

Delivery System: The “How” of the School Counseling Program

Tim Lambertsen, Waukee School District High School Counseling

I really love the concept of a delivery system because the gift of a school counselor is the gift of versatility. During the day there are so many different events (scheduled or unscheduled), people, or activities requiring our support and expertise. A school counselor who is versatile will have a lasting and positive effect on their school district, not just because they are able to handle and manage challenges as they arise, but because they lay foundations with students, staff, and community members that allow for preventative and proactive knowledge, behaviors, and programming. ASCA provides us with the big 3 content areas (personal /social skills, career development, and academic development), with that it is up to each school counselor and their imagination to deliver our skills, resources, and support to each situation.

The delivery system outlined in the Iowa School Counseling framework describes methods and strategies for ensuring that all students receive the benefits of the program. Components include a well-defined, articulated, sequential K-12 school counseling curriculum, individual academic and career planning for every student, appropriate responsive services, and a strong system support plan for ensuring continuous program improvement.

Within the delivery system there are four main areas presented in the framework. The four areas are: Responsive services, Individual student planning, System support, and School guidance curriculum.

Responsive services are actions we can take to meet immediate needs of students. This may come in the form of crisis counseling, referrals, or intentional small group or individual counseling.

Individual student planning are systemic activities designed to assist each student in developing educational, career, or personal/social goals. The most common presentation of this is the Student Core Curriculum Plan. This is a highly effective process of helping students to see the relationship between their potential areas of career interest and purposeful course selection. It is my belief that students who intentionally select courses based on their interests, work values, and skills will become purposeful and successful in their studies. The Iowa School Counselor Framework has a nice breakdown of Student Core Curriculum Plan and tips for getting it done.

System support is the collaboration of school counselors in establishing, maintaining, and enhancing their comprehensive school counseling program. This is commonly accomplished by collaboration, teaming, and professional development. At the Waukee Community School District, where I work, our School Counselors meet once a month to collaborate and manage our comprehensive program. This is highly beneficial as a district since we continuously grow and change.

Finally the School Guidance Curriculum can be embedded within the district’s overall curriculum and delivered in collaboration with instructional staff. This is a great means of partnership with staff and often times will allow us to actively see our students in action.