

Advocacy and the Professional School Counselor

Iowa Department of Education Newer
Counselor Workshop

August 6-7, 2014

Presenter: Sue Farran

Guidance Counselor

VS

**Professional School
Counselor**

Does the name make a difference?

Why “Professional School Counselor”?

What are the stereotypes?

Why “Professional School Counselor”?

Understanding the history of the school counseling profession.

Why “Professional School Counselor”?

So, what is the definition of a professional school counselor or, better yet, a professional school counseling program?

Why “Professional School Counselor”?

- ASCA National Model.
- Iowa School Counseling Program Framework.
- Improving Conditions for Learning: the Roles of School Counselors, School Psychologists and School Social Workers.

IMPROVING CONDITIONS FOR LEARNING: The Roles of School Counselors, School Psychologists & School Social Workers

School Counselors

- Fully Implement, manage and evaluate the Comprehensive Guidance Program
- Conduct classroom guidance curriculum lessons for all students that contribute to their academic, career, and personal/social development
- Provide educational, career and employability counseling
- Assist all students to develop and manage personal plans of study

Shared Responsibility

- Facilitate policies and practices that create and maintain a safe, supportive, and effective learning environment
- Advocate for the rights of all children
- Team with other mental health providers
- Consult with parents, school staff, administrators and other stakeholders
- Provide crisis prevention and intervention
- Provide mental health intervention services to individuals and small groups
- Identify, refer to and use community resources
- Assist students in making transitions from grade to grade and to post-secondary opportunities
- Provide professional development and parent education
- Assist with the selection, development and implementation of individual evidence-based interventions and behavior plans

School Social Workers

- Connect and coordinate family and community support services
- Provide consultation and interventions regarding home and community factors impinging upon a student's school functioning
- Provide psycho-social evaluations including functional behavioral assessments
- Provide mental health intervention services to individuals, groups, and families

School Psychologists

- Assess students for special services, high risk status, and learning needs
- Interpret evaluation results and translate into meaningful educational recommendations
- Conduct functional behavioral assessments and develop behavioral intervention plans
- Evaluate effectiveness of educational and behavioral interventions
- Interpret and monitor special education and OCR regulations

What is Advocacy?

Advocacy is letting your stakeholders know what your comprehensive school counseling program is AND how your school counseling program makes a difference, how it impacts the success of your students.

What is Advocacy?

Think about your school counseling program...

1. Who are your stakeholders? (internal and external)

What is Advocacy?

Think about your school counseling program...

2. What THREE things would you MOST like to say to your stakeholders.

What is Advocacy?

Because of your school counseling program,

1. How are the lives of your students better?
How are they better served?

What is Advocacy?

Because of your school counseling program,

2. How are your parents more effective as partners in their children's schooling?

What is Advocacy?

Because of your school counseling program,

3. How are your teachers better supported and more effective in their instruction?

What is Advocacy?

Because of your school counseling program,

4. How are your administrators better able to reach their building/district goals?

What is Advocacy?

Because of your school counseling program,
5. How does your community benefit?

Why is Advocacy Important?

**Consider the results of this ASCA
questionnaire:
(Selected items)**

1. Please rank order the top 5 key relationships that need to be strengthened to achieve optimal effectiveness in your district.

a. Principals	51%
b. Superintendents	32%
c. School boards	23%
d. Faculty	21%
e. Families	21%
f. Legislators	29%

2. How often do you meet with these individuals or groups to advocate for your program?

	<u>3-Plus times per year</u>	<u>Never</u>
a. Principals	75%	5%
b. Superintendents	9%	61%
c. School Boards	1%	70%
d. Faculty	59%	11%
e. Families	45%	18%
f. Legislators	1%	88%

3. What issues will have an impact on school counselor effectiveness in your district during the next five years? Please rank your top 5 responses with 1 having the biggest impact.

- | | |
|--|------------|
| a. School Counselor-to-pupil ratio. | 56% |
| b. Funding for the school counseling department | 42% |
| c. Lack of decision-maker understanding about the role school counselors in social/emotional development of students. | 41% |
| d. Lack of decision-maker understanding about the role of school counselors in student achievement. | 33% |
| e. Lack of role clarity for school counselors | 29% |

4. Understands that Professional School Counselors are the primary resource for social/emotional development. (agree/strongly agree)

a. Superintendents	49%
b. School Boards	38%
c. State Dept. of Ed	36%
d. Legislators	18%

5. Understands the contribution of Professional School Counselors to student achievement. (agree/strongly agree)

a. Superintendents	35%
b. School Boards	33%
c. State Dept. of Ed	33%
d. Legislators	13%

6. Understands that Professional School Counselors are the primary resource in career development. (agree/strongly disagree)

a. State Dept. of Ed	61%
b. Superintendents	53%
c. School Boards	44%
d. Legislators	41%

What are the implications?

- We do not communicate with many of our critical stakeholders.
- Our stakeholders still cling to the old role description of Guidance Counselors – career/vocational
- Our stakeholders do not have an accurate picture of a comprehensive school counseling program nor its positive impact on our students and their futures.

Why is Advocacy Important?

To ensure that your stakeholders understand the role of the professional school counselor and the importance of a comprehensive school counseling program in the lives of all students.

**So What Keeps
Professional School
Counselors from
Advocating for our
Profession?**

How Can We Advocate?

Make connections between what your stakeholders want and need and the services and supports that your school counseling program can provide.

ISCA has developed a three tier approach,

The Multi-Tiered System of
Advocacy
(MTSA).

Start at your comfort level, then push a bit more.

BE BOLD!!!!

Multi-Tiered System of School Counselor Advocacy (MTSA) –Three Tier Approach

- Be physically visible
- Introduce yourself and use Professional School Counselor terminology and signage everywhere
- Develop a program brochure
- Implement ASCA Model and Iowa School Counseling Framework-Use data!
- Print business cards
- Celebrate National School Counselor Week
- Use social media to communicate
- Bulletin Boards
- Know how you are funded
- Consistent communication and conversations with administrators and staff
- Advisory committee
- *Join professional organizations
- Join ISCA and ASCA and attend conferences
- Display ISCA/ASCA membership certificate, clothing, mug, water bottle, etc.
- Nominations for SCOY and ISCA grants

LEVEL 1

- Yearly goal setting aligned with district goals using data
- Develop PLC (Professional Learning Committee)
- Management agreement
- Time Analysis
- Develop and share calendar
- Presentation on program results with staff, admin., school board and PTA
- Use School Counselor Evaluation Tool
- Member of building leadership committees
- *Connections with community
- *Active in ISCA
- *Present at ISCA conference
- *Be informed about state legislative issues. Contact legislators and attend forums.
- *Attend Visit the Hill Day

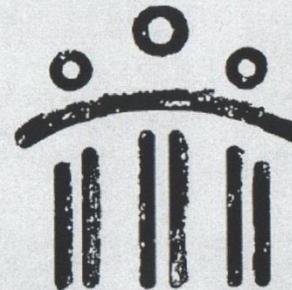
LEVEL 2

- School Counseling program is an integral part of the school and community
- Consistently demonstrate how students are different because of the school counseling program
- *Apply for RAMP (Recognized ASCA Model Program)
- *Know what is going on at the Department of Education
- *Communicate with state legislators-invite them to your school and meetings
- *Knowledge of issues and communication at the federal level

LEVEL 3

*We all need to
STEP UP!*

*If we do not define our
role as school counselors,
someone else will!!*



**I O W A
S C H O O L
C O U N S E L O R
A S S O C I A T I O N**

The Next Steps. Remember, Advocacy Takes Time!

1. Identify what you are already doing.
2. Identify what you are comfortable adding for this year. Set timeline for accomplishing.
3. Identify what you are uncomfortable doing, but could if you could defeat your fears. Then add some of these (or all) to this year's plan.

The Next Steps...

4. Look at a three-year Advocacy plan. Do not try to do it all at once.
5. BE RELENTLESS!!! Follow the 5 T's:
 - a. TALK about school counseling and your program.
 - b. TRADE advocacy ideas with others.
 - c. TRY a new advocacy strategy each month.
 - d. TEST new ideas and strategies; talk about what worked.
 - e. TEAM UP – grassroots effort to advocate every day for school counseling.

So What is Advocacy?

Advocacy **IS**:

- Sharing our role with teachers, administrators, school board, legislators and showing them how we can help them to reach our educational goals. Then doing it!

Advocacy **IS NOT**:

- Bragging
- Making demands

Concluding thoughts:

1. As Professional School Counselors, we need to actively and consistently promote our profession.
2. Advocate by providing a consistent message across settings and systems.
3. Have a clear plan of professional advocacy with a timeline.
4. Analogy of an oxygen mask: If we don't promote ourselves, we will be gone. Need to help ourselves first if we are to be there to help our students.

Resources

1. Why school counselors?
 - a. www.vsca.org/why-school-counselors.asp
2. ISCA website (www.iowaschoolcounselors.org)
3. ASCA website (www.schoolcounselor.org)
 - a. Why Elementary School Counselors? Middle School Counselors? High School Counselors?
 - b. Who are School Counselors?
4. How to Contact Your Legislator (ISCA website)
 - a. www.isea.org Legislative Action Center

How to contact your legislators

ISEA members are powerful because we live, work, and vote in a legislator's district. It's our job to make sure our lawmakers represent us and our profession. The first thing to do is sign up for the ISEA Hotline which is our premiere online subscriber service offering up-to-date legislative information you can't find anywhere else. To sign up for the Hotline go to the ISEA Web site at www.isea.org and click on the Legislative Action Center tab, then click on the "Lobbying Resources" link.

By E-mail

Type your zip code in the box provided on the Home Page of the ISEA Web site at www.isea.org to get contact information and e-mail links for your legislators and for the Governor.

By Phone

While most legislators don't have direct phone numbers, or even offices, you can call either the House or Senate switchboard number and leave a message.

Governor: 515-281-5211

Iowa Senate: 515-281-3371

Iowa House: 515-281-3221

By Mail

Individual personalized letters, rather than mass-generated form letters, generally make a greater impression on your legislator. It's important that you clearly state your points and be polite, yet firm, in your tone. Make sure that you include your name, address, and phone number!

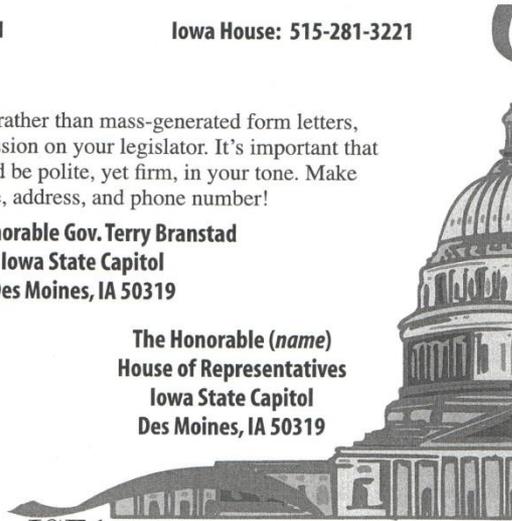
**The Honorable Gov. Terry Branstad
Iowa State Capitol
Des Moines, IA 50319**

**The Honorable (name)
Iowa Senate
Iowa State Capitol
Des Moines, IA 50319**

**The Honorable (name)
House of Representatives
Iowa State Capitol
Des Moines, IA 50319**



ISEA Great Education.
It's An Iowa Basic.



Resources

5. Cedar Falls CSD School Counseling Program

<https://sites.google.com/a/cfschools.org/cedar-falls-counseling-program/>

- We asked students, staff, administrators, parents, and community members to finish the statement, "A School Counselor is someone....." Watch this video to see their responses.

6. National School Counseling Week activities

(ISCA, ASCA websites)

Resources

7. Michelle Obama speech at 2014 ASCA Conference.

a. Read at

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/07/01/remarks-first-lady-american-school-counselor-association-annual-conferen>

b. Watch video at:

<http://www.schoolcounselor.org/school-counselors-members/professional-development/annual-conference/2014-conference-webstream/first-lady-s-address>

c. Both links available at ASCA website

8. Arnie Duncan (Secretary of Education) letter, June 30, 2014.

a. <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/secletter/140630.html>