Accountability in School Counseling

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Accountability

- Myrick (2003) defines accountability as being responsible for one’s actions and contributions, especially in terms of objectives, procedures, and results. It involves describing goals, and what is being done to meet them. It entails collecting information and data that support any accomplishments that can be claimed.

- According to ASCA, accountability is one of the most important components of a school counseling program.

(Myrick, 2003) &
(American School Counselor Association [ASCA], 2012)
Why Talk About Accountability?

- School counselors are under even more pressure to show accountability in their programs.
- Showing the importance of accountability, or effectiveness, in every school counseling program created in the school system is a key component of this department.
- The purpose of this presentation is to explain:
  - Importance of accountability for school counselors,
  - Give examples of models of how to address accountability
  - Review two articles that present evidence of how school counselors demonstrate accountability in the schools.
  - Explain goals for the school
The ASCA National Model
The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) developed a framework for school counseling programs.

The framework for school counselors has four quadrants or components.

1. Foundation
2. Program Management
3. Delivery
4. Accountability
   • “How are students different as a result of the school counseling program?”

(American School Counselor Association [ASCA], 2012)
The roles and responsibilities of school counselors have changed. Legal and cultural changes

Focused on direct contact hours they were with students
- Individual Counseling
- Group Counseling
- Classroom Guidance

They focused more on counseling and improving student achievement, but they did not have data to prove they were improving student achievement.

(White, 2007)
History

- The need for this data was not a necessity.
  - Time-On-Task Data
  - Needs Assessments
  - Reporting Effectiveness
  - Pre/Post Test Assessments

- According to White (2007) stakeholders believe that the traditional practice of counting does not demonstrate to stakeholders professional school counselor’s effectiveness.
Importance of Accountability

- Allows counselors to show HOW students are different based on the data collected and the interventions used.

- Demonstrates to stakeholders the success of the school counseling program in addressing students’ academic needs and outcomes.

- School counselors become accountable for students within the school, sharing their responsibility with parents, the community, and their colleagues.

- Equity and accountability have become more and more prevalent in our programs, along with documentation that proves accountability

(Holcomb-McCoy, 2007)
School counselors collect and present data on programs to show their efforts and the effects they have on students.

We are here to serve as advocates, eliminate the achievement gap, and to focus on equity.

(Dahir & Stone, 2009)
Models of Accountability

- RAMP
- Gold Star
- MEASURE
Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP)
RAMP will help school counselors assess the programs within the school and identify areas that need improvement.

This model increases the school counselor’s skills and knowledge about school counseling, which in turn improves the programs within the school, allowing for greater academic achievement and student success.
The programs are evaluated on 12 areas a few areas are:
- Vision and Mission Statement
- Program Goals
- ASCA Standards
- Annual Agreement

The school counseling program must have at least one whole academic year to collect the data from a comprehensive school counseling program.

(ASCA, 2012)
Gold Star
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The American Student Achievement Institute (ASAI) created the Gold Star program with the goal that schools create a school counseling program that will support a school improvement plan and the schools’ academic goals.

According to ASAI (2013) there are three specific objectives that the school counseling program must accomplish for each student in order to be considered Gold Star.

1. Master standards in the areas of academic, career, and citizenship development.
2. Overcome personal and/or social concerns that are interfering with learning.
3. Make sound educational choices like choosing to come to school, turn in homework, enroll in tough courses, and participate in extra-help programs.

(ASAI, 2013)
Nine Standards

- Program foundation
- Data-based accountability
- Student guidance
- Student counseling
- Student advocacy

- Program management
- Professionalism
- Professional resources,
- School counseling improvement plan

(ASAI, 2013)
School Counselor Accountability
A MEASURE of Student Success
Second Edition
MEASURE stands for:

- M: Mission
- E: Elements
- A: Analyze
- S: Stakeholders
- U: Unity
- R: Results
- E: Educate

(Dahir & Stone, 2011)
Six Steps to Improving Students’ Success

Offers a way for school counselors to look more directly into school situations and problems.

After establishing the problems the school counselor will then develop an action plan. The action plan will have data-driven techniques that will allow the school counselor to monitor progress and results.

This model supports the goals of the school counseling department, as well as evaluates data that correlates with the goals of the department.

(Dahir & Stone, 2009)
Evidence of School Counseling Accountability

Intervention and Prevention Programs
Looking at empirically supported intervention and prevention programs from other school counseling programs helps school counselors see if the assessment actually worked for students.

School counselors can also build off of the programs they read to improve or adopt it to their school setting.
Career Intervention Program

- Assessed a nine-week career intervention program.
- Middle school students in sixth and seventh grade who were at-risk with career maturity levels, self-esteem, and academic achievement.
- Pretest and Posttest Assessment
- Three types of measurements for this program:
  - Crites Career Maturity Inventory
  - Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory
  - Grades.
- The results for this program revealed significant improvement on the student’s career maturity attitude, competency levels, and academic achievement.

(Legum & Hoare, 2004)
Bullying Prevention and Intervention Program

- The counselors had a few reasons for pursuing this program approach:
  - they wanted to see how effective their lesson on bullying and harassment were for the students and also gauge students’ awareness of strategies to resist bullying. Another reason was to view the extent students and teachers each saw bullying at the same middle school.
  - Three-year period
  - Group counseling and classroom guidance lessons.
  - Pretest and Posttest Assessments
  - Measurement: discipline referrals and schools climate.
  - They assessed the schools climate through a survey.

(Young, Hardy, Hamilton, & Biernesser, 2009)
Bullying Prevention and Intervention Program

- The results from the program were collected during each year for three years.
  - First Year
    - For Students, 83.5 percent of the students would not tell an adult if they were being bullied. 80 percent of students report that they were not aware of strategies to use if they were being bullied.
    - For teachers, about 56 percent of them did not think that bullying was a problem in the school, and 50 percent of them also believed that students felt safe in the school.
  - Second Year: The students’ percentages decreased and teachers’ responses were not reported.
  - Third Year: The data of this program again showed progress, meaning the school-wide bullying prevention interventions were working.

(Young, Hardy, Hamilton, & Biernesser, 2009)
Goals
Creating a program in our school and effectively uses assessments.

Correlate the programs goals with the school’s mission. This will allow students to achieve academic, personal, social, and career success.

The goals for the program will also be data-driven.

While I apply accountability techniques in my programs to increase student performance, I will also use them to close the achievement gap.
To Sum it All Up
Accountability is a key component for school counselors to show the effectiveness of their programs.

Even though school counselors did not previously have to show accountability and instead focused simply on programs that they felt best fit students’ needs, school counselors today complement their focus on counseling with data driven information.

This allows counselors to show other stakeholders both inside and outside of schools the impact of what counselors do, answering the ASCA’s question, “How are students different as a result of the school counseling program?”

As school districts face tightened budgets and look for areas to cut, it is important, now more than ever, that school counselors show the value they add to the school.
School counselors have the luxury of having a number of models to use to measure the effectiveness of their programs. This means that they can find a model that they feel best evaluates each program in their overall school counseling program, as well as the best model to evaluate their overall program.

School counselors have an opportunity to examine a wide variety of models that have been used by other counselors throughout the country to evaluate their own programs. It is important for school counselors to make sure that their programs work, so as to not waste the school’s, the students’, and their own time and resources.
Any Questions?


