to students. The findings of this study urge urban high schools to create a research-based comprehensive program for students that would cater to the diverse needs of students and meet the college and career readiness accountability standards.

The findings of this research support the belief that when principals and well-trained school counselors collaborate to provide comprehensive academic, social-emotional, and college and career programs, PK-12 students will receive the necessary skills to be ready for post-secondary success. School districts should be aware that to prepare all students to become college and career ready, high expectations should be set and ongoing support and guidance must be given collaboratively through comprehensive school counseling programs (Carey & Dimmitt, 2012; Lapan, 2012). Students can be college and career ready regardless of their gender, ethnicity, race, socio-economic, or family background when school counselors act as leaders, advocates, consultants, coordinators, collaborators, managers of resources, and facilitators (Dahir & Stone, 2012).

In this study, we provide insights into how help urban students meet college readiness benchmarks. Urban high schools face challenges of having equal access to resources and opportunities, which makes it imperative that they develop comprehensive academic and counseling services to help their students reach the college readiness benchmarks. Factors such as attendance, gender, lunch status, status as a special education or ELL student, discipline issues, all play a role in causing inequities in college readiness.

Urban school administrators, school counselors, teachers, and policymakers are encouraged to work collaboratively to implement the necessary academic and counseling services needed for urban students to succeed. When implemented with fidelity, these services have the capacity to improve the probability of urban students being college ready.

References

Akmel, A. (2018). *Quantitative analysis of minority students' college preparedness and matriculatin through advanced placement test scores*. University of Maryland, College Park. https://drum.lib.umd.edu/bitstream/handle/1903/20501/McNair Research- Minorities College Prepardness .pdf

American School Counselor Association (ASCA). (2012). *ASCA national model: A framework for school counseling*.

American School Counselor Association (2014). *Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success: K-12 College- and Career-Readiness Standards for Every Student*. Alexandria, VA: Author

American School Counselor Association (ASCA), (2017). *ASCA national standards for students.*

Bandura, A., Barbaranelli, C., Caprara, G. V., & Pastorelli, C. (2001). Self-efficacy beliefs as shapers of childrens aspirations and career trajectories. *Child Development, 72*(1), 187-206. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8624.00273

Bradley, R., McCraty, R., Atkinson, M., Tomasino, D., Daugherty, A., & Arguelles, L. (2010). Emotion self-regulation, psychophysiological coherence, and test anxiety: Results from an experiment using electrophysiological measures. *Applied Psychophysiology & Biofeedback, 35*(4), 261-283. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10484-010-9134-x

Brackett, M. A., Rivers, S. E., Reyes, M. R., & Salovey, P. (2012). Enhancing academic performance and social and emotional competence with the RULER Feeling Words Curriculum. *Learning and Individual Differences, 22*, 218-224. httpps://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2010.10.002

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 & Development, 89*(2), 190-199. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6678.2011.tb00077.x

Bransford, J. D., Brown, A. L., and Cocking, R. R. (eds.). (2000). *How people learn: Brain, mind, experience, and school.* National Academy of Sciences.

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

Chen, G. (2019). Are high school graduates ready for college? Studies are dismal. *Public School Review*. https://www.publicschoolreview.com/blog/are-high-school-graduates-ready-for-college-studies-are-dismal

Clemens, E. V., Milsom, A., & Cashwell, C. S. (2009). Using leader-member exchange theory to examine principal-school counselor relationships, school counselors' roles, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. *Professional School Counseling, 13*(2), 75-85. https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X0901300203

College Board. (2008). *Inspiration and innovation: Ten effective counseling practices from the College Board's inspiration award schools*.

College Board. (2010). The eight components of college and career readiness counseling. Retrieved fromhttp://media.collegeboard.com/digitalServices/pdf/nosca/

Conley, D. T. (2008). What makes a student college ready? *Expected Excellence, 66*(2).

Crawford, E. R., & Arnold, N. W, & Brown, A. (2014). From preservice leaders to advocacy leaders: Exploring intersections in standards for advocacy in educational leadership and school counseling. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 17*(4), 481–502.

Dahir, C. A., Burnham, J. J., Stone, C. B., & Cobb, N. (2010). Principals as partners: Counselors as collaborators. *NASSP Bulletin, 94*(4), 286-305.

Dahir, C. A. & Stone, C. B. (2012). *The transformed school counselor* (2nd ed.). Brooks/Cole.

Dervarics, C. (2011). Minority, low-income students lack adequate access to educational opportunities. *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, *28*(13), 6. https://diverseeducation.com/article/16180/

DeBerard, M. S., Speilmans, G. I., & Julka, D. L. (2004). Predictors of academic achievement and retention among college freshmen: A longitudinal study. *College Student Journal, 38*(1), 66-80.

DeSimone, J. R., & Roberts, L. A. (2016). Fostering collaboration between preservice educational leadership and school counseling graduate candidates. *The Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision, 8*(2). 2

Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development, 82*(1), 405-32. http://casel.org/wp-content/uploads/Meta-Analysis-Child-Development-Full-Article1.pdf

Duslak, M., & Geier, G. (2018). Communication factors as predictors of relationship quality. *Professional School Counseling, 20*(1), 1096-2409.

Edwards, L., Grace, R., & King, G. (2014). Importance of an effective principal-counselor relationship. *Alabama Journal of Educational Leadership, 1*, 34-42. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1097546.pdf

Falcon, L. (2015). Breaking down barriers: First-generation college students and college success. *Innovation Showcase, 10*(6).

Finkelstein, S., Whitehead, J., & Campbell, A. (2009). What drives leaders to make bad decisions. *Leader to leader, 2009*(53), 52-58.

Fulton, M., Gianneschi, M., Blanco, C., & DeMaria, P. (2014). *Developmental Strategies for College Readiness and Success*. Education Commission of the States.

Gao, N. (2016). College readiness in California: A look at rigorous high school course-taking. https://www.ppic.org/publication/college-readiness-in-california-a-look-at-rigorous-high-school-course-taking/

Gullone, E., Hughes, E. K., King, N. J., & Tonge, B. (2010). The normative development of emotion regulation strategy use in children and adolescents: A 2-year follow-up study. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 51*(5), 567-574.

Hines, P. L., Lemons, R. W., & Crews, K. D. (2011). *Poised to lead: How school counselors can drive college and career readiness*. Education Trust.

Holcomb-McCoy, C. (2010). Involving low income parents and parents of color in college readiness activities: An exploratory study. *Professional School Counseling, 14*(1), 115- 124.

Janson, C., Militello, M., & Kosine, N. (2008). Four views of the professional school counselor-principal relationship: A Q-methodology study. *American School Counseling Association, 11*(6) 353-361. https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X0801100601

Johnson, A. F., & Perkins, G. W. (2009). What we know about at-risk students: Important considerations for principals and counselor leadership. *NASSP Bulletin, 93*(2), 122-134.

Kimber, M., & Campbell, M. (2014). Exploring ethical dilemmas for principals arising from role conflict with school counselors. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 42*(2), 207-225.

Lapan, T. R. (2012). Comprehensive school counseling programs: In some schools for some students but not in all schools. *Professional School Counseling.* https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X1201600201

Li, Y. & Lerner, R. M. (2013). Interrelations of behavioral, emotional, and cognitive school engagement in high school students. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 42*(1), 20-32.

Logan, J. R., & Burdick-Will, J. (2017). School Segregation and Disparities in Urban, Suburban, and Rural Areas. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *674*(1), 199–216. https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716217733936

Mahoney, J. L., Weissberg, R. P., Greenberg, M. T., Dusenbury, L., Jagers, R. J., Niemi, K., Schlinger, M., Schlund, Shriver, J., T. P., VanAusdal, K., & Yoder, N. (2020). Systemic social and emotional learning: Promoting educational success for all preschool to high school students. *American Psychologist*. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/amp0000701

Mason, K. L., & Perera-Diltz, D. M. (2010). Factors that inuence pre-service administrators' views of appropriate school counselor duties. *Journal of School Counseling, 8*(5), 1-28. https://jsc.montana.edu/articles/v8n5.pdf

Morgan, L. W., Greenwaldt, M. E., & Gosselin, K. P. (2014). School counselors' perceptions of competency in career counseling. *The Professional Counselor, 4*(5), 481-496.

Paulsen, M. B., & St. John, P. E. (2002). Social class and college costs: The financial nexus between college choice and persistence. *Journal of Higher Education, 2,* 189-236.

Petosa, R. L., & Smith, L. H. (2014). Peer mentoring for health behavior change: A systematic review. *American Journal of Health Education, 45*, 351-357.

Perusse, R., Poynton, T., Parzych, J., & Goodnough, G. E. (2015). The importance and implementation of eight components of college and career readiness counseling programs in school counselor education programs. *Journal of College Access, 1*, 29-41.

Peterson, J. (2013). *The school counselor's role in college and career readiness.* http://gsdcollegecareerready.weebly.com/uploads/5/5/2/2/55229551/school_counselors_role_in_college_and_career_readiness_-_april_2013.pdf

Reid, M. J. & Moore, J. L. III. (2008). College readiness and academic preparation for postsecondary education: Oral histories of first-generation urban college students. *Urban Education, 43*(2), 240-261.

Riddile, M. (2008). Addressing the challenges of 21st-century schools through principal-counselor collaboration. In F. Connolly & N. Protheroe (Eds.), *Principals and counselors partnering for student success* (pp. 1-20). Educational Research Service/ Naviance. https://files.nassp.org/igx_temp/nassp_leading_success/M9R1_Principals-and-Counselors-Chapter1.pdf.

Ritchhart, R. (2002). *Intellectual character: What it is, why it matters, and how to get it*. John Wiley & Sons.

Roderick, M., Nagaoka, J., Coca, V., & Moeller, E. (2009). *From high school to the future: Potholes on the road to college*. Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago.

Sedlacek, W. E. (2004). The case for noncognitive measures. In W. J. Camara & E. W. Kimmel (Eds.), *Choosing students: Higher education admission tools for the 21st century* (pp. 177–194). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Speroni, C. (2011). *Determinants of students' success: The role of advanced placement and dual enrollment programs*. National Center for Postsecondary Research. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED527528.pdf

Steinberg, L. (2012). Should the science of adolescent brain development inform public policy? *Issues in Science and Technology, 28,* 67-78.

VanVelsor, P. (2009). School counselors as social-emotional learning consultants: Where do we begin? *Professional School Counseling, 13*(1), 50-58. https://www.jstor.org/stable/42732919

Venezia, A., Kirst, M., & Antonio, A. (2004). *Betraying the college dream: How disconnected K-12 and postsecondary systems undermine student aspirations*. The Stanford Institute for Higher Education Research.

Ward, N. L. (2006). Improving equity and access for low-income and minority youth into institutions of higher education. *Urban Education, 41*(1), 50-70. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085905282253

Welton, A., & Martinez, M. (2014). Coloring the college pathway: A more culturally responsive approach to college readiness and access for students of color in secondary schools. *Urban Review, 46*(2), 197-223. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-013-0252-7

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. https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X1701600302

Yamamura, E.K., Martinez, M.A., & Saenz, V.B. (2010). Moving beyond high school expectations: Examining stakeholders' responsibility for increasing Latina/o students' college readiness. *The High School Journal, 93*(3), 126-148.

Yavuz, O. (2014). *Improving college readiness, pursuit, access, and persistence of disadvantaged students* [Doctoral dissertation, Rutgers University].