



ENHANCING THE PRINCIPAL-SCHOOL COUNSELOR RELATIONSHIP

>Toolkit



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ENHANCING THE RELATIONSHIP



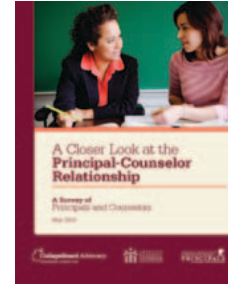
Introduction

The principal-counselor relationship toolkit comes from a multiyear research project undertaken by the College Board's National Office for School Counselor Advocacy (NOSCA), the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) to learn what principals and school counselors think is important in their relationships, how they view the current status of their own relationships within their schools, and what effective principal-counselor relationships might look like.

In 2008, thousands of school counselors and principals were surveyed about their relationships. The results were published in *A Closer Look at the Principal-Counselor Relationship*. After the data were analyzed, principals and school counselors who had been recognized for personal or school excellence (i.e., ASCA School Counselor of the Year and RAMP (Recognized ASCA Model Program) Awards, NASSP Principal of the Year, College Board Inspiration Award Schools) were interviewed to determine whether these award-winning professionals had developed effective working relationships with their principals or school counselor counterparts. Their stories were told in *Finding a Way*.

The stories from the teams were striking: although they came from diverse geographical and social backgrounds, the staff at each of these schools had "solved" the issues and challenges that were mentioned by their peers in the survey, leading to greater academic success for their students.

The toolkit has been reviewed by a very broad and diverse group, including principals and school counselors, staff from the College Board, ASCA and NASSP, members of the College Board's online counselor community, the College Board Schools principals, several of the school counselors and principals whose stories are highlighted in *Finding a Way*, and other interested counselors and principals.



Statement of Belief

The College Board, NASSP and ASCA believe that the principal-counselor relationship is a **dynamic and organic** relationship that evolves over time in response to the ever-changing needs of a school. The **goal** of an effective principal-counselor relationship is to use the strength of the relationship **to collaboratively lead** school reform efforts to increase achievement for all students. The **desired outcome** of an effective principal-counselor relationship is to raise achievement levels for all students and ensure equity in educational outcomes.

Toolkit Organization

The tools provided in this toolkit are designed to help school counselors and school principals analyze and enhance key areas of their working relationship with the overall goal of increasing student achievement.

The toolkit is organized in four sections:

- Communications
- Trust/Respect
- Leadership
- Collaborative Planning

These tools allow principals, school counselors and teams to:

- Analyze the current status of key aspects of the principal-counselor relationship for each individual and school;
- Develop ways of more effectively and closely working together as a team in an atmosphere in which all team members feel able to participate in open and honest communication; and
- Improve student achievement by eliminating barriers among staff members that inhibit their effectiveness.

PLEASE NOTE

This toolkit is not designed as a school counselor evaluation tool and cannot effectively be used as such. It is, rather, a means to assess, build and enhance a positive, effective working relationship between school principals and school counselors to benefit their students. In order to do this, it is vital to keep an open mind and a positive, nonjudgmental attitude throughout. Remember, it is not where you begin that counts, it is where you finish. Enhancing the working relationship will make both principals' and school counselors' jobs (and lives) easier, and it will help your kids.

The goal is to help principals and school counselors build effective relationships in which communications are open and fluid, all professionals trust and respect one another, all professionals serve in leadership roles, and planning involves close collaboration. While this task is too involved to be “fixed” by the use of any number of tools, this toolkit can help school professionals assess, understand and build their relationships. The toolkit is designed for group use, although a number of the tools provide value by themselves. Similarly, some of the tools can be used by individual practitioners to assess their role, but these self-assessments are more useful when combined with the group exercises that follow. For a number of these group exercises, we recommend that discussions take place after individuals complete their self-assessment tools and worksheets.

We recommend that as a prerequisite to using the toolkit, team members read *A Closer Look at the Principal-Counselor Relationship* and *Finding a Way: Practical Examples of How an Effective Principal-Counselor Relationship Can Lead to Success for All Students*. These can be downloaded at <http://advocacy.collegeboard.org/college-preparation-access/national-office-school-counselor-advocacy-nosca>. In addition, please have disaggregated student achievement data available.

Using the Toolkit

These tools are flexible and are designed to be effective whether they are used as a group or as individual exercises. They can be used by individuals for their own professional development, as group exercises on a single topic, as refreshers, for planning purposes or any number of other ways. Some tools are useful even if designed for someone in another role. For example, the “leadership styles” tool for principals contains information that could be beneficial to a counselor, especially to a head counselor or district leader. During the review process, numerous school counselors and principals noted that many of the tools would be equally effective for other school and district personnel, from teachers to superintendents. Some of the tools, such as the vision and mission tools, may be equally or even more effective when used with the larger school community.

The way a team (or individual) uses these tools will depend primarily on two factors: the current environment at the school and the amount of time available. For example, one school team may have effective communications skills but may be seeking ways to increase their leadership skills or joint planning, while others might recognize a need to build more effective communications strategies to improve student outcomes. It may be helpful to view the toolkit as a process rather than as an event.

In schools where more than one school counselor is participating in activities that may be listed as an activity between one counselor and one principal, please modify how you use the tool/exercise. In most cases, it is appropriate for each of the counselors to fill out the paper for the exercise. We suggest, however, that the school counselors analyze and discuss their collected views, assessments and issues with one another before meeting with the principal

about their individual concerns. This way the counseling team will have the opportunity to establish, among themselves, “what is most important” and to alleviate confusion and/or too many issues to work on immediately.

The toolkit is very comprehensive and requires more than one session to complete in its entirety. In any case, not every team will need or want to use every tool. For example, many schools will have already gone through a vision/mission process and do not need to repeat it. The toolkit can be divided into several sections, to be utilized during regularly scheduled professional development days during the school year. We recommend allotting approximately one hour for discussion for the majority of the tools. Since relationship development is the goal of the toolkit, discussion about what you learned or discovered when completing an exercise is often more useful than the actual tools. The toolkit is, however, flexible and principals and school counselors can choose which sections or exercises to focus on, depending on the needs at their own schools and the time available for these activities.

Choosing a Starting Point

Which tools you use will depend upon a number of factors, including the amount of time available, your goals, and the current relationship status in your school. If you are not sure where to begin, use the data tools in this section to determine the areas that most need attention in your school, and then use the “Taking One Step Forward” assessment to determine the effectiveness of your current team. Then use the tools in the appropriate section to begin building a stronger working partnership.

Using a facilitator

Whenever possible, we recommend using a facilitator or moderator, even if one is chosen from the staff. There is value in having someone think through the activities before they are used, and a moderator can keep discussions moving forward. It’s also a great way to foster leadership skills and confidence among staff members. (Please note that in any school there are large numbers of highly trained and experienced facilitators, also known as “teachers.”)* In schools with less well-developed relationships, an outside, neutral facilitator can help greatly. We do not recommend having the principal lead discussions; that tends to inhibit conversation and promotes the standard “top-down” management style. Above all, teams should work in an open manner in which everyone feels comfortable.

Types of Tools:

- **Self-Assessments.** Self-assessments help you get started by determining a starting place for a category. For example, ask: Are your communications helping? Do they need work? Are the principal and counselors on the same page? These self-assessments can be completed prior to any group activity.

* Please note that many of the exercises and tools are transferable and can be used by other staff members. In some cases, such as the mission and vision tools, we encourage as broad a representation of staff as possible.

- **Checklists.** Resources to help improve a specific skill.
- **Exercises.** Designed to facilitate growth among individuals and teams.
- **Case Studies.** In addition to providing case studies based on real situations, there are activities to help teams create their own case studies and develop solutions.
- **Other resources.** The school counselor strategic planning tool and school counselor management agreement template can help translate your goals into practice.

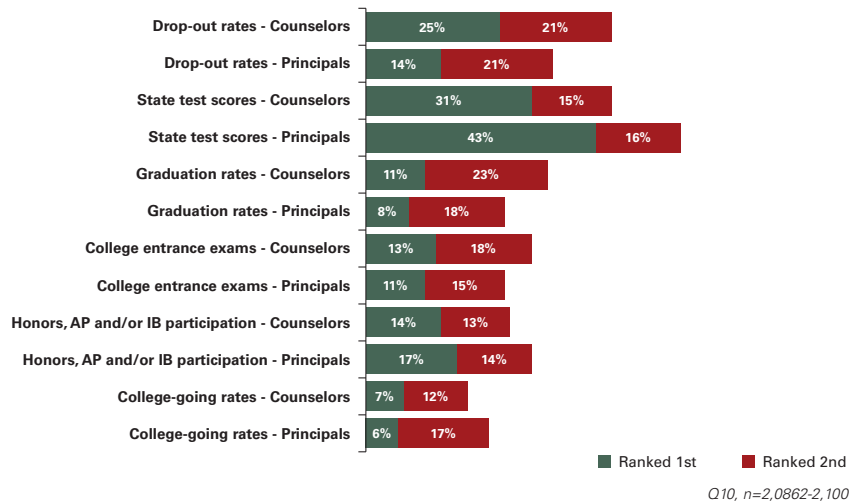
Getting Started

When principals and school counselors work together effectively, they are able to solve many of the issues that matter most in their schools. The data below show the issues that principals and school counselors believed to be most important; they are ranked in terms of which gaps are in greatest need of being addressed in their own school. Each of the teams profiled in *Finding a Way* faced — and solved — similar challenges. This toolkit is designed to help school counselors and principals understand the greatest needs in their school and then to develop a better working partnership to meet these needs so that all their students are prepared for a full range of postsecondary college or career options. The following chart shows areas that principals and counselors believe are important.



Drop-out rates and state test scores are the areas with the greatest gaps between student subgroups.

Please rank these areas where there may be gaps between student subgroups in terms of which gaps are in greatest need of being addressed in your school.



Exercise 1.1: The Current Situation: Student Outcomes

Take a look at your own data, comparing where you are now to where you want to be. Use this chart to determine the most critical issues. (If possible, have someone fill in the current data prior to the discussion. If you have goals for each data point, add those as well. Take one-half hour to discuss what your data is telling you and what you need to do to move toward your target. Use the blank spaces to add additional data points that are important in your school (i.e., attendance, disciplinary actions, promotion rates, credit recovery, etc.).

Data Point	Current	Target
Drop-out rate		
Graduation rate		
State test score: Meets Expectations – English		
State test score: Meets Expectations – Math		
State test score: Exceeds Expectations – English		
State test score: Exceeds Expectations – Math		
College Entrance Exam participation (ACT & SAT®)		
College Entrance Exam Average score (ACT)		
College Entrance Exam Average score (SAT)		
AP®/IB Participation		
College-going rate (2-year)		
College-going rate (4-year)		

Exercise 1.2: The Current Situation: Student Outcomes by Race and Gender

Goal: Get a clear picture from the data about student outcomes in your school, and determine how principals and school counselors can work together to improve them. This is an important first step in clarifying the counselors’ role and responsibilities for those outcomes.

Time: 1 hour to fill in the worksheet (depending on how the data are available); 1–2 hours for discussion.

Now, try to break the data down further. Use the “Other Ethnic” columns to record data for large subgroups in your school (e.g., Hmong, Samoan, etc.).

Data Point	Overall		African American		Hispanic		Asian/PI		White		Other Ethnic	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Drop-out rate												
Graduation rate												
State test score: Meets Expectations – English												
State test score: Meets Expectations – Math												
State test score: Exceeds Expectations – English												
State test score: Exceeds Expectations – Math												
College Entrance Exam participation (ACT & SAT)												
College Entrance Exam Average score (ACT)												
College Entrance Exam Average score (SAT)												
AP/IB Participation												
College-going rate (2-year)												
College-going rate (4-year)												

Questions for Discussion:

1. Are these data readily available? Are you able to disaggregate them?
2. What does the data show? Are there obvious gaps in either participation or achievement for particular ethnic groups? Genders?
3. What steps are you taking to address these issues?
4. Who is in charge of monitoring the data?
5. Who is responsible for helping these students plan, prepare and make informed choices about their postsecondary options? Who is in charge of ensuring that their course selections, extracurricular activities, etc., will meet requirements for those options?

Exercise 1.3: The Most Pressing Issues at Our School

Goal: Develop, clarify or formalize the school counselor’s role in enhancing these student outcomes.

Time: 15 minutes to fill out and tabulate the chart; 1–2 hours for discussion.

Instructions: After reviewing and discussing the two data worksheets above (Exercises 1 and 2), have the principal(s) and school counselors each complete the following chart, ranking each issue on a scale of 1–12, with one being the most critical issue and 12 the least important. Tabulate and average the results from all participants to get a consensus on the most critical achievement* issues at your school. To do this, you should take into account your school, district and state priorities.

Issue	Counselor Rating	Principal Rating	Overall Rating
Drop-out rate			
Graduation rate			
State test score: Meets Expectations – English			
State test score: Meets Expectations – Math			
State test score: Exceeds Expectations – English			
State test score: Exceeds Expectations – Math			
College Entrance Exam participation (ACT & SAT)			
College Entrance Exam Average score (ACT)			
College Entrance Exam Average score (SAT)			
AP/IB Participation			
College-going rate (2-year)			
College-going rate (4-year)			

* Please note that this exercise is designed to focus on student achievement. While other issues such as truancy or violence may be critical for a school, they are beyond the scope of this toolkit.

Discussion

Once you have identified the most pressing issues, have a conversation about how you can collaborate to solve them. The next exercise can tell you a great deal about the current state of that relationship, and the tools in the following sections can help to strengthen the collaboration at the school. Some questions for discussion might include:

1. Do the issues identified by your school's data provide any surprises? Why?
2. How would you prioritize these critical issues?
3. How closely do these align with your district and state priorities and goals?
4. Do you have the resources, skills and capacity to prioritize and address these issues?
5. What are the school counselor's responsibilities in addressing the most critical issues? Are these responsibilities clearly defined and understood by all parties? Should these responsibilities change?
6. In what ways do the principal(s) and counselor(s) need to work together in order to accomplish your student outcome/achievement goals?

Now that you have examined the critical issues in your school, the next step is to take a closer look at where you can strengthen your current relationship to assist you in reaching the goals in your school. To do this, use the self-assessment tool that follows.

Exercise 1.4: Advance Practice: *Taking One Step Forward*: A Self-Assessment Tool

Goal: Gain a clear sense of each team member’s view of the current relationship and the importance of each of these areas, and identify gaps and areas that require attention.

Time: 1 hour to complete and tabulate the form; 1–3 hours for discussion. (Note: Due to the sensitive nature of the information, it might be helpful in some cases to have principals and counselors complete the worksheet separately and then have a third party tabulate the results.)

This exercise can help teams become self-reflective practitioners. It can help assess the degree to which the areas in need of work impact the team’s ability to address issues of school reform, solve problems, engage in strategic planning, introduce new initiatives, handle resistance to change, and handle crises and other issues with critical impact on student achievement.

Complete this form by having the principal and counselor(s) rate each characteristic on the level of importance from 1 to 5, with 1 being “not important” and 5 being “very important.” Next, do the same for the extent to which the characteristic is present in your relationship, with 1 being “not present” and 5 being “extremely present.” After rating each characteristic, note the difference between the level of importance and the level of presence in the “Gap” column.

PRINCIPAL			Ten Characteristics of an Effective Principal-Counselor Relationship	COUNSELOR		
Importance	Presence	Gap		Importance	Presence	Gap
			1. Open communication that provides multiple opportunities for input to decision making			
			2. Opportunities to share ideas on teaching, learning and schoolwide educational initiatives			
			3. Sharing information about needs within the school and community			
			4. School counselor participation on school leadership teams			
			5. Joint responsibility in the development of goals and metrics that indicate success			
			6. Mutual trust between the principal and school counselors			
			7. A shared vision on what is meant by student success			
			8. Mutual respect between the principal and school counselors			
			9. Shared decision making on initiatives that impact student success			
			10. A collective commitment to equity and opportunity			

Now that you have completed this assessment, examine where the greatest gaps appear. Each item above is represented in one of the four sections of the toolkit: Communications, Trust

and Respect, Collaborative Planning, and Leadership. Because you are busy and time is at a premium, the key below can help determine a starting point for using the toolkit. Once you work through the areas with your greatest gaps you can reexamine the assessment to determine the next area of work. Each section will help you strengthen your working relationship to better achieve the goals for each of the critical issues you have identified using your school's data. The last section of the toolkit contains advanced practice and solution finding that all principals and counselors will find helpful as they test the collaborative strength of their relationship.

Areas for Focus

High “gap” scores on the various items above correspond to the toolkit sections below:

Communication: Items 1 & 3

Trust and Respect: Items 6 & 8

Leadership: Items 4, 5 & 9

Collaborative Planning: Items 2, 7 & 10

Advanced Practice: Items 1–10



Building an Effective Principal-School Counselor Relationship:

COMMUNICATION



“The most important thing in communication is to hear what isn’t being said.”

— Peter Drucker

Ricardo Damian knew a good thing when he saw it. His new school had a very dynamic counselor who could really help with his goals for the school. Although he was new, he had spent 13 years as a teacher and eight years in administration, and when he started his tenure as principal at Ernesto Serna School, the district’s director of guidance made sure that he understood the role of the counselors in the school. He also recognized a kindred spirit in the counselor, Tammi Mackeben. “I picked up that she was a hard worker,” says Ricardo, “that she really liked her job, and she was here to work with me. And that was the nice thing — she understood that I was here to work with her.” “You need to sit down with [the counselor],” he continues, “and get to know that person, even on a personal basis. That’s very important because we work so closely together.”

For her part, Tammi was not going to leave anything to chance; she wanted to make sure that the new principal realized how counselors could help throughout the school — especially with raising student achievement. “You know, you have to educate,” she says. “You can’t expect people to know what a counselor’s role is unless you tell them. And I think you have to know what [the principal’s] job is too and what they’re up against, to have a good relationship. It can’t always be about you.”

Trust between the two was established early when a student had an incident in the classroom. Ricardo called Tammi and asked how she thought it should be handled. “He asked me for my professional opinion,” she says. “He wanted input from me like a member of a team to decide something important. That was the first ‘aha!’ moment to me that this was going to be a real team effort.” And once they had made a decision, he followed through exactly the way he said he would.

Ricardo says, “Our day starts with her; I’m in my office, she’s walking by, and it’s like, okay, how about this? Frequently during the day, we’re both out there [in the school]. We don’t even have to wait until we’re back in the office to find a solution.”

Adapted from ***Finding a Way***

Introduction

Communication (n): the exchange of information, thoughts or ideas by means of speech, writing or verbal and nonverbal signs.

The tools in the communication section are designed to:

- Come to a mutual understanding of what constitutes effective communication;
- Assess the current state of communication between the principal and school counselor(s);
- Understand communication from the viewpoint of both principal and school counselor; and
- Develop strategies to effectively increase the level of communication between the principal and school counselor.

Findings from the Research

School counselors and principals were asked to rate *“the Importance and Presence of Open Communication that provides multiple opportunities for input to decision making.”*

Survey Results*	Importance (1–5)	Present in my school (1–5)	Gap between presence and importance
Principals	4.52	4.15	.37
Counselors	4.64	3.58	1.06

Principals and school counselors both felt that communication was one of the biggest issues:

- Principals more often mentioned the quality of the communication; while
- Counselors more often mentioned the frequency of the communication

Tools in this Section:

- 2.0 Instructions for Self-Assessment
- 2.1 Counselor Self-Assessment
- 2.2 Principal Self-Assessment
- 2.3 Principal-School Counselor Scenarios
- 2.4 Create Your Own Scenario

* Survey results are based on a sampling of more than 2,300 counselors and principals throughout the U.S. Participants were asked to rate a number of characteristics on a scale of 1–5, with 1 meaning not important and 5 extremely important. Next, the participants were asked to rate whether these characteristics were present in their current school, with 1 meaning not present and 5 extremely present. The next column shows the gap between what the survey participants felt was important and its presence in their school.

2.0 Instructions for Self-Assessment

Goal

These tools — one for school counselors and one for principals — are designed to allow each individual to determine their own levels of communication and determine whether any modifications are desirable. It is not recommended that these worksheets be shared, in order to allow for an open and honest self-assessment.

Time: 5–10 minutes to fill out grid; 15–20 minutes to answer questions; discussion time: open.

Instructions

1. Fill in the boxes on the first page, paying careful attention to the wording of the questions. Be as honest with yourself as possible, since the goal is improvement.
2. Analyze your results and answer the two individual questions on the second page.
3. Use the results of your self-assessments to guide a discussion between principals and counselors about each of your perspectives. If possible, this discussion should be moderated, perhaps by a district official or outside facilitator.
4. Consider having the school counselors and principals meet separately to go over their assessments, focusing on whether you see the issues the same way as a group.

2.1 Counselor Self-Assessment

Aspects of Effective Communication — In order to adequately engage in effective communication, the principal and counselor need to establish and agree upon a goal for their conversation(s). The exchange should be collaborative, respected and appreciated for reaching the ultimate level of effectiveness. Assess your communication effectiveness. You may see your style of communication differently from the way your principal views it.

Aspects of Effective Communication					
	Never 1	Seldom 2	Sometimes 3	Usually 4	Always 5
Formulating a consensus I am able to merge diverse perspectives to come up with a common goal.					
Sharing diverse perspectives I can appreciate divergent thinking to reach goals.					
Flexibility in communication styles I am aware of the informal/formal communication in the context and situation for best outcomes.					
Listening I am willing to hear and appreciate diverse and similar perspectives.					
Professional Engagement I am willing to participate in shared communication.					
Establishing Commonality I can create alignment in the vision/mission of the school and school counseling program.					

After you have completed your self-assessment, the questions below are to help you develop a better and more effective counselor-principal relationship. Share your self-assessment with your principal, and complete the questions below. Each section has an individual focus that you complete as the counselor and a collaborative focus section that you complete in collaboration with your principal.

2.2 Principal Self-Assessment

Aspects of Effective Communication — In order to adequately engage in effective communication, the principal and counselor need to establish and agree upon a goal for their conversation(s). The exchange should be collaborative, respected and appreciated for reaching the ultimate level of effectiveness. Complete the self-assessment and reflect on the interactions you have with your counselor or counseling department.

Aspects of Effective Communication					
	Never 1	Seldom 2	Sometimes 3	Usually 4	Always 5
Formulating a consensus I am able to merge diverse perspectives to come up with a common goal.					
Sharing diverse perspectives I can appreciate divergent thinking to reach goals.					
Flexibility in communication styles I am aware of the informal/formal communication in the context and situation for best outcomes.					
Listening I am willing to hear and appreciate diverse and similar perspectives.					
Professional Engagement I am willing to participate in shared communication.					
Establishing Commonality I can create alignment in the vision/mission of the school and school counseling program.					

After you have completed your self-assessment, the questions below are to help you develop a better and more effective principal-counselor relationship. Share your self-assessment with your counselor and complete the questions below. The sections below have an individual focus that you complete as the principal and a collaborative focus section that you complete in collaboration with your counselor.

Individual Questions:

1. What aspects of my communication enhance and/or hinder the establishment of a strong principal-counselor relationship?
2. What would I do the same and/or differently to improve the aspects of my communication continuum?
3. How does your self-assessment link to your leadership style?

Collaborative Questions:

1. Is the way I see "myself," the principal, the way "you," the counselor, see my aspects of communication? Explain.
2. How could we establish a stronger and more engaging principal-counselor relationship?

2.3 Principal-School Counselor Scenarios

Instructions

1. Now that you have analyzed your communication practices, try brainstorming how effective communication can help you resolve a pressing issue at your school. A sample, based on a situation at a real school, has been provided, along with discussion questions. Following the example, think of a situation that you can work on collaboratively, using the questions provided as well as others that pertain to the situation.
2. As situations arise — especially ones that you are having difficulty solving — use this method to analyze, discuss and create solutions.
3. We recommend that you use an outside facilitator for the first discussion. After that, select a school counselor or principal to act as facilitator, preferably on a rotating basis.

Time: 1–2 hours for discussion.

Sample Scenario

The Situation	
It is the first week of second semester of the school year, and the principal has held one meeting with the counseling department. That meeting was about the opening of school processes and how to handle schedule changes.	The principal is a hands-on manager who holds frequent meetings with his administrative staff but calls additional staff/department meetings on an “as needs basis.” The administrative meetings are scheduled for every Monday morning before students arrive and are seldom cancelled. The counselors view this as a direct slighting of them as professionals and discounting of their contributions to the school because the monthly scheduled meetings that were set up for their meetings with the principal are almost always cancelled.

Discussion Questions	
How would you characterize this relationship?	
What would be the indicators that solution finding is characterized by open communication, opportunities for both parties to have input, and that the goal was making student benefits the primary goal?	
What critical student and community information must be addressed in reaching an educationally just and sound solution?	
What information do the counselors need to share with the principal in order to improve communication?	
What does the principal need the counselors to understand about her or his time limitations/priorities?	

2.4 Create Your Own Scenario

The Situation in Our School	
Discussion Questions	
How would you characterize this relationship?	
What would be the indicators that solution finding is characterized by open communication, opportunities for both parties to have input, and that the goal was making student benefits the primary goal?	
What critical student and community information must be addressed in reaching an educationally just and sound solution?	
What information do the counselors need to share with the principal in order to improve communication?	
What does the principal need the counselors to understand about her or his time limitations/priorities?	



Building an Effective Principal-School Counselor Relationship:

Trust and Respect



“For it is mutual trust, even more than mutual interest that holds human associations together.”

— H. L. Mencken

When Jon Prince joined Palm Beach Gardens High School as principal, the faculty did not see the value of the counselors, and the counselors did not realize that the faculty didn't understand what they did. “It was killing me,” he says, “as a principal. They did not perceive this as an effective organization.” The school was considered to be failing, however, and Jon was able to make changes. He brought in experienced counselor Olga Middleton to lead the counseling department. Like Jon, she leads by example, saying, “If I was going to ask them to do something, I was the first one doing it.” The two agree completely on their goal. “It's student achievement and success,” Olga says. “So why can't we just not join the team and become even more powerful so we can get the results that we're looking for?” Jon responds that “Olga continues to hit it on the head with her philosophy about teamwork. It's not about me, it's not about her. It's about us and what we can collectively achieve.”

This philosophical agreement leads to trust. “I really feel very strongly,” says Olga, “that he will never lead me in the wrong direction — there are things I may not understand.” I may disagree with him in private, but I will support him outside this door, because I believe that it's his philosophy that he wants the best for our school and our students. [I've developed] a much, much deeper trust in his decision.” This is because “He has shown that by his philosophy and his work ethic, and the way he has managed the school that he's an amazing leader. He's good to his word.” For his part, Jon says, “she's always shown herself to be very reliable. She's never lied to me.”

The relationship between the two has evolved and overcome some issues. The lowest moment for Olga was when Jon told her that she was going to lose a counselor. With few students achieving at an acceptable level, he needed the position for instruction. "That was a challenge for me," she says, "and it goes back to communication and explaining 'this is why we're doing this.' [Jon said] This is where I need a position in place here because this is a bigger challenge for the school than it is for your department right now. And he gives me that holistic view of the school, that understanding that again, it's not about me. It's about the goals of the school and achieving our goals."

Adapted from *Finding a Way*

I respect the man who knows distinctly what he wants. The greater part of all mischief in the world arises from the fact that men do not sufficiently understand their own aims. They have begun to build a tower but spend no more labor on the foundation than would be necessary to erect a hut.

— Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

INTRODUCTION

Trust (n): Confidence that a responsibility or obligation will be met.

Findings from the Research

School counselors and principals were polled on the importance of *“Mutual Trust between the principal and counselors.”*

Survey Results*	Importance (1–5)	Present in my school (1–5)	Gap between presence and importance
Principals	4.78	4.25	.53
Counselors	4.85	3.75	1.10

School counselors and principals were also polled on the importance of *“Mutual Respect between the principal and counselors.”*

Survey Results	Importance (1–5)	Present in my school (1–5)	Gap between presence and importance
Principals	4.77	4.33	.44
Counselors	4.84	3.82	1.02

Trust and respect are fundamental components of an effective working relationship. And trust and respect must go both ways. Few people can work well with someone they do not respect or with someone they do not believe respects them, and a lack of trust leads to an atmosphere in which communication is stifled and motivation is questioned. The difficulty is compounded by the fact that the school is a hierarchy rather than a democracy; the principal is the boss. It is more, however, than just personal respect. The principals and school counselors who participated in the survey defined respect very differently:

- School counselors wanted personal respect; while
- Principals looked for respect for their goals and vision.

It is clear from the survey that principals feel their schools have a higher level of trust and respect than counselors do. Principals and school counselors need to respect one another both personally and professionally. In order to achieve the level of respect needed, both need to understand their counterpart’s role, responsibilities, training and how those combine to benefit their students. It is difficult to respect a professional’s role and value if you do not know what they are. While a certain amount of respect is presumed from the outset, a deeper level must be earned through actions, beliefs and outcomes. Planning, communications and trust are all part of building respect, and it will be difficult to build the relationship without them.

* Survey results are based on a sampling of more than 2,300 counselors and principals throughout the U.S. Participants were asked to rate a number of characteristics on a scale of 1–5, with 1 meaning not important and 5 extremely important. Next, the participants were asked to rate whether these characteristics were present in their current school, with 1 meaning not present and 5 extremely present. The next column shows the gap between what the survey participants felt was important and its presence in their school.

The process of building respect and trust comes from developing a track record of effective work, communications and follow-through. The principal-counselor teams profiled in *Finding a Way* shared a number of practices and habits that led directly to trust and respect. Among these were:

- Successful principal-counselor teams focus on student achievement.
- Successful teams study data to understand issues concerning their students.
- The teams use their limited communication opportunities to discuss and implement solutions to problems.
- These professionals support one another at all times; the principals give the counselors a great deal of latitude and support, and the counselors do not challenge the principal in public; once a decision has been made, they support it.
- They communicate regularly and efficiently, even about the most difficult issues.
- They establish a pattern of always following up with what they've been assigned or have said they will do. They do not need micromanaging.

NOTE:

Trust and respect are built and earned over time by actions and track record. The tools provided in this section will not build trust or respect; they are designed, rather, to provide different ways to understand the level of trust and respect within the school. The self-assessments can help each team member determine how their own actions create or hinder these important areas of a professional relationship.

If the self-assessments show that there may be a larger problem, the team building and defining trust exercises will help define what conditions or actions each team member believes are necessary for a trusting, respectful relationship. Once that is understood, it is up to all team members to follow through. Periodically refer to the questions in the self-assessments to decide whether you are keeping your end of the bargain. Over time, behaviors will be modified and trust will slowly build.

Tools in this Section:

- 3.1 Principal: Relationship Self-Assessment
- 3.2 School Counselor: Relationship Self-Assessment
- 3.3 Principal: Trust and Respect Self-Assessment
- 3.4 School Counselor: Trust and Respect Self-Assessment
- 3.5 Trust Building: Team Checklist
- 3.6 Defining Trust in the Context of the School

3.1 Principal: Relationship Self-Assessment

A great deal of respect and trust comes from both parties having a clear understanding of what each wants and needs, and in establishing a track record of doing what they say they will do.

Goal: Gain a clear picture of your current attitudes and beliefs as they relate to your colleagues.

Time: 10 minutes to complete, as needed for reflection.

Directions: Read each statement and check the response that best corresponds to the current state of your principal-counselor relationship using the rating scale provided. Total the number of responses in each category, and look for patterns. A higher score indicates that you may need to work to build trust.

1 = Agree 2 = Somewhat Agree 3 = Somewhat Disagree 4 = Disagree	1	2	3	4
Relationship Development				
<i>Mutual trust between the principal and school counselors</i>				
1. I am open to my counselors' perspective and point of view.				
2. I can engage in a nonjudgmental relationship with my counselors.				
3. I can create a collaborative relationship with my counselors.				
4. I can empathize with the needs and challenges my counselors face in running the school counseling program.				
5. I can anticipate how my relationship with my counselors can be useful in addressing the needs of the school.				
<i>Mutual respect between the principal and school counselors</i>				
1. I am reliable, consistently including my counselors in implementing directives, decisions or initiatives in a timely manner.				
2. I am dependable, willing to collaborate with counselors on the implementation of directives, decisions or initiatives.				
3. I am responsible, guiding counselors in appropriate application of school policy and procedures that support implementation of directives, decisions or initiatives.				
4. I demonstrate integrity, adhering to a code of morals and values in my interactions.				
5. I am honest, demonstrating veracity and fidelity in all aspects of my relationship with my counselors.				
6. I am able to engage in constructive conflict resolution/management with my counselors.				
Subtotal				
Leadership				
<i>School counselor participation on school leadership teams</i>				
1. I expect my school counselors to be members of the school leadership team.				
2. I expect my school counselors to contribute information in their area of expertise.				
3. I encourage the school counselors to provide consultation in key areas to other members of the leadership team.				

1 = Agree 2 = Somewhat Agree 3 = Somewhat Disagree 4 = Disagree	1	2	3	4
4. I expect the school counselors to participate in problem solving and decision making on the leadership team.				
5. I support school counselors contributions in the implementation of leadership team directives.				
<i>Joint responsibility in the development of goals and metrics that indicate success</i>				
1. I encourage counselors to align their program vision/mission to the schools.				
2. I share school data used for the school improvement plan with my counselors.				
3. I share the goals of the school and district with my counselors for use in developing their goals.				
4. I expect the counselors to develop action/implementation plans that are congruent to the goals of the school improvement plan.				
5. I expect school counseling program outcomes to relate to the metrics and goals of the school improvement team.				
<i>A shared vision of what is meant by student success</i>				
1. I collaborate with my counselor on initiatives that promote higher levels of student success.				
2. I collaborate with my counselors to promote values and a belief system that supports higher levels of student success.				
3. I can collaborate with my counselors in creating a schoolwide vision of student success.				
4. I can collaborate with my counselors to develop and implement initiatives focused on student success.				
5. I can collaborate with my counselors to demonstrate outcomes of student success.				
<i>Shared decision making on initiatives that impact student success</i>				
1. I am willing to engage in the process of collaborative decision making with my counselors.				
2. I can foster shared decision making with my counselors.				
3. I can weigh the risks in the shared decision-making process with my counselors.				
4. I can compromise in the shared decision-making process with my counselors.				
5. I can integrate the outcomes of shared decision making into schoolwide initiatives.				
Subtotal				
Collaborative Action				
<i>Open communication that provides multiple opportunities for input to decision making</i>				
1. I am willing to participate in collaborative communication with my counselors.				
2. I am aware of my own communication style and the impact it has on my counselors' input in the decision-making process.				
3. I can value input that demonstrates divergent thinking in my counselors.				
4. I provide both formal and informal opportunities for my counselors to give input in decisions that impact school goals and initiatives.				
5. I provide regular feedback to my counselors on their input in decision making that impacts school goals and initiatives.				
<i>Opportunities to share ideas on teaching, learning and schoolwide educational initiatives</i>				

1 = Agree 2 = Somewhat Agree 3 = Somewhat Disagree 4 = Disagree	1	2	3	4
1. I provide opportunities for my counselors to share ideas on teaching and learning.				
2. I provide opportunities for my counselors to share ideas that support schoolwide reform initiatives.				
3. I use formal methods of communication with my counselors to share ideas about teaching, learning about schoolwide initiatives.				
4. I use informal methods of communications with my counselors to share ideas about teaching, learning and educational initiatives.				
5. I use organized meetings such as faculty and department meetings, professional learning communities and grade-level meetings to communicate with counselors about teaching, learning and schoolwide educational initiatives.				
<i>Opportunities to share ideas on teaching, learning and schoolwide educational initiatives</i>				
1. I provide opportunities for my counselors to share ideas on teaching and learning.				
2. I provide opportunities for my counselors to share ideas that support schoolwide reform initiatives.				
3. I use formal methods of communication with my counselors to share ideas about teaching, learning about schoolwide initiatives.				
4. I use informal methods of communications with my counselors to share ideas about teaching, learning and educational initiatives.				
5. I use organized meetings such as faculty and department meetings, professional learning communities and grade-level meetings to communicate with counselors about teaching, learning and schoolwide educational initiatives.				
<i>Sharing information about needs within the school and the community</i>				
1. I share school needs and information with my counselors.				
2. I can share information about the needs of the school to help counselors create alignment with schoolwide initiatives.				
3. I know how to strategically share information with my counselors to encourage change in the school.				
4. I can create pathways of communication with and for my counselor to identify the needs of the community.				
5. I can sustain pathways of communication with and for my counselors.				
Subtotal				
Equity				
<i>Sharing information about needs within the school and the community</i>				
1. I acknowledge the importance of discussing issues of race, gender, socioeconomic status and diverse need of the community with my counselors.				
2. I can discuss issues of race, gender and socioeconomic status related to student achievement with my counselors.				
3. I can collaboratively commit to addressing schoolwide issues of equity with my counselors.				
4. I can develop and implement initiatives that support the collaborative commitment to equity with my counselors.				
Subtotal				
TOTALS				

QUESTIONS

1. What is my average score?
2. With which areas am I most comfortable/open (low scores)? Which are the least comfortable? (high scores)
3. Are there categories in which I need work (i.e., Collaborative Action)? Are my responses consistent throughout?
4. (If there is more than one school counselor in the building): Are my responses about my engagement with the whole counseling team or about my engagement with the lead counselor/chairperson of the counseling department?

3.2 School Counselor: Relationship Self-Assessment

A great deal of respect and trust comes from both parties having a clear understanding of what each wants and needs, and in establishing a track record of doing what they say they will do.

Goal: Gain a clear picture of your current attitudes and beliefs as they relate to your colleagues.

Time: 10 minutes to complete, as needed for reflection.

Directions: Read each statement and check the response that best corresponds to the current state of your principal-counselor relationship using the rating scale provided. Total the number of responses in each category, and look for patterns. A higher score indicates that you may need to work to build trust.

1 = Agree 2 = Somewhat Agree 3 = Somewhat Disagree 4 = Disagree	1	2	3	4
Relationship Development				
<i>Mutual trust between the principal and school counselors</i>				
1. I am open to my principal's perspective and point of view.				
2. I can engage in a nonjudgmental relationship with my principal.				
3. I can create a collaborative relationship with my principal.				
4. I can empathize with the needs and challenges my principal faces in running the school.				
5. I can understand how to use my relationship with my principal to address the needs of the school.				
<i>Mutual respect between the principal and school counselors</i>				
1. I am reliable, consistently following through with directives, decisions or initiatives set forth by my principal in a timely manner.				
2. I am dependable, willing to collaborate on directives, decisions or initiatives set forth by my principal.				
3. I am responsible, following policy and procedures that support effective implementation of directives, decisions or initiatives set forth by my principal.				
4. I demonstrate integrity, adhering to a code of morals and values in my interactions with my principal.				
5. I am honest, demonstrating veracity and fidelity in all aspects of my relationship with my principal.				
6. I am able to engage in constructive conflict resolution/management with my principal.				
Subtotal				
Leadership				
<i>School counselor participation on school leadership teams</i>				
1. I am a member of the school leadership team.				
2. I contribute information in my area of expertise.				
3. I provide consultation in key areas to other members of the leadership team.				
4. I participate in problem solving and decision making on the leadership team.				
5. I contribute to the implementation of leadership team directives.				

1 = Agree 2 = Somewhat Agree 3 = Somewhat Disagree 4 = Disagree	1	2	3	4
<i>Joint responsibility in the development of goals and metrics that indicate success</i>				
1. I align the school counseling program with the vision/mission of the school.				
2. I review the data and goals of the school improvement plan prior to developing the school counseling goals.				
3. I create alignment between the goals of the school improvement plan and the school counseling program.				
4. I develop an action/implementation plan that is congruent with the goals of the school improvement plan.				
5. I demonstrate program outcomes that relate to the metrics and goals of the school improvement team.				
<i>A shared vision of what is meant by student success</i>				
1. I collaborate with my principal on initiatives that promote higher levels of student success.				
2. I collaborate with my principal to promote values and a belief system that supports higher levels of student success.				
3. I can collaborate with my principal in creating a schoolwide vision of student success.				
4. I can collaborate with my principal to develop and implement initiatives focused on student success.				
5. I can collaborate with my principal in demonstrating outcomes of student success.				
<i>Shared decision making on initiatives that impact student success</i>				
1. I am willing to engage in the process of collaborative decision making with my principal.				
2. I can foster shared decision making with my principal.				
3. I can weigh the risks in the shared decision-making process with my principal.				
4. I can compromise in the shared decision-making process with my principal.				
5. I can integrate the outcomes of shared decision making into schoolwide initiatives.				
Subtotal				
Collaborative Action				
<i>Open communication that provides multiple opportunities for input to decision making</i>				
1. I am willing to participate in collaborative communication with my principal.				
2. I am aware of my own communication style and the impact it has on my principal's input in the decision-making process.				
3. I can value input that demonstrates divergent thinking in my principal.				
4. I use both formal and informal communication to give my principal input in decisions that impact school goals and initiatives.				
5. I provide regular feedback to my principal on his/her input in decision making that impacts school goals and initiatives.				

1 = Agree 2 = Somewhat Agree 3 = Somewhat Disagree 4 = Disagree	1	2	3	4
<i>Opportunities to share ideas on teaching, learning and schoolwide educational initiatives</i>				
1. I create opportunities to share ideas on teaching and learning with my principal.				
2. I create opportunities to share ideas that support schoolwide reform initiatives with my principal.				
3. I use formal methods of communication with my principal to share ideas about teaching, learning about schoolwide initiatives.				
4. I use informal methods of communications with my principal to share ideas about teaching, learning and educational initiatives.				
5. I use organized meetings such as faculty and department meetings, professional learning communities and grade-level meetings to communicate with my principal about teaching, learning and schoolwide educational initiatives.				
<i>Sharing information about needs within the school and the community</i>				
1. I am aware of the importance of sharing school needs with my principal.				
2. I can share information about the needs of the school to create principal-counselor alignment in schoolwide initiatives.				
3. I know how to strategically share information with my principal to encourage change in the school.				
4. I can create pathways of communication with and for my principal to identify the needs of the community.				
5. I can sustain pathways of communication with and for my principal.				
Subtotal				
Equity				
<i>A collective commitment to equity and opportunity</i>				
1. I acknowledge the importance of discussing issues of race, gender, socioeconomic status and diverse need of the community with my principal.				
2. I can discuss issues of race, gender, socioeconomic status related to student achievement with my principal.				
3. I can collaboratively commit to addressing schoolwide issues of equity with my counselor.				
4. I can develop and implement initiatives that support the collaborative commitment to equity with my principal.				
5. I can demonstrate outcomes that highlight the shared commitment to equity I have with my principal.				
Subtotal				
TOTALS				

QUESTIONS

1. What is my average score?
2. With which areas am I most comfortable/open (low scores)? Which are the least comfortable? (high scores)
3. Are there categories in which I need work (i.e., Collaborative Action)? Are my responses consistent throughout?
4. (If there is more than one school counselor in the building, before engaging the principal with the results): Are there discernible patterns in my assessment response with those of other school counselors on my team?
5. What factors contribute to the disparities between/among the school counseling team members?
6. Discuss and clarify the largest gaps in assessment results.
7. What does the school counselor team think is the most important issue(s) to engage in dialogue with the principal regarding Trust and Respect?

3.3 Principal: Trust and Respect Self-Assessment

Goal: Understand your own beliefs about how your interactions and behaviors are understood by other school professionals.

Time: 1 hour

Directions: Complete the worksheet by checking the appropriate box. For each “No” response, provide an explanation in the row below. Once both principals and counselors have completed the worksheets, compare them and determine which areas have gaps. Discuss why this is, and how you can change them.

	Yes	No
I have clearly communicated a vision for the school and for student achievement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I encourage input and participation in developing the school’s mission and vision.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have a clear understanding of my counselors’ unique training, knowledge and skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My goals are based on data about student needs and characteristics.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have knowledge and support for the counselors’ plans.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am able to clearly communicate what I believe to be the best use of my counselors’ time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Yes	No
My school counselors' plans fit into my vision for the school.		
I provide feedback and support, rather than criticism.		
I monitor and question metrics tied to my plans.		
I follow student data throughout the year and support modification of my counselors' plans as needed.		
I support my counselors personally and professionally.		

Questions for Thought

1. How do you know your answers are correct? Have you solicited feedback?
2. Analyze your responses to see if you can determine a pattern. Did you respond "No" often? What does that tell you?
3. Do the responses confirm your current beliefs about the effectiveness of your working relationships? Why or why not?
4. Do your responses indicate that you value teamwork?

3.4 School Counselor: Trust and Respect Self-Assessment

Goal: Understand your own beliefs about how your interactions and behaviors are understood by other school professionals.

Time: 1 hour

Directions: Complete the worksheet by checking the appropriate box. For each “no” response, provide an explanation in the row below. Once both principals and counselors have completed the worksheets, compare them and determine which areas have gaps. Discuss why this is, and how you can change them.

	Yes	No
I understand the principal’s vision for the school and for student achievement.		
I believe in and support the school’s mission and vision.		
I have a clear plan that utilizes my training, knowledge and skills as a school counselor.		
My plans are based on data about student needs and characteristics.		
I am able to clearly communicate my plans to the principal.		
I am able to clearly communicate what I believe to be the best use of my unique skills, training and knowledge to the principal.		

	Yes	No
My plans fit into the principal's vision for the school.		
My plans are developed with input from the principal and other school leaders.		
I track and report on metrics tied to my plans.		
I follow student data throughout the year and modify my plans as needed.		
I am able to modify my plans if circumstances change during the year.		
I accept tasks cheerfully.		
I am viewed as a team player.		
I believe in the principle of "disagree in private, support in public."		

	Yes	No
I have a well-earned track record for following through on tasks and commitments.		
I feel I can talk openly with my principal when the need arises.		
I feel that my skills as a school counselor are valued by the principal.		
My time is largely spent on activities that take advantage of my training and skills as a school counselor.		
I am encouraged to take the initiative.		
The principal knows how I spend my time.		
My input is respected and valued.		

Questions for Thought

1. How do you know your answers are correct? Have you solicited feedback?
2. Analyze your responses to see if you can determine a pattern. Did you respond “No” often? What does that tell you?
3. Do the responses confirm your current beliefs about the effectiveness of your working relationships? Why or why not?
4. Do your responses indicate that you value teamwork?

3.5 Trust-Building: Team Checklist

The principal-counselor teams profiled in *Finding a Way* shared a number of practices and habits that led directly to trust and respect. Use this tool to check your own behaviors.

Goal: Continue the process of building respect and trust by developing a track record of effective work, communications and follow-through.

Time: 3–10 minutes to respond to the statements; 1/2 to 1 hour for collating the responses; 1 or 2 hours for discussion, depending upon responses. The responses can be completed and tabulated prior to a working discussion section.

Instructions:

1. Have each team member fill out the table separately.
2. Have someone collect the [anonymous] responses, tabulating the answers and comments. Total the number of “Yes” and “No” answers.
3. If you receive more than a few “No” responses, further discussion is strongly recommended. If there are more than a few “No” responses, or if the comments are at all contentious, an outside moderator is recommended.

Statement	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Never	Comments
Our team focuses first and foremost on student achievement.					
Our team studies data to understand issues concerning our students.					
Our team members clearly understand their own roles in the school.					
Our principals understand the role and function of the school counselors.					
Our school counselors understand the role and function of the principals.					
Our team uses our limited communication opportunities to discuss and implement solutions to problems.					
We support one another as professionals at all times.					
Our principal gives the counselors a great deal of latitude and support.					
Our counselors do not challenge the principal in public; once a decision has been made, they support it.					

Statement	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Never	Comments
Our team communicates regularly and efficiently, even about the most difficult issues.					
Our team members can each rely on consistent and thorough follow-through.					
Our counselors have established a pattern of always following up with what they've been assigned or have said they will do. They do not need micromanaging.					
Our administrators are consistent and thorough with policies and practices.					
Our team members do not sidestep procedures or take actions that undercut one another's position or authority without discussing the reasons first.					

Questions

1. Do your responses indicate good teamwork?
2. Is your teamwork validated by your students' outcomes?
3. Discuss the collective result of the "Sometimes" and "Never" responses. Do these things make your work easier or more difficult?
4. What needs to be done to move from "Sometimes" or "Never" to "Always"?

3.6 Defining Trust in the Context of the School

Building trust is not easy, in part because it means different things in different contexts, requires different facets for different roles, and means different things to different people. (For example, in the military deference and obedience to higher ranks are vital, but less so in other professions.)

Time: 5–10 minutes to answer the questions; 1 hour for discussion.

Activity: Twenty aspects of trust are listed below, in random order, along with some blank slots for other aspects you believe are important. Rank each of these aspects from 1 to 5, with 1 being least important and 5 being most important.

1. Credibility _____
2. Consistency _____
3. Reliability _____
4. Honesty _____
5. Security _____
6. Belief _____
7. Courtesy _____
8. Competence _____
9. Open-mindedness _____
10. Dependability _____
11. Collegiality _____
12. Motivation _____
13. Attitude _____
14. Flexibility _____
15. Discretion _____
16. Respect _____
17. Safety _____
18. Willingness to Share _____
19. Ability to Listen _____
20. Focus on Others _____

Discussion

Have someone (a neutral moderator, if possible) collate and average the counselors' rankings and the principals' rankings. Compare the two, then note and discuss the differences. Some questions to ask include:

1. How do the two groups differ?
2. How are they the same?
3. Which aspects of trust are absolutely required?
4. Do any of the aspects of trust ever conflict with one another (i.e., courtesy and discretion versus honesty)? How do you work around this?
5. How might any discrepancies in answers affect your students?
6. Is there a difference between personal and professional trust? Is personal respect necessary?
7. Is it equally important for principals and counselors to trust one another?

Bring It Home

Think of some situations in your school in which particular aspects are needed, and what the effect of establishing trust in this way can have on your students' achievement. Begin with a successful situation that results in a positive outcome; then try to identify an issue with a less positive outcome in which trust could make a difference.



Building an Effective Principal-School Counselor Relationship: Leadership



She'd heard it before. When school counselor Laura Newton listened to new principal Mel Riddle expound on his goals for the school, and how this time they would be achieved by empowering the staff, she did so with skepticism arising from years of frustration. Despite advanced degrees and years of experience, the counselor office run by Dr. Newton and her colleagues was usually an afterthought to the principal, who had too many other things to worry about. Laura's frustration was very real. Rather than using their expertise to guide students to a better education, the counselors at TC Williams were often little more than scheduling machines, averaging over 800 schedule changes each fall. It is no wonder that when Dr. Riddle announced that he would focus on helping students, and that he "saw counselors as part of the solution, not as scheduling clerks," she was dubious.

*Located in Alexandria, Va., **T.C. Williams High School** is a comprehensive high school serving 2,800 students. Best known for being featured in the film *Remember the Titans*, 45 percent of the students qualify for free or reduced-fee lunch, and the student body has a mobility rate of 30 percent. Seventy-five percent of the students are members of minority groups and more than 22 percent are English language learners.*

Mel began by establishing leaders in each department and giving them the power to advocate for their department, asking that they provide key information to use in data-driven decision making. He already had a clear idea of the importance of the counselor in individual students' decision making. Laura was ready; she had been keeping detailed logs of everything the counseling staff did, showing each service the department provided to a student, and also documenting the more than 800 schedule changes her department made each year, bleeding their time. Teamwork is an important part of decision making at the school. "Collaborative decisions take longer," says Mel, "but they also last a lot longer. Changing the way people work together changes results more than changing structures does."

Adapted from *Finding a Way*

INTRODUCTION

You do not lead by hitting people over the head; that's assault, not leadership.

—Dwight D. Eisenhower

Findings from the Research

School counselors and principals were asked to rate “the importance and presence of counselor participation on school leadership teams.”

Survey Results*	Importance (1–5)	Present in my school (1–5)	Gap between presence and importance
Principals	4.29	4.01	.28
Counselors	4.38	3.56	.82

Principals and school counselors both think that it is important that counselors participate in school leadership. They have very different perceptions about how well that is happening in their own schools.

Tools in this Section

- 4.1 School Counselor Self-Assessment: Leadership
- 4.2 Principal Self-Assessment: Leadership
- 4.3 Principal-Counselor Shared Decision Making: Principal Worksheet
- 4.4 Principal-Counselor Shared Decision Making: School Counselor Worksheet
- 4.5 Leadership and Student Achievement
- 4.6 Identifying Opportunities for School Counselors to Participate in School Leadership Teams
- 4.7 Counselor Leadership Planning Worksheet
- 4.8 Leadership Styles for Principals

“A leader who can’t immediately give a list of other leaders he’s created and empowered may be in the wrong position.”

— Mel Riddle, NASSP

* Survey results are based on a sampling of more than 2,300 counselors and principals throughout the U.S. Participants were asked to rate a number of characteristics on a scale of 1–5, with 1 meaning not important and 5 extremely important. Next, the participants were asked to rate whether these characteristics were present in their current school, with 1 meaning not present and 5 extremely present. The next column shows the gap between what the survey participants felt was important and its presence in their school.

4.1 School Counselor Self-Assessment: Leadership

Leadership Requires Shared Responsibility for Student Success

Leadership takes a level of commitment that requires a shared responsibility by both parties. If the commitment does not exist, both the principal and counselor will need to be intentional and deliberate in committing to shared leadership. A commitment to leadership supports student success.

You can't stay in your corner of the Forest waiting for others to come to you. You have to go to them sometimes.

— A. A. Milne, *Pooh's Little Instruction Book*

Time: 5 minutes to complete page 1; 45 minutes to complete page 2 (plus ongoing updates).

Activity: Rate your commitment toward leadership:

School Counselor Participation on School Leadership Team	Yes	No
I participate on the school leadership team.		
I contribute relevant information in my expertise area to the leadership team.		
I contribute to key decisions that impact student achievement.		
Joint Responsibility in the Development of Goals and Metrics	Yes	No
I align my school counseling program with the vision and mission of the school/principal.		
My school counseling activities or methods support schoolwide goals and metrics.		
I demonstrate program outcomes that relate to the metrics and goals of my school.		
I develop an action plan that is congruent to the goals established with my principal.		
I solicit input from teachers, students, parents, administrators and community stakeholders in development of metric and goals for my school counseling program.		
Shared Decision Making on Initiatives that Impact Student Success	Yes	No
I use results data to make positive change in school policies.		
I implement change to foster student success.		
I take a leadership role in facilitating schoolwide change.		

1. Review your rating in the three areas above.
2. Prioritize the area in which you need to improve.
3. Create steps toward improving your commitment.

Areas of Leadership Commitment I Need to Improve	The Steps I Need to Take to Improve

4.2 Principal Self-Assessment: Leadership

Leadership Requires Shared Responsibility for Student Success

Leadership takes a level of commitment that requires a shared responsibility by both parties. If the commitment does not exist both the principal and counselor will need to be intentional and deliberate in committing to shared leadership. A commitment to leadership supports student success.

You can't stay in your corner of the Forest waiting for others to come to you. You have to go to them sometimes.

— A.A. Milne, *Pooh's Little Instruction Book*

Time: 5 minutes to complete page 1; 45 minutes to complete page 2 (plus ongoing updates).

Activity: Rate your commitment toward leadership:

School Counselor Participation on School Leadership Team	Yes	No
I allow school counselors to participate on the school leadership team(s).		
I value relevant information from my counselors in their area of expertise when it is presented to the leadership team.		
I welcome and encourage my counselors to contribute to key decisions that impact student achievement.		
Joint Responsibility in the Development of Goals and Metrics	Yes	No
I ensure that my school counseling program aligns with the vision and mission for my school.		
I ensure that my school counselors' activities or methods support schoolwide goals and metrics.		
I monitor and expect program outcomes that relate to the metrics and goals of the school.		
I review action plans to make sure they are congruent to the goals I have established for the school.		
I solicit input from teachers, students, parents, administrators and community stakeholders in development of metric and goals for my school counseling program.		
Shared Decision Making on Initiatives that Impact Student Success	Yes	No
I use results data to make positive change in school policies.		
I implement change to foster student success.		
I take a leadership role in facilitating schoolwide change.		

1. Review your rating in the three areas above.
2. Prioritize the area in which you need to improve.
3. Create steps toward improving your commitment.

Areas of Leadership Commitment I Need to Improve	The Steps I Need to Take to Improve

4.3 Principal-Counselor Shared Decision Making: Principal Worksheet

The survey data revealed that school counselors and principals see four broad areas as critical for the development of an effective principal-counselor relationship: One is **Principal-Counselor Shared Decision Making**.

Directions: Read each case study in the *Finding a Way* booklet and then answer the questions below.

Time: 30–45 minutes

Snapshots of Effective Principal-Counselor Relationship						
T.C. Williams High School (page 2)	Ernesto Serna School (page 9)	Visitation Valley Middle School (page 13)	Jefferson County High School (page 15)	Palm Beach Gardens High School (page 19)	Kenwood Academy (page 23)	Benjamin Banneker Academic High School (page 25)

Activity/Discussion

- Which, if any, of the principal-counselor pairs demonstrate or model shared decision making similar to you and your school counselor(s)? _____

- If none of the shared decision making modeled or demonstrated fit with your situation, how can you replicate some of the effective practices of the teams in the different schools? _____

- If your shared decision making is different from any of the pairs, what are the behaviors that make your shared decision making effective or not effective? _____

- What are the outcomes/results of your shared decision making with the school counselor in your building? _____

- How does the shared decision making of the pairs in each school appear to impact student outcomes? _____

- How does your shared decision making with your school counselor appear to impact student outcomes? _____

4.4 Principal-Counselor Shared Decision Making: School Counselor Worksheet

The survey data revealed that school counselors and principals see four broad areas as critical for the development of an effective principal-counselor: One is **Principal-Counselor Shared Decision Making**.

Directions: Read each case study in the *Finding a Way* booklet and then answer the questions below.

Time: 30–45 minutes.

Snapshots of Effective Principal-Counselor Relationship						
T.C. Williams High School (page 2)	Ernesto Serna School (page 9)	Visitation Valley Middle School (page 13)	Jefferson County High School (page 15)	Palm Beach Gardens High School (page 19)	Kenwood Academy (page 23)	Benjamin Banneker Academic High School (page 25)

Activity/Discussion

- Which, if any, of the principal-counselor pairs demonstrate or model shared decision making similar to you and your principal? _____

- If none of the shared decision making modeled or demonstrated fit with your situation, how can you replicate some of the effective practices of the teams in the different schools? _____

- If your shared decision making is different from any of the pairs, what are the behaviors that make your shared decision making effective or not effective? _____

- What are the outcomes/results of your shared decision making with the principal in your building? _____

- How does the shared decision making of the pairs in each school appear to impact student outcomes? _____

- How does your shared decision making with your principal appear to impact student outcomes? _____

4.5 Leadership and Student Achievement

Overview: Thinking about leadership from a different perspective can be a powerful tool for change. The objective of this exercise is to translate different views of leadership into terms that describe student achievement. An experienced moderator will help to facilitate this exercise.

Directions

1. Read through each quote below and briefly describe how you would relate to it in your role as a principal or school counselor leader in improving student achievement.
2. Collate the responses, using a neutral party whenever possible.
3. Have a free discussion about each of these statements, and then
4. Discuss the leadership roles played by the principals and by the school counselors, and how they enhance student achievement.

Time: 20 minutes for each to complete sheet; 1 hour for discussion.

Leadership	Principal's View on Student Achievement	School Counselor's View on Student Achievement
The difference between the impossible and possible lies in a person's determination.		
Leaders instill in their people a hope for success and a belief in themselves. Positive leaders empower people to accomplish their goals.		
Nothing limits achievement like small thinking. Nothing equals possibilities like unleashed thinking.		
Dream no small dreams, for they have no power to move the hearts of men.		
Believe in yourself and act on your convictions.		
A real leader faces the music, even when he doesn't like the tune.		
Good leaders develop through a never-ending process of self-study, education, training and experience.		

4.7 Counselor Leadership Planning Worksheet

Instructions: This exercise allows principals and counselors to work together to identify at least one activity (and preferably more) in which each counselor can serve in a leadership capacity. Note that this is not a detailed work plan; rather, it is a summary of activities that each counselor will lead.

Time: ½ hour (ongoing)

Activity	Goal	Counselor Leader	Activities	Timeframe	Measurement
Example Financial Aid Forms	100% of Seniors Fill Out the FAFSA	Jane Smith	Master Calendar Letter to Parents Training for Advisory Teachers After-School Workshops Parent Meetings Checklists	August September October Sept. – March Sept. – March August – May	Completed ____ Mailed ____ Training Conducted ____ Workshops Conducted ____ Meetings Conducted ____ Keep track of student responses ____ Follow-up ____

4.8 Leadership Styles for Principals

SOME EXAMPLES OF LEADERSHIP METHODS

Here are some ways principals can choose to influence their staff and the work they do in the school. Each has pros and cons. (These methods are valid for leadership activities taken by other staff members as well.)

Persuasion

Pro: Since it uses evidence and logic to make a case for an action, this method requires good upfront planning.

Con: Persuasion is not always possible or even desirable (especially on small matters) with time constraints and staff size. Some people may not buy in no matter how persuasive the argument.

Consultation

Pro: This method obtains buy-in by soliciting the opinions and ideas of the other party; they may have ideas you don't.

Con: It can be messy if you don't like the input or feedback you get.

Appeal

Pro: This can generate enthusiasm if the appeal is based on emotion or speaks to core values.

Con: Some topics don't generate much enthusiasm. ("And, you get to do two extra hours of lunchroom duty!")

Pressure

Pro: This is a very hands-on leadership style, and you know immediately if assigned tasks are being accomplished.

Con: Pressure tactics tend to turn adversarial, and they prevent others from assuming a leadership role.

Collaboration

Pro: This creates strong buy-in by creating a team of professionals and soliciting their advice and feedback. It increases the sense of value among team members and helps to create leaders.

Con: Some tasks and decisions are not well suited for collaboration. Groups can require hands-on management, and often one or two people tend to dominate.

Decree

Pro: This is the simplest way to accomplish many goals, especially small ones, and it is quick.

Con: It can backfire if a large group resists the directive. It can erode both trust and respect if used too often.

SOME REACTIONS TO ATTEMPTS AT INFLUENCE

Staff will usually react to a leadership action in one of these four ways:

Compliance

People go along with the program, although levels of enthusiasm can vary widely.

Commitment

This is the desired outcome because it leads to active support of an initiative.

Resistance

If buy-in is not obtained, staff can actively subvert initiatives without openly opposing them.

Refusal

In rare cases, resistance can turn into rejection of an initiative or order, especially if a large enough group opposes the initiative.

Leadership Styles for Principals (Continued)

Time: 10 minutes; 20 minutes for discussion

Overview: This exercise requires principals to reflect upon their actions and identify/examine their behaviors and leadership style in the context of the school and student achievement. For discussion with school counselors, a neutral moderator may be desirable.

ACTIVITY

Think of an action, project or other activity that required some form of influence from you as the leader. Write it down in 2–3 sentences. You may want to choose something that did not entirely lead to the outcome you wanted; this can help you understand why it did not work.

Now think about what type of leadership method you used: _____

What was the reaction? _____

Did you expect that result? ___ Yes ___ No

Did that outcome positively impact your students? ___ Yes ___ No

Would you choose the same style or tactic if you had to do it again? ___ Yes ___ No

Try again, using another type of project, decision or activity.

Now think about what type of leadership method you used: _____

What was the reaction? _____

Did you expect that result? ___ Yes ___ No

Did that outcome positively impact your students? ___ Yes ___ No

Would you choose the same style or tactic if you had to do it again? ___ Yes ___ No

Why or why not?

Discuss your results with your counselors. Which leadership styles work best for them? Why?



Building an Effective Principal-School Counselor Relationship:

Collaborative Planning



Having a shared vision is important at Ernesto Serna.

“Maybe that’s when we clicked,” says Tammi. “I thought, ‘We’re shortchanging our kids. We don’t have high enough expectations; they can do as well as anybody else can.’ But it was always kind of a philosophy that, ‘Oh well, they’re doing as good as they can.’ And I always felt like, ‘No, they’re not. We can do better — we’re shortchanging them.’ That’s the direction we both wanted them to go, to achieve as high as anybody else did. Because it didn’t matter, with all the other stuff that was going on with them. They still can do it, you know, if you just have the expectation.” Ricardo agrees, saying that “a counselor I could work with is one who basically has the same philosophy when it comes to kids, that we need to serve the kids, not just pop in — you know, where you have your presentation and pop in the tape and sit there and do your paperwork.”

The focus at the school is on getting all students to achieve at high levels, and the team has been very successful at this. One strategy is to get the school’s two counselors involved in the classroom. Tammi attends teachers’ planning meetings to better understand what’s going on in the classroom and to give her views from a counseling perspective. And they involve the whole school in their team — not just the principal and counselor. Tammi says, “You couldn’t possibly have a principal–counselor team that worked really well together if it didn’t reflect on the whole faculty ... I don’t think it was just our team that made students successful, but it was just building a team on the campus. Everybody works together well as a team.”

Adapted from *Finding a Way*

Once you have gained a clearer understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of your current relationship and have taken some initial steps to make it even stronger, the next step is to plan together to create an action plan for the school's counseling program. This involves developing a mission and vision for what success looks like in your school and then carefully planning and agreeing upon a counseling program that supports that vision.

Tools in this section:

- 5.1 Developing a Shared Vision
- 5.2 Developing Vision and Mission Statements
- 5.3 NOSCA School Counselor Strategic Planning Tool
- 5.4 ASCA Secondary School Counselor Management Agreement
- 5.5 School Counselor Activities Rating (Counselor)
- 5.6 School Counselor Activities Rating (Principal)

Developing a Shared Vision and Mission

Everyone takes the limits of his own vision for the limits of the world.

— Arthur Schopenhauer

Vision (n.): *The state of seeing what could be.*

As Schopenhauer noted, a collective vision is almost always more powerful than that of a single person. People come from many different places and backgrounds and often have strong beliefs. In order to create a school environment in which student achievement is at the forefront, the school professionals must come to terms with basic agreement on:

- What they believe
- What they want the results to look like
- How they are going to get there

This three-step process includes discovering values, developing a vision and identifying a mission. In other words, to effectively plan an effective school, it is important for everyone to first understand what you believe (your values), what you want the end result to be for your students (your vision) and how the school community can organize to get there (your mission).

Ideally, all school professionals should be included in the process or the vision will not be truly shared.

5.1 Developing a Shared Vision

If possible, this exercise should be distributed prior to the group session in order to ensure thoughtful responses to the questions. This is not a quick process and might require one or two full days to develop a sense of mission and vision for the school.

Exercise

1. Make a list of your core values as they relate to education. What really matters, and why? (An example is provided.) Participants should include at least three examples of values and beliefs that can be directly affected by effective school counselors.

Core Value or Belief	Why This is Important
Ex. All children can learn and achieve at a high level.	Once we accept that all students are capable of excelling, we can no longer sit back comfortably if large numbers are failing.

2. Selecting completed forms at random, discuss the values presented. If principals and counselors from multiple schools are participating, divide into groups, mixing principals and school counselors. Assign completed worksheets at random, and discuss the values. Ask these questions:
 - Should this be a core value of our school?
 - How does this value or belief affect our students? Our staff? Our community?
 - Is there currently widespread belief in this value in the school? In the community?
 - How can we get buy-in from the key stakeholders — Including the community, parents, district supervisors, principals, counselors, teachers, other staff — and students?
3. Following your discussions, take a fresh belief chart and, working as a team, define your core beliefs and values, and describe why they are important to the school.

A note on developing shared values. In order to develop values that are truly shared, a “safe” atmosphere is required. That is, all participants must feel that they are able to present their views without fear of repercussions, blame or belittlement. Principals must take care to not dominate the discussion — it would be good practice to have principals speak after other team members whenever possible. And everyone on the team should be heard and should listen.

5.2 Developing Vision and Mission Statements

Vision Statements

A vision statement tells you what your school will look like when your values and beliefs are translated into outcomes. This vision should directly reflect the values developed in the previous exercise. Vision statements can be short. (All our students will graduate from high school and attend college.) They can, however, also include longer lists of how things should look in the classroom and elsewhere in the school in an ideal situation.

Mission Statements

Using the shared values developed earlier, create a short mission statement for the school. Effective mission statements have several things in common. They:

- Are concise — 1–2 sentences
- Are grounded
- Are challenging enough to push the boundaries of what the school is currently achieving
- Are clear
- Do not require explanation
- Are relevant for your school's community and students

There are many resources available on creating vision and mission statements, and it is often a long, involved process. Our belief, however, is that once shared values are identified, the vision and mission will quickly fall into place.

Sample Vision Statements

Women's Centre

Within the next five years, the Women's Centre will have helped create a safer, more harmonious community by helping women acquire the education, skills and resources necessary to build self-sufficient prosperous lives.

Metromanage.com

Within the next five years, Metromanage.com will become a leading provider of management software to North American small businesses by providing customizable, user-friendly software scaled to small business needs.

Wicomico County

Wicomico County government is valuable and service driven. Wicomico County will be known locally, regionally, statewide and nationally as being innovative and progressive in providing cost effective county services. The citizens and the County council will be proud of the staff and have a firm belief in the reliability, truth and strength of the organization.

Andover Department of Community Services

The Andover Department of Community Services vision is to provide high quality services to all residents by continuing to serve as leaders in the recreation field with innovative and creative programs. DCS will serve well as advocates for current community interests by keeping pace with our growing community in providing a maximum number and a variety of quality programs. A pro-active strategy of coordination, planning and implementation with the Andover Youth Services, Andover Public Schools and other town departments and organizations will foster our ability to respond effectively.

The Leisure Services Department

The Leisure Services Department is committed to improving the quality of life of the citizens of _____ by providing a variety of high quality leisure service opportunities that are reasonably priced, in the most cost-effective manner to citizens of all ages, in a safe, courteous, clean, comfortable and enjoyable family environment.

Microsoft

"A personal computer in every home running Microsoft software."

SYP Mentorship Program

The purpose of the CWRA SYP mentoring program is to promote the management of Canada's water resources by strengthening the professional capacity of students and young professionals through meaningful mentorship opportunities and/or relationships. While mutually benefiting students, young professionals, and CWRA professionals, this program will foster a larger professional water community.

Sample Mission Statements

IBM

"Our goal is simply stated. We want to be the best service organization in the world."

Wal-Mart

"To give ordinary folk the chance to buy the same thing as rich people."

Saturn

"Our mission is to earn the loyalty of Saturn owners and grow our family by developing and marketing U.S.-manufactured vehicles that are world leaders in quality, cost and customer enthusiasm through the integration of people, technology and business systems."

Westin Hotels and Resorts

In order to realize our Vision, our Mission must be to exceed the expectations of our customers, whom we define as guests, partners and fellow employees. We will accomplish this by committing to our shared values and by achieving the highest levels of customer satisfaction, with extraordinary emphasis on the creation of value. In this way we will ensure that our profit, quality and growth goals are met."

FedEx

"FedEx is committed to providing outstanding customer experience, to being a great place to work, a thoughtful steward of the environment and a caring citizen in the communities where we live and work. At FedEx, we are passionate about sustainably connecting people and places and improving the quality of life around the world."

Family Dollar Stores

"For our customers we offer a compelling place to shop by providing convenience and low prices. For our associates ... a compelling place to work by providing exceptional opportunities and rewards for achievement. For our investors ... a compelling place to invest by providing outstanding returns."

Hewlett-Packard

"To provide products, services and solutions of the highest quality and deliver more value to our customers that earns their respect and loyalty."

MBC Farms

MBC Farms is a producer of grains, oilseeds, specialty crops and milk. Our mission is to be recognized by our business associates and competitors as one of the top producers in our area and to make sure that productivity translates into prosperity and growth for everyone involved with our farm.

The College Board National Office for School Counselor Advocacy

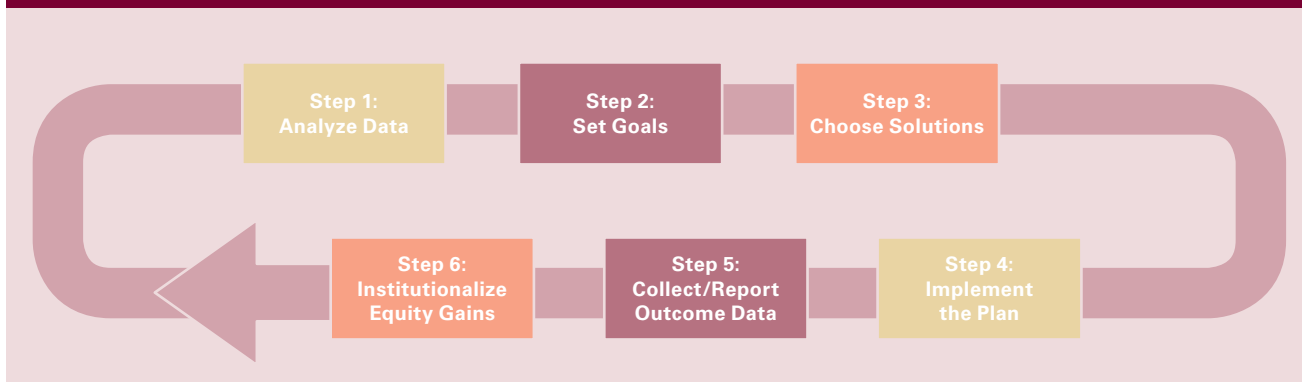
5.3 School Counselor Strategic Planning Tool

Every student should graduate from high school with the educational preparation and social capital necessary for success in college and the workforce.

School counselors are well positioned as the school professionals best able to guide all students toward college and career readiness. To be effective leaders in establishing a college-going culture, counselors must be strong advocates for their students and their profession and possess the skills to drive positive change in the school.

Strategic planning is an essential tool for school counselors to use to drive positive change in schools. Strategic planning helps school counselors use data to set clear goals and develop strategies with measurable outcomes for student achievement and success. Using this process helps school counselors to align college and career counseling with school improvement plans. It makes the case that college counseling is an effective way to meet the goals set by principals and district leaders. This allows counselors to become school leaders and advocates for all students. A clear plan enables them to build college and career readiness programs at each level of K–12 education.

NOSCA's strategic planning process helps school counselors:



NOSCA's strategic planning process:

- Makes the most of the school counselor's time and resources
- Links goals, interventions and outcomes
- Provides evidence to advocate for systemic change
- Eliminates "random initiatives"
- Provides results measured in student outcomes

"My counselor's strategic planning helped us transform the school community into one where everyone in the building was focused on getting all our students ready for college."

— Sharon Sevier
Director of Guidance and Counseling
Rockwood School District
Eureka, Mo.

The College Board National Office for School Counselor Advocacy **School Counselor Strategic Planning Tool**



STEP 1: Collect, analyze and interpret data to identify gaps in student outcomes.

Examine data elements that describe student outcomes, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, family income and other relevant measures, in order to identify student, school and community needs. Analyze data to identify inequities.

STEP 2: Develop and prioritize measurable, data-driven goals aligned with school, district, state and national goals.

Goals should be specific, quantifiable, time-sensitive statements of what is going to be achieved and when it will be achieved.

STEP 3: Develop strategies and interventions to meet goals.

Develop solutions and interventions that can be successfully implemented within the context of the school and community and will gain support from stakeholders.

STEP 4: Develop and implement the plans for each goal, including benchmarks to monitor progress.

Develop multilevel action plans for each goal. Identify action items, the specific individuals responsible for implementation and key milestones, and timelines that correspond to each goal.

STEP 5: Collect and report outcome data to all stakeholders, and adjust strategies and interventions as needed based on results.

Collect results data to determine whether the goals were reached and if strategies or implementations need to be adjusted. Present results to administrators and other stakeholders.

STEP 6: Institutionalize policies, practices and procedures to sustain gains in equity.

Identify the strategies and interventions that result in positive student outcomes and equity gains to make them standard operating procedure within the context of the school.

The College Board National Office for School Counselor Advocacy (NOSCA)

The College Board's National Office for School Counselor Advocacy (NOSCA) promotes the value of school counselors as leaders in advancing school reform and student achievement. It seeks to endorse and institutionalize school counseling practice that advocates for equitable educational access and rigorous academic preparation necessary for college readiness for all students. For more information, please visit www.collegeboard.com/nosca.



5.4 Secondary School Counselor Management Agreement (Counselor/Principal Agreement)

School year _____ School _____ Date _____

Counselor _____

STUDENT ACCESS:

Students will access the school counselor by:

_____ Grade level _____ Domain _____ By academy/pathway
_____ Alpha listing _____ No caseload (See any counselor) _____ Other please specify _____

COUNSELOR OF THE DAY:

Our counseling program will _____ will not _____ implement counselor of the day.

DOMAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

Looking at your site needs/strengths, counselors will be identified as the domain counselors for the following areas:

Academic domain: _____

Career domain: _____

Personal/social domain: _____

Rationale for decision: _____

PROGRAMMATIC DELIVERY

The school counseling teams will spend approximately the following time in each component area to ensure the delivery of the school counseling program?

_____ % of time delivering guidance curriculum
_____ % of time with individual student planning
_____ % of time with responsive services
_____ % of time with system support

SCHOOL COUNSELOR AVAILABILITY:

The school counseling department be open for student/parent/teacher access from _____ to _____

The department will manage the division of hours by: _____

The career center will be open from _____ to _____

The department will manage the division of hours by: _____

Programs and services presented and available to parents include:

Example: guidance newsletter, parenting classes, parent information night

Secondary School Counselor Program Management Agreement

Programs and services presented and available to staff include:

Example: department liaison, topical information workshops (child abuse, ADD, etc.)

Community liaisons, programs and services will include:

THE SCHOOL COUNSELORS WILL BE COMPENSATED FOR EXTRA WORK HOURS (BEYOND WORK DAY) BY?

Extra duty pay (fund?) Comp time By principal/counselor negotiation
 Flex schedule Per union regulations No option for this

MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES

What materials and supplies are necessary for the implementation of the school counseling program:

The following funding resources support the school counseling program:

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The school counseling team will participate in the following professional development:

PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION

The school counseling department will meet weekly/monthly:

As a counseling department team With administration
 With the school staff (faculty) With subject area departments
 With the advisory council

OFFICE ORGANIZATION

Responsibilities for the support services provided the counseling team will be divided among the support services staff:

The school counseling assistant will: _____ The registrar will: _____
 The clerk will: _____ The receptionist will: _____
 Volunteers will: _____ Others will: _____

Counselor signature & date

Principal signature & date

5.5 School Counselor Activities Rating (Counselor)

Time: 1 hour

Instructions

Step 1: Directions: Rate each of the 13 counselor activities in the table below for both Importance and the Time you believe counselors spend on this activity as either **“High”** or **“Low.”** Rate each answer.

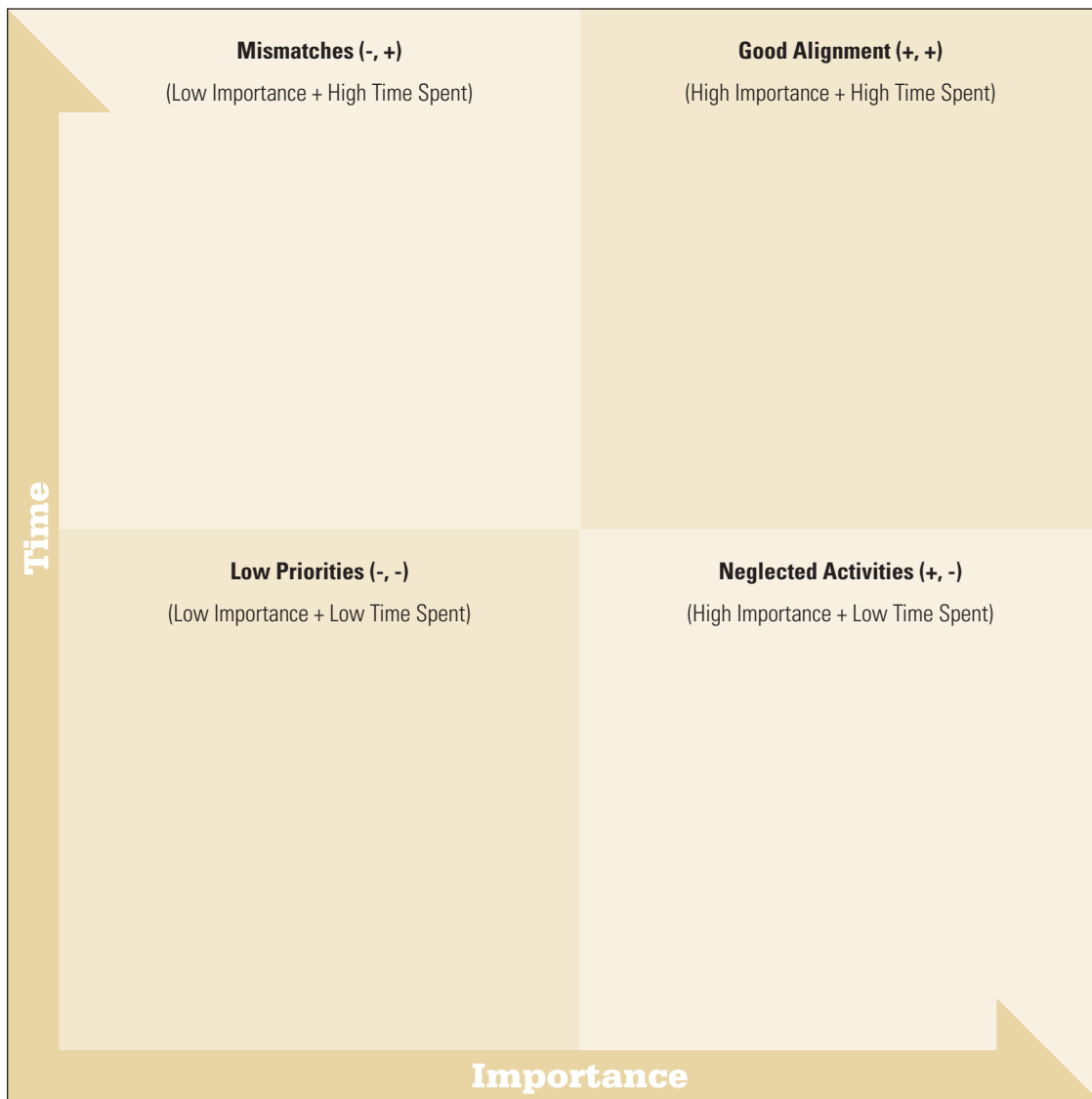
“High” (+) is defined as *of significant value and engagement.*

“Low” (-) is defined as *not of significant value or engagement.*

	Rating
Low Importance + High Time Spent	-, +
High Importance + High Time Spent	+, +
Low Importance + Low Time Spent	-, -
High Importance + Low Time Spent	+, -

Activity	Importance	Time Spent	Rating
1. Using vertical teaming to ensure that students entering high school are prepared to enroll in rigorous and challenging course work			
2. Developing schoolwide strategies to increase the number of students enrolled in honors and/or advanced courses (such as AP, IB or dual enrollment)			
3. Implementing schoolwide strategies to increase graduation rates in the school			
4. Helping to promote student personal growth and social development			
5. Helping to create a college-going culture within the school			
6. Helping students with career planning			
7. Advocating for schoolwide strategies that address equity and access issues for underserved students			
8. Helping parents and families of first-generation students learn about college and what it takes to get there			
9. Doing supportive administrative tasks such as clerical tasks and record keeping			
10. Serving as coordinator/facilitator for standardized tests given in the school			
11. Providing interpretation of test results that can be used in academic planning			
12. Doing scheduling tasks such as creating a master schedule, processing schedule changes and maintaining student transcript information			
13. Helping students in the college planning and application processes			

Step 2: Transfer each of your responses into the matching box in the grid below for further analysis of your responses.



Step 3: Reflection Questions

1. What observations can you make based on the placement of your responses? What surprises you? What causes you the most concern?
2. What responses would you like to be changed? Do you think you need to change?
3. What would you have to do differently in order to change the placement of the responses that need to be improved?
4. What knowledge and/or skills would you need to make the change?
5. How do you feel your responses impact student outcomes?
6. Can you make the changes you feel are necessary on your own or do you need the active support and engagement of your principal?

Step 4: Compare and contrast your responses with those of the counselor survey respondents.

Time	<p>Mismatches (-, +) (Low Importance + High Time Spent)</p> <p>Serving as a coordinator/facilitator for standardized tests</p> <p>Doing supportive administrative tasks</p> <p>Doing scheduling tasks such as creating a master schedule, processing changes, and maintaining transcript information</p>	<p>Good Alignment (+, +) (High Importance + High Time Spent)</p> <p>Helping promote student personal growth and social development</p> <p>Helping students in college planning/application process</p> <p>Helping students with career planning</p> <p>Helping create a college-going culture</p>
	<p>Low Priorities (-, -) (Low Importance + Low Time Spent)</p> <p>Developing strategies to increase the number of students enrolled in honors/advanced courses</p> <p>Using vertical teaming to ensure students entering high school are prepared to enroll in rigorous and challenging courses</p> <p>Implementing strategies to increase graduation rates</p> <p>Providing interpretation of test results that can be used in academic planning</p>	<p>Neglected Activities (+, -) (High Importance + Low Time Spent)</p> <p>Helping parents of families of first-generation students learn about college</p> <p>Advocating for strategies that address equity and access issues for underserved students</p> <p>Implementing strategies to increase graduation rates</p>
	Importance	

Step 5: After rating each of the 13 activities and placing them into the corresponding box above. Compare and contrast your responses with those of your peers and principal and discuss.

1. In which of the four focus areas is there the greatest similarity or discrepancy in Importance and Time Spent between your principal's chart and yours?
2. To what do you attribute the similarities and/or discrepancies?
3. In what ways do you believe these similarities and/or discrepancies impact your collective ability to meet your students' needs?

Step 6: Compare and contrast the Mismatches, Good Alignment, Low Priorities and Neglected Activities with your principal. Use the questions below to begin the conversation.

Mismatches: How can we create greater alignment in these areas?

Good Alignment: How can we capitalize on these areas and use them to help strengthen other areas?

Low Priorities: How can we work together to develop and continue to have a shared sense of high- and low-priority issues?

Neglected Activities: How can we engage in collaborative problem solving and decision making to address neglected areas that impact outcomes for our students?

Step 7: Given the identified Good Alignment, Mismatches, Low Priorities and Neglected Activities in both the principal and counselor responses, what needs to change in the way you interact and work together in order to increase academic achievement and outcomes for all students?

1.
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5.6 School Counselor Activities Rating (Principal)

Time: 1 hour

Directions:

Step 1: Rate each of the 13 counselor activities in the table below for both Importance and the Time you believe counselors spend on this activity as either “High” and “Low.” Rate each answer.

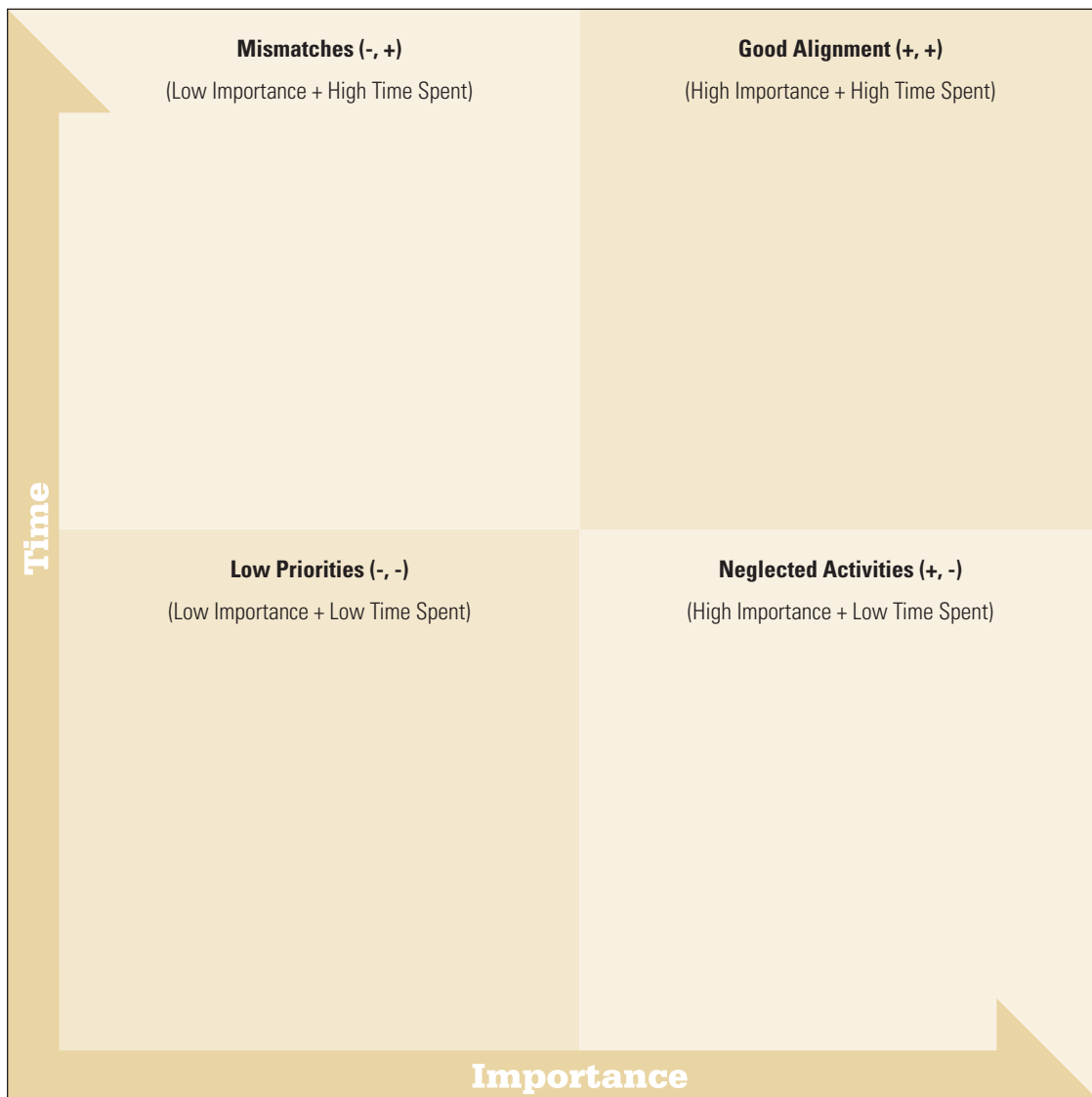
“High” (+) is defined as of significant value and engagement.

“Low” (-) is defined as **not** of significant value or engagement.

	Rating
Low Importance + High Time Spent	-, +
High Importance + High Time Spent	+, +
Low Importance + Low Time Spent	-, -
High Importance + Low Time Spent	+, -

Activity	Importance	Time Spent	Rating
1. Using vertical teaming to ensure that students entering high school are prepared to enroll in rigorous and challenging course work			
2. Developing schoolwide strategies to increase the number of students enrolled in honors and/or advanced courses (such as AP, IB or dual enrollment)			
3. Implementing schoolwide strategies to increase graduation rates in the school			
4. Helping to promote student personal growth and social development			
5. Helping to create a college-going culture within the school			
6. Helping students with career planning			
7. Advocating for schoolwide strategies that address equity and access issues for underserved students			
8. Helping parents and families of first-generation students learn about college and what it takes to get there			
9. Doing supportive administrative tasks such as clerical tasks and record keeping			
10. Serving as coordinator/facilitator for standardized tests given in the school			
11. Providing interpretation of test results that can be used in academic planning			
12. Doing scheduling tasks such as creating a master schedule, processing schedule changes and maintaining student transcript information			
13. Helping students in the college planning and application processes			

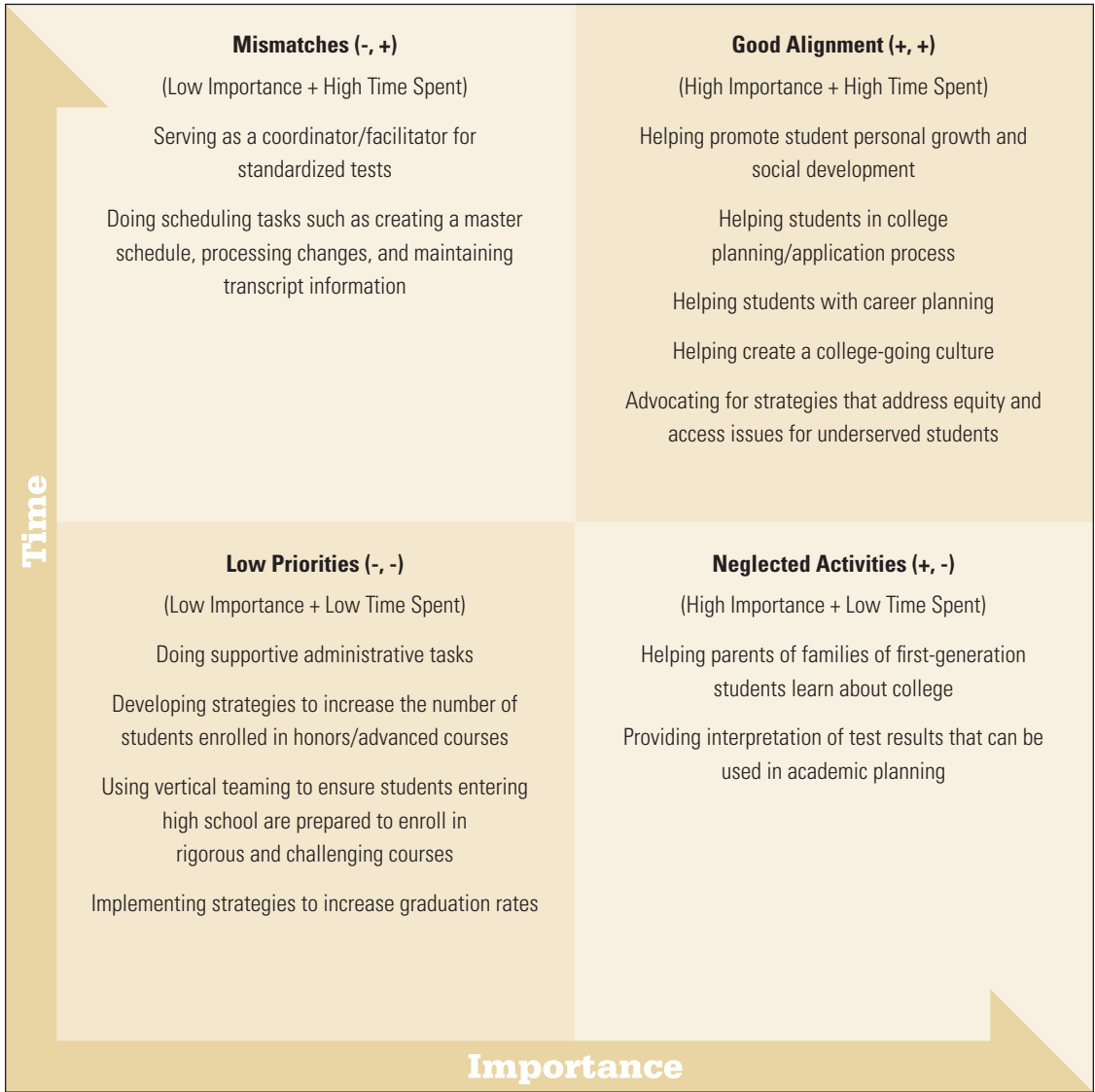
Step 2: Transfer each of your responses into the matching box in the grid below for further analysis.



Step 3: Reflection Questions

1. What observations can you make based on the placement of your responses? What surprises you? What causes you the most concern?
2. What responses would you like to be changed? Do you think you need to change?
3. What would you have to do differently in order to change the placement of the responses that need to be improved?
4. What knowledge and/or skills would you need to make the change?
5. How do you feel your responses impact student outcomes?
6. Can you make the changes you feel are necessary on your own or do you need the active support and engagement of your principal?

Step 4: Compare and contrast your responses with those of the principal survey respondents.



Step 5: After rating each of the 13 activities and placing them into the corresponding box above, compare and contrast your responses with those of your peers and principal and discuss.

1. In which of the four focus areas is there the greatest similarity or discrepancy between Importance and Time Spent between your principal's chart and yours?
2. To what do you attribute the similarities and/or discrepancies?
3. In what ways do you believe these similarities and/or discrepancies impact your collective ability to meet your students' needs?

Step 6: Compare and contrast the Mismatches, Good Alignment, Low Priorities and Neglected Activities with your counselor(s). Use the questions below to begin the conversation.

Mismatches: How can we create greater alignment in these areas?

Good Alignment: How can we capitalize on these areas and use them to help strengthen other areas?

Low Priorities: How can we work together to develop and continue to have a shared sense of high- and low-priority issues?

Neglected Activities: How can we engage in collaborative problem solving and decision making to address neglected areas that impact outcomes for our students?

Step 7: Given the identified Good alignment, Mismatches, Low Priorities and Neglected Activities in both the principal and counselor responses, what needs to change in the way you interact and work together in order to increase academic achievement and outcomes for all students?

1.
2.
3.
4.
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Building an Effective Principal-School Counselor Relationship:

Advanced Practice



6.1 Application of Knowledge and Skills: Principal Counselor Scenarios

This section contains five parts; rules of engagement, overarching questions, four situations, guiding questions, and blank templates for personalized school situations for practice.

Goal

Apply the awareness and knowledge of an effective principal-counselor relationship when faced with challenging situations by exhibiting effective rules of engagement through structured practice. Customize your application of knowledge and skill to your own school situations.

Directions

The work in this section can be done in teams, pairs or as individuals, however teams are recommended.

1. Read the rules of engagement and discuss whether your relationship and way of working falls on the “Move From” or the “Move To.” Use this as an opening conversation directed at desired modes of interacting when facing challenging situations.
2. There are four situations presented in this section describing common challenges in schools. Read a situation and then use the overarching questions for solution finding and the guiding questions for more in depth analysis. See if your interactions resemble the “Move To” column of Rules of Engagement.
3. Once you have completed practice on the four situations, use the blank templates and write in real life situations in your school. Engage in the same process as you did for the structured situations. What part of this work can you actually apply in your school?

Application of Knowledge and Skills Package

Principal – Four Counselor Solution-Finding Scenarios

Rules of Engagement

Effective Principal-Counselor Relationship Development/Maintenance

MOVE FROM:

- Personal gripes
- Adult needs/wants
- Issues benefiting one or a few students
- Judgmental posture/remarks
- Sharing critical info when requested or problems occur
- Presenting problems
- Shutting down when faced with opposition

MOVE TO:

- Professional goals
- Plans/outcomes that benefit students
- Systemic issues that benefit whole school/community
- Consensus building posture/remarks
- Sharing critical info frequently to ensure team success
- Building solutions to problems presented
- Reframing, reconciling and use of data for making points

Overarching Questions for solution finding in the situations below, ask these questions:

1. How could the principal or counselor build mutual trust and respect in working to resolve these issues? (*Relationship Development*)
2. What could be done to avoid getting into these kinds of nonproductive activities that could lead to conflict involving principals against counselors, counselors against principals and counselors against teachers? (*Collaborative Action/Leadership/Equity*)
3. How could counselor participation on the leadership team make these situations workable and less conflicting? (*Leadership*)

Finding a Way: Principal-Counselor Relationships — Solution-Finding Activity (Relationship Development, Collaborative Action, Equity)

Structured Situation 1:

Principal has set goal to increase the number of students in AP classes by directing that every student take at least one AP course during grades 10–12.

- Principal communicates the rule that all students will take at least one AP class before graduating from high school, part of the master plan to get all students college/career ready.
- Counselor tries to make sure only the students who have the capacity to earn a 3 or above are placed in AP classes because he or she does not want to set students up for failure.

Guiding Questions

Leadership

1. What are the benefits of having a school counselor on the leadership team in working on solutions for this situation?
2. Who owns the responsibility for success of the goals and metrics that are being sought for student success?
3. What happens when the solution finding sought represents a “win-win” for all — principal, counselor as well as the students/school community?

Relationship Development

1. How could the principal or counselor build mutual trust and respect in working to resolve these issues?
2. What would that look like? Words? Tone? Behavior? Expectations?

Collaborative Action

1. What would be the indicators that solution finding is characterized by open communication, opportunities for both parties to have input, and that benefiting students is the primary goal?
2. What critical student and community information must be addressed in reaching an educationally just and sound solution?

Equity

1. What does equity have to do with finding solutions to this situation?
2. How will you know that equity is being addressed in your solution?
3. How is a commitment to equity demonstrated in your solution?

Note: All 10 characteristics of an effective principal-counselor relationship can be addressed by engaging principal and counselor in working through the situations above to arrive at “win-win” solutions for principals, counselors and students.

Finding a Way: Principal-Counselor Relationships — Solution-Finding Activity (Leadership, Relationship Development, Collaborative Action, Equity)

Situation 2:

By school board directive, every 12th-grader in the school must have a documented conference with school counselor to go over graduation requirements and make post-high school plans.

- Counselor sets up a schedule over two months to accomplish this task by pulling students out of classes to meet in guidance office.
- Principal issues a cease-and-desist directive to counselor for using this method, acting under pressure from teachers who want to maintain instructional time and cut down on class disruptions.

Guiding Questions

Leadership

1. What are the benefits of having a school counselor on the leadership team in working on solutions for this situation?
2. Who owns the responsibility for success of the goals and metrics that are being sought for student success?
3. What happens when the solution finding sought represents a “win-win” for all — principal, counselor as well as the students/school community?

Relationship Development

1. How could the principal or counselor build mutual trust and respect in working to resolve these issues?
2. What would that look like? Words? Tone? Behavior? Expectations?

Collaborative Action

1. What would be the indicators that solution finding is characterized by open communication, opportunities for both parties to have input, and that benefitting the students is the primary goal?
2. What critical student and community information must be addressed in reaching an educationally just and sound solution?

Equity

1. What does equity have to do with finding solutions to this situation?
2. How will you know that equity is being addressed in your solution?
3. How is a commitment to equity demonstrated in your solution?

Note: All 10 characteristics of an effective principal-counselor relationship can be addressed by engaging principal and counselor in working through the situations above to arrive at “win-win” solutions for principals, counselors and students.

Finding a Way: Principal-Counselor Relationships — Solution-Finding Activity

(Leadership, Relationship Development, Collaborative Action, Equity)

Situation 3:

After opening school in September, class sizes for required English and social studies classes are overloaded. New students enroll daily needing these required classes with no changes being made to the master schedule.

- All students, no matter when they enter as school opens, must have a schedule of classes that meets their grade-level requirements, especially grade-level English and social studies.
- Counselors have no option except to place students in full classes, which causes constant controversy with receiving teachers. Additionally, some teachers refuse to seat the students and send them back to the counselor's office, giving new students the feeling that they are not welcome in this school. Students are sent back to same classroom where they must now contend with a teacher who didn't want them in the first place.

Guiding Questions

Leadership

1. What are the benefits of having a school counselor on the leadership team in working on solutions for this situation?
2. Who owns the responsibility for success of the goals and metrics that are being sought for student success?
3. What happens when the solution finding sought represents a “win-win” for all — principal, counselor as well as the students/school community?

Relationship Development

1. How could the principal or counselor build mutual trust and respect in working to resolve these issues?
2. What would that look like? Words? Tone? Behavior? Expectations?

Collaborative Action

1. What would be the indicators that solution finding is characterized by open communication, opportunities for both parties to have input, and that benefitting the students is the primary goal?
2. What critical student and community information must be addressed in reaching an educationally just and sound solution?

Equity

1. What does equity have to do with finding solutions to this situation?
2. How will you know that equity is being addressed in your solution?
3. How is a commitment to equity demonstrated in your solution?

Note: All 10 characteristics of an effective principal-counselor relationship can be addressed by engaging principal and counselor in working through the situations above to arrive at “win-win” solutions for principals, counselors and students.

Finding a Way: Principal-Counselor Relationships — Solution-Finding Activity (Leadership, Relationship Development, Collaborative Action, Equity)

Situation 4:

It is the first week of second semester of the school year, and the principal has held one meeting with the counseling department. That meeting was about the opening of school processes and how to handle schedule changes.

- The principal is a hands-on manager who holds frequent meetings with his administrative staff, but calls additional staff/department meetings on an “as-needed basis.” The administrative meetings are scheduled for every Monday morning before students arrive and are seldom cancelled.
- Counselors view this as a direct slighting of them as professionals; they feel that their contributions to the school are discounted because their irregularly scheduled monthly meetings with the principal are almost always cancelled.

Guiding Questions

Leadership

1. What are the benefits of having a school counselor on the leadership team in working on solutions for this situation?
2. Who owns the responsibility for success of the goals and metrics that are being sought for student success?
3. What happens when the solution finding sought represents a “win-win” for all — principal, counselor as well as the students/school community?

Relationship Development

1. How could the principal or counselor build mutual trust and respect in working to resolve these issues?
2. What would that look like? Words? Tone? Behavior? Expectations?

Collaborative Action

1. What would be the indicators that solution finding is characterized by open communication, opportunities for both parties to have input, and that benefitting the students is the primary goal?
2. What critical student and community information must be addressed in reaching an educationally just and sound solution?

Equity

1. What does equity have to do with finding solutions to this situation?
2. How will you know that equity is being addressed in your solution?
3. How is a commitment to equity demonstrated in your solution?

Note: All 10 characteristics of an effective principal-counselor relationship can be addressed by engaging principal and counselor in working through the situations above to arrive at “win-win” solutions for principals, counselors and students.

Write 2–4 scenarios that describe situations in your school that you would like to substitute for any of the four shown above.

My Situation #1:

My Situation #2:

Write 2–4 scenarios that describe situations in your school that you would like to substitute for any of the four shown above.

My Situation #3:

My Situation #4:

About the College Board

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Advocacy & Policy Center

The College Board Advocacy & Policy Center was established to help transform education in America. Guided by the College Board's principles of excellence and equity in education, we work to ensure that students from all backgrounds have the opportunity to succeed in college and beyond. We make critical connections between policy, research and real-world practice to develop innovative solutions to the most pressing challenges in education today. For further information, visit advocacy.collegeboard.org.

The National Office for School Counselor Advocacy

The College Board's National Office for School Counselor Advocacy promotes the value of school counselors as leaders in advancing school reform and student achievement. It seeks to endorse and institutionalize school counseling practice that advocates for equitable educational access and rigorous academic preparation necessary for college readiness for all students. For further information, visit www.collegeboard.org/nosca.

The National Association of Secondary School Principals

Founded in 1916, NASSP promotes excellence in school leadership as the preeminent organization of and national voice for middle level and high school principals, assistant principals, and aspiring school leaders from across the United States and more than 45 countries around the world. NASSP provides our members with the professional research-based and peer-tested resources, and practical tools and materials they need to serve as visionary school leaders so that every student can be prepared for postsecondary learning opportunities and be workforce ready. NASSP advances middle level and high school education by promoting high professional standards, focusing attention on school leaders' challenges, providing a "national voice" for school leaders, building public confidence in education, strengthening the role of the principal as instructional leader, and advocating for the issues and interests of principals in the news media. NASSP sponsors the National Honor Society, the National Junior Honor Society, the National Elementary Honor Society and the National Association of Student Councils.

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The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) professional organization based in Alexandria, VA. ASCA promotes student success by expanding the image and influence of professional school counseling through leadership, advocacy, collaboration and systemic change. ASCA helps school counselors guide their students toward academic achievement, personal and social development, and career planning to help today's students become tomorrow's productive, contributing members of society. Founded in 1952, ASCA currently has a network of 50 state associations and a membership of more than 29,000 school counseling professionals.