CollegeBoard
Advocacy & Policy Center

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

The College Board 2012 National Survey of School Counselors and Administrators

Report on Survey Findings: Barriers and Supports to School Counselor Success

HART RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

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National Survey of School Counselors and Administrators

Report on Survey Findings: Barriers and Supports to School Counselor Success

Produced for the College Board Advocacy & Policy Center
by Peter D. Hart Research Associates

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October 2012

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College Board Annual National Counselor Survey Advisory Committee

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Introduction: What Supports and What Are the Barriers to Counselor and Student Success?

The Second College Board National Office for School Counselor Advocacy (NOSCA) National Survey of School Counselors builds on the 2011 National Survey in many important ways. Most notably, it adds to the perspectives of high school and middle school counselors by bringing in the perspectives of school administrators (principals, vice principals, and assistant principals), but the story is far less one of contrasting views and differing priorities than one of convergent views and shared priorities. School counselors and school administrators in public and private middle schools and high schools in all 50 states completed surveys, offering results that are nationally representative. Where responses differ among groups or between counselors and administrators, they are fully noted, but in most cases the differences are ones of degree. On the whole, counselors and administrators identify the same challenges and share the same goals.

The 2011 survey uncovered strong support for a broad range of goals for student counseling but also identified important gaps in counselors' assessments of the success their schools were experiencing in reaching those goals. The goal of this survey is to identify the barriers to success, as well as the supports and to identify strategies for improvement. Rather than finding a single breakdown in the path to success, the survey reveals a more nuanced picture in which counselors are more committed to some specific strategies than others, gaps in training are identified for some specific areas, and lack of resources help explain some areas where success is judged to be more limited. The following overview presents key findings from the report.

The Eight Components of a College and Career Readiness Approach to Counseling and Specific Example Activities

Counselors express strong personal commitment to the eight components and example activities but feel they achieve only limited success.

- A large majority of school counselors say that they are personally committed to each of the eight components developed by NOSCA as indicated by a rating of eight or higher on a zero-to-10 scale. High school counselors show the most personal commitment to advancing students' academic planning for college and career readiness (92%), providing early and ongoing information about college and career exploration and selection processes (91%), and ensuring that students and families have an early and ongoing understanding of college and career admission processes (90%).
- Although middle school counselors are devoted to setting their students up to succeed in college and career, they express lower levels of commitment to the eight components than their high school counterparts. Compared with high school counselors, middle school counselors are notably less committed to preparing students for college and career admission processes and college affordability planning.
- Counselors by and large reinforce their commitment to the broad components with a strong personal commitment to concrete and specific examples of activities for achieving each component. However, on several specific example activities, fewer counselors rate their personal commitment as an eight or higher on a zero-to-10 scale than they rated their commitment to the broader components. High school counselors showed relatively lower levels of commitment on working with teachers to improve recommendations and incorporate elements of college applications into their course work (60%), providing test preparation to students (57%), and using student FAFSA completion data to monitor application progress and to review aid reports (44%).
- School counselors' self-reported personal success in achieving each of the eight components falls short of their personal commitment. They see the largest disparity between their own commitment (81%) and success (58%) in helping students transition from high school graduation to college enrollment.

A majority of school counselors say they need further training and greater resource support to achieve full success in the eight components and to ensure that all students graduate from high school ready to succeed in college and career.

- Before counselors can implement these components effectively, they must acquire the requisite training and knowledge base. At least 40% — and in many cases

more than half — of school counselors say that they need some or extensive additional training for each of the eight components. The largest training deficits appear in transitioning students from high school graduation to college enrollment and college affordability planning.

- While many counselors want to receive further training in the broader eight components, high school counselors overall fare better when it comes to training in the specific example items. On all but one of the example action items, a majority of high school counselors say that they are trained well enough to do each activity effectively. High school and middle school counselors alike feel the least trained in the specific example item for "college affordability planning."

- A strong relationship exists between the availability of resources high schools have for supporting the example strategies associated with the eight components and high schools' success in ensuring that the activities happen effectively enough to help all students succeed. Even after controlling for high school counselors' commitment, training, administrative support, and district support, resources are the strongest and most significant predictor of success in accomplishing the specific activities.

Despite college affordability planning being a major part of the college and career readiness process, the most problematic specific activity for counselors is using student FAFSA data to monitor application progress and ensure that students receive and review aid reports.

- The specific example item for high school counselors' college affordability planning, "using student FAFSA completion data to monitor application completion, to make application updates and corrections, and to ensure that students receive and review aid reports" scored lowest among counselors' ratings of specific activities for personal commitment, training, and available resources.

- In contrast, high school counselors at disadvantaged schools are ready to lead the way in showing other counselors and schools how to more effectively use student FAFSA data to monitor application progress and review aid reports. High school counselors at schools with at least 75% of the student body on free or reduced-price lunch report greater success, stronger commitment, more training, and more administrative and district support for achieving this activity.

Counselors in disadvantaged schools are in greater need of more support from their school districts, more training, and more resources in order to accomplish the eight components.

- With the exception of the specific example activity for college affordability planning, counselors at schools with at least 75% of the student body on free or reduced-price lunch see lower levels of support from their school districts, report greater need for further training, and report fewer resources for supporting most of the eight components and the other seven specific example activities.

- High school counselors in disadvantaged schools particularly struggle when it comes to ensuring that all students have a program of study that meets requirements for in-state universities or creates pathways to industry and technology licenses and certifications. This critical part of preparing students for college and career success warrants further attention from school administrators and districts in terms of providing more training and resources to counselors in disadvantaged schools.

Comparing Counselors' and Administrators' Views on the Education System and Implementing a College and Career Readiness Approach to Counseling

School counselors and administrators share the same vision of an ideal education system but administrators evaluate their school more favorably than do counselors on the degree to which reality matches their ideals.

- School administrators (93%) overwhelmingly agree with school counselors in the 2011 survey (92%) that the ideal mission of the education system should be "ensuring that all students complete the 12th grade ready to succeed in college and career," as indicated by a rating of eight or higher on a zero-to-10 scale.

- Compared with school counselors, however, administrators see their school as far more successful in achieving these goals. While fewer than half (47%) of counselors say that "ensuring that all students complete the 12th grade ready to succeed in college and career" fits the reality of their school, fully 71% of school administrators (a difference of 24 points) say this fits the reality of their school.

Administrators support counselors' adopting the eight components and specific activities and want counselors to take the lead in implementing a college and career readiness counseling agenda.

- More than 3 in 4 (76%) school administrators say they can see themselves committing to the approach outlined in the eight components and their specific activities.
- On each of the individual eight components, at least 7 in 10 school administrators rate themselves as an eight or higher on a zero-to-10 scale regarding the extent to which they support school counselors in their school incorporating each of the eight components into their counseling practice.
- High school administrators also overwhelmingly support their counselors engaging in the specific example activities associated with the eight components, to a degree much higher, in fact, than the counselors estimate from their administrators.
- Virtually all school administrators (98%) agree that "it is important for school counselors to exercise leadership in advocating for students' access to rigorous academic preparation, as well as other college and career readiness counseling, even if others in the school do not see counselors in a leadership role."

Counselor Accountability

Inconsistency characterizes current accountability systems for school counselors.

- One in 5 (19%) counselors admits that they do not currently have a system of accountability set up for counselors in their school. Slightly more than half (53%) say that the system of accountability in their school is focused more on student outcomes than counseling activities, and 23% say their school focuses on both student outcomes and counseling activities about equally. Only 5% say the system of accountability in their school is more focused on counseling activities.
- Despite reporting that their accountability systems are more focused on student outcomes, counselors are far more likely to choose examples of counseling activities than student outcomes when asked about specific measures. The top three measures counselors most commonly say they are held accountable to are not student-outcome–centric: school counseling program development (74% of counselors), administrative and clerical tasks (69%), and coordinating tests (60%).

Counselors are more likely to support accountability measures related to practicing specific example activities associated with the eight components than specific measures of student outcome.

- With the exception of using FAFSA completion data to monitor students' application progress and review aid reports (receiving only 54% of high school counselors' support), at least two-thirds of counselors say that every specific example activity is a fair way to assess counselor effectiveness.
- The top three student outcome measures identified by high school counselors as a fair way to assess counselor effectiveness are transcript audits of graduation readiness (60%), completion of a college-prep sequence of courses (59%), and students' gaining access to advanced classes and tests (58%). Middle school counselors, in contrast, struggle to find measures of accountability as fair; even middle school completion rates — the highest scoring outcome measure — receive the endorsement by fewer than half (46%) of middle school counselors.
- On every metric, however, counselors who say that their current system of accountability focuses on both student outcomes and counselor activities about equally are more likely to think the metric is fair than counselors who only focus on student outcomes.

A strong relationship exists between perceived efficacy and assessments of fairness of student outcome measures of accountability.

- A majority of counselors believe the counselors in their school could be effective at improving nearly every option given, including college application rates (82% give a rating of eight or higher on a zero-to-10 scale), access to upper-level classes (81%), and the completion of a college-prep sequence of courses (83%), provided they had the necessary administrative and resource support.
- The more counselors believe they can be effective in improving a specific outcome measure, the more likely they are to see that same measure as a fair way to assess school counselors' effectiveness. For example, one of the highest rated measures for efficacy and accountability fairness is completion of college-prep

courses: 83% of high school counselors believe they could improve completion rates, while 59% rate this as a fair measure of accountability. Conversely, one of the lowest rated measures for high school counselors is graduate employment rates: only 48% believe they could improve graduate employment rates and just 23% believe this is a fair measure of accountability.

Other Key Findings from the Survey, Including Equity and Core Standards

A substantial gap exists between counselors' personal commitment to equity and their success in achieving equity in their schools. There also is room for improvement when it comes to implementing the eight components and specific example activities in a way that ensures equity for all students.

- Nearly 9 in 10 (88%) school counselors say that "making sure that students from low-income, disadvantaged, and immigrant backgrounds get the extra attention and support they need to achieve success equal to other students" is extremely important. Counselors who are minorities themselves (96% of African American counselors) or who work in schools in which minority students (93%) are the majority are even more likely to place great import on equity.
- By 21 points, counselors are more likely to say that equity is important to them personally (88%) than that they believe they are personally successful in achieving equity in their school (67%).
- When asked about equity in reference to the eight components and specific example activities, a smaller proportion, albeit still a majority, show the same levels of personal commitment and success. More than half of school counselors say they know how to identify students who need the most help (59%), they know how to apply these interventions to suit the diverse cultural and academic needs of their students (57%), and they prioritize equity when implementing the eight components (56%).

Counselors express a need and a desire to receive further training in the Common Core State Standards.

- Few counselors can be considered experts on the Common Core State Standards; only 37% would rate themselves as an 8, 9, or 10 in terms of knowledge about Common Core State Standards. Even fewer have received training (30% rate as an eight or higher).
- Reflecting their lack of training and knowledge, a strong majority (59%) of school counselors believe that they need further training in the Common Core State Standards.
- While administrators are more knowledgeable about the Common Core State Standards, they support counselors in their school receiving further training. Nearly 9 in 10 (88%) administrators say that school counselors should receive training in the Common Core State Standards.

Collaborations with teachers, family, and members of the community represent both a challenge and an untapped resource for school counselors.

- Thinking about the eight components and specific example activities as one overall approach to counseling students, counselors see the largest deficiencies in support and collaborations with outside groups. Furthermore, these collaborations prove even more difficult for middle school counselors.
- Just 2 in 5 (41%) school counselors say that the teachers in their schools supports the kinds of interventions described in the eight components and specific example activities. Furthermore, only 44% of high school counselors rate themselves as successful in working with teachers to include elements of college applications into courses and to write effective recommendations for students.
- Only half (49%) of high school counselors and only 39% of middle school counselors say they know how to apply these interventions in ways that keep students' parents and families actively involved. Family and parent involvement appears to be especially lacking not only at middle schools but in high schools with lower rates of college attendance.
- The most challenging and perhaps the most multidimensional aspect explored with counselors involves their collaboration with potential service providers outside their school. Only 31% of counselors (32% high school, 30% middle school) say that they "intentionally collaborate with governmental, community, and nonprofit organizations and businesses to match their programs and services to support these types of interventions."

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Research Methods

On behalf of The College Board's National Office for School Counselor Advocacy (NOSCA), Hart Research conducted 2,890 online interviews among 806 middle school and 2,084 high school counselors from May 1 to June 18, 2012. The 3-to-1 ratio of high school to middle school counselors was predetermined (although the actual completion rate ended up being 2.58 to 1) to include the voices of middle school counselors but not fully in proportion to the actual number of middle school counselors. In addition, Hart Research interviewed 439 high school and middle school administrators, including principals, vice principals, and assistant principals.

Counselors were invited to participate in the online survey via email and by postcard, and many received both forms of invitation. Counselors' and administrators' contact information was obtained through the list provider MDR, a Dun and Bradstreet company. Records were divided by the available contact information — counselors who had email addresses were contacted via email and counselors who had only postal mail contact information were contacted by postcard; all administrators were contacted only by email. While it was possible for a counselor to have a postal address with no email address, every email address had a corresponding physical address. Many counselors, particularly those in the smaller states, received both forms of contact.

Survey Development

The survey was developed over a period of several months through collaboration among researchers and managers from the College Board, NOSCA, Civic Enterprises, and Hart Research. Six focus groups also were conducted among school counselors and school administrators in March 2012, to explore potential survey topics and to give some counselors and administrators an opportunity to express their views in their own words: two groups were convened in Charlotte, N.C., two in Dallas, Texas, and two in Chicago, Ill.

More than a dozen drafts of the survey passed among the organizations on the way to the final survey, which attempted to cover a wide variety of topics without imposing an excessive time burden on the counselors who volunteered to complete the survey. Counselors were not compensated or offered any incentive for the time it took from their other work.

Survey Invitations

Counselor invitations were made on a state-by-state basis, with a sample of 1,600 counselors as the original target for the national sample. Each state's target number of responses was designed to be representative of the size of the state's school counselor population, as determined by the universe of counselors. In addition to the national survey of 1,600 counselors, the eight largest states were targeted with an oversample of 200 additional counselors per state. In Virginia, Ohio, Illinois, and Florida, the number of completed surveys fell short of this goal.

Wherever possible, the postal and email records were selected at random, but this survey should not be viewed as randomly sampled because all available counselor records

Table 1: Weighted Number of Completed Counselor Surveys by State

State	Weight / Completes	State	Weight / Completes	State	Weight / Completes	State	Weight / Completes
AK	1.22 / 6	ID	1.08 / 14	MT	1.24 / 5	RI	1.24 / 10
AL	1.23 / 31	IL	0.55 / 98	NC	0.74 / 84	SC	1.22 / 45
AR	1.23 / 21	IN	1.26 / 44	ND	1.11 / 9	SD	1.30 / 9
AZ	1.14 / 39	KS	1.03 / 26	NE	1.26 / 20	TN	1.26 / 43
CA	1.13 / 246	KY	0.92 / 32	NH	1.30 / 18	TX	0.78 / 228
CO	1.05 / 44	LA	1.27 / 28	NJ	1.26 / 69	UT	0.88 / 23
CT	1.15 / 46	MA	1.26 / 69	NM	1.13 / 17	VA	0.59 / 82
DC	1.15 / 1	MD	1.10 / 57	NV	1.27 / 14	VT	1.15 / 8
DE	1.24 / 5	ME	0.89 / 16	NY	0.81 / 192	WA	0.77 / 55
FL	0.64 / 119	MI	0.78 / 70	OH	0.49 / 85	WI	0.96 45
GA	1.25 / 81	MN	0.85 / 39	OK	1.26 / 19	WV	1.15 / 14
HI	1.15 / 15	MO	1.22 / 55	OR	1.17 / 28	WY	0.74 / 6
IA	1.23 / 27	MS	1.24 / 15	PA	0.47 / 103	Total Weighted	2,475

were sent invitations in a large number of states. In the smaller states, only a fraction of the total population was sent a postal invitation. However, in several of the oversample states, the postal invitations exhausted the available number of counselors. Further, all available counselors were sent email invitations, exhausting the national sample of email contacts.

The first email wave and postcard wave were sent out May 1, 2012. Those who received a postcard also received a follow-up postcard, while those receiving emails could have received up to five additional emails, with two of those waves including an expanded population encompassing the entire available universe. The final wave was sent only to schools still in session on June 13, 2012.

In total, approximately 68,918 counselors received at least one postal or email invitation to take the survey, with a 4.19% completed interview response rate. In addition to the 2,890 completed interviews, 127 interviews were stopped because the respondent failed a screening question, and 2,896 interviews were stopped by respondents.

Administrators also were selected at random from the national sample, with the number of invitations per state proportional to the state size. The first email wave was sent to 40,663 administrators on May 17, 2012, with only one additional wave afterwards that was inclusive of the original sample selection. The survey closed with 439 completed interviews, giving a total response rate of 1.08%. In addition, 41 interviews were stopped by a screening question and 503 interviews were terminated by the respondent or timed out before the survey was completed.

Survey Scales

Many questions in this survey ask for ratings on a zero-to-10 scale. Whenever we present these results, we report the proportion giving a rating of eight or higher because this indicates full or nearly full agreement; a rating of six or seven, while indicating general agreement, also could indicate a barrier in the form of incomplete endorsement. There are two exceptions to this rule: The first exception is a case in which the counselor is rating others' commitment — either the administrators or school district. We set the bar lower for counselors' perceptions of administrators' support to assess simply whether counselors see administrators as "on their side" (indicated by a six or higher). The second exception is acceptance of various accountability measures where a six indicates that the measure is acceptable.

Section 1: What School Counselors Do

School counselors are jacks-of-all-trades in their schools, according to one high school counselor from Charlotte. The results of the 2012 National Survey of School Counselors corroborate this view; in addition to supporting students' social-emotional and academic development, counselors provide administrative support, fill in for teachers, coordinate tests, and act as a liaison between schools and communities, among many other responsibilities. Although their efforts do not go unnoticed by administrators, many counselors and administrators alike believe that changes should be made to counselors' job responsibilities to attain the goal of an education system in which all students graduate from high school ready to succeed in college and career.

When asked in a focus group exercise to describe what counselors actually do and what they should be doing, a high school counselor in Charlotte captured both the feeling of being spread thin and the desire to devote more time to working directly with students:

> "I listen, I answer emails and phone calls, I do technology, I write recommendation letters, I handle parents, I parent kids and parents. I support, advocate, teach, guide, reflect, counsel. I explain rules, prerequisites; I repeat myself. I manage expectations, and I manage teachers, parents, and students. And what I really should be doing is going back to what I've been trained to do: listening, guiding, supporting, counseling, reflecting, teaching, and advocating."
>
> — High school counselor, Charlotte

Job Description

To start, counselors report a busy schedule that includes personal, college, and career counseling along with student scheduling, academic testing, family and community outreach, and other non-counseling activities (see Table 2). Nearly all (93%) counselors include personal-needs counseling as part of their job, although that proportion is lower among private school counselors (69%) and those with only a bachelor's degree (67%). Private school counselors also are less likely than their peers to do other common counselor activities, including student scheduling (89% of all counselors compared with 68% private school counselors) and career counseling (83% of all counselor, 66% private school counselors). College counseling is a more common activity among private school counselors than among the general counselor population (83% all counselors, 94% private school), although high school counselors still do it the most (96%).

Just over 2 in 5 (42%) counselors develop a master schedule as part of their job, and fewer than 1 in 3 does occupation counseling and job placement (32%) or teaching (31%). Again, private school counselors have a unique experience, with fewer than 1 in 4 developing a master schedule (24%) and practicing occupation counseling and job placement (21%), and 2 in 5 (41%) private school counselors including teaching as part of their job.

Fully 80% of counselors include non-guidance activities as part of their job, and this proportion remains relatively high

Table 2: Please Check All That Are Part of Your Job

	All Counselors %	Middle School %	High School %	Public School %	Private School %	Grad Degree in School Counseling %	Grad Degree Other %	BA/BS Only %
Personal-needs counseling	93	98	91	96	69	96	84	67
Student scheduling	89	85	90	91	68	92	77	69
Career counseling	83	72	87	85	66	84	75	80
College counseling	83	46	96	82	94	83	79	88
Academic testing	78	74	79	77	79	79	69	69
Family and community outreach	74	82	71	78	41	76	68	56
Developing a master schedule	42	44	41	44	24	44	37	27
Occupation counseling and job placement	32	14	39	33	21	32	31	32
Teaching	31	40	27	29	41	30	38	33
Other non-guidance activities	80	86	78	81	73	81	73	77

Table 3: Proportion Who Say Each Is a Part of Counselors' Job

	All Counselors %	All Administrators %	Middle School %	High School %
Personal-needs counseling	93	92	95	91
Student scheduling	89	91	81	94
Career counseling	83	61	41	68
College counseling	83	77	28	94
Academic testing	78	74	75	74
Family and community outreach	74	61	76	55
Developing a master schedule	42	48	46	49
Occupation counseling and job placement	32	30	15	36
Teaching	31	21	31	17
Writing IEPs and 504 plans	*	30	41	26
Attendance checking and verification	*	23	32	20
Lead coordinator of community partnerships	*	15	21	12
Disciplinary actions	*	10	18	7
Other non-guidance activities	80	*	*	*
Other duties as assigned	*	78	87	74

*Question not asked

across public and private schools, high and middle schools, and counselors' own education levels.

Counselors and administrators alike demonstrate nearly unanimous agreement that personal-needs counseling and student scheduling are part of a counselor's job (see Table 3). However, only 61% of administrators identify career counseling as part of their counselor's job — 22 points lower than the 83% of counselors who say they do career counseling as part of their job. Administrators also struggle to report family and community outreach (74% of counselors compared with 61% of administrators) and teaching (31% of counselors compared with 21% of administrators) as part of counselors' job at the same rate as counselors. Developing a master schedule is the only task that administrators see done more frequently by counselors than counselors do, with 48% of administrators reporting it as part of their counselors' job description (42% of counselors say the same).

Counselor Caseloads

Counselor caseloads have not changed from last year's national survey, with this year's average of 367 being only one point less than the 2011 results (368). As was the case last year, middle school counselors have a larger average caseload (415 students) than do their high school counterparts (350 students), and public school counselors have a much larger load (386 students) than do private school counselors (197 students). Not surprisingly, schools that send more students to college have, on average, smaller caseloads (336 students at high college-attendance schools compared with 402 students at low college-attendance schools).

As Table 4 shows, counselors at schools with at least 75% of their students on free or reduced-price lunch also have a higher average caseload (408 students) than counselors at schools with fewer than 25% of their students on free or reduced-price lunch (362 students). While there is no discernible difference in caseload averages for schools that have a Title I program, schools that qualify for Title I Schoolwide support have an average of 69 more students per counselor than schools without Title I Schoolwide (395 students with to 326 without Schoolwide).

Caseload also varies by school size and location. Counselors at larger schools generally have much larger caseloads, with schools of more than 2,000 students having an average caseload of 502 students per counselor. For comparison, schools with fewer than 1,000 students average a caseload of 348 students per counselor, and schools between 1,000 and 2,000 students average only 411 students per counselor. Location also is a factor: Schools in urban and suburban settings average a caseload of more than 410 and 402 students, respectively, while schools in a rural setting average 362 students in each counselor's caseload.

Especially large caseloads can inhibit counselors' ability to give the necessary time to their already numerous responsibilities, as one school administrator in Dallas explained:

Table 4: Average Caseload ✓

	Average Caseload #
All Counselors	367.1
High school counselors	349.6
Middle school counselors	415.3
Type of school	
Public	386.3
Private	196.8
Proportion minority student population	
0 to 24%	343.2
25 to 49%	428.6
50 to 74%	417.0
75% or more	417.3
Region[1]	
Northeast	329.4
Midwest	345.2
South	372.8
West	366.5
Percentage of student population on free or reduced-price lunch	
0 to 24%	362.2
25 to 49%	395.9
50 to 74%	398.9
75% or more	408.1
School location	
Urban area	410.9
Suburban area	402.1
Rural area	362.1
College attendance rates	
High (86% or higher)	335.7
Low (less than 64%)	402.4

"We have six counselors for 2,600 students. They've become more schedulers and credit counters than anything else. They aren't true guidance counselors who have relationships with the students. They don't have an opportunity to build those relationships, and now they take it upon themselves to get out in the halls just for five, 10 minutes, just to try to connect with these kids who they're seeing for just minutes to talk about credits and graduation as opposed to career planning and guidance."

— School administrator, Dallas

In-Job Training

Three in 4 (75%) counselors say that they received college and career readiness counseling training at some point since their job began, including 4 in 5 (79%) high school counselors (see Table 5). Nearly as many (74% of all counselors) have received training in the use of technology and 68% have received training in the use of data. Training in working with special populations is common (64%), but training in focused efforts on minority populations, like closing the achievement gap (49%) and cultural competence (44%), is less prevalent among counselors. A majority (61%) of counselors also have received training in academic planning, but only 39% have received training in dropout prevention.

In general, public school counselors are more likely than private school counselors to receive technology (74%) or data-use training (69%), while private school counselors are more likely than their public school counterparts to receive training for college and career readiness (85%) and in leadership development (59%). Public school counselors also tend to get more training that focuses on targeting at-risk children, including working with special populations (66% public compared with 47% private) and cultural competence (46% public compared with 31% private), as well as dropout prevention (41% public compared with 15% private) and closing the achievement gap (51% public compared with 30% private). Education also appears to play a role, as counselors with a graduate degree are more likely to receive training in working with at-risk children. The differences in education do not extend to Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) graduates, who are no more or less likely to be trained in any of these activities.

In general, white and nonwhite counselors receive the same amount of training after they begin their careers. The only exceptions are training in the use of technology (77% white to 68% nonwhite) and cultural competence (41% white to 51% nonwhite).

Administrators and In-Job Training

Table 6 shows noticeable gaps between counselor experiences and administrator objectives on assigning resources for training. On the use of technology, 74% of counselors have received training, while only 45% of administrators are willing to invest resources in counselor training on this topic, with a similar gap between career cluster training (60% of counselors) and resource investment (44% of administrators).

Significantly, counselor training falls behind administrators' expectations on several topics, including closing the achievement gap (49% counselors trained to 61%

1. States were grouped in accordance with U.S. Census regions (see Appendix B).

Table 5: Training Since Beginning Career as a School Counselor

	All Counselors %	Middle School %	High School %	Public School %	Private School %	Grad Degree in School Counseling %	Grad Degree Other %	BA/BS Only %
College and career readiness counseling	75	62	79	74	85	74	74	81
Use of technology	74	76	73	74	71	75	66	71
Use of data	68	72	67	69	58	69	63	60
Working with special populations (e.g., minority males, undocumented and ESL students, Special Ed)	64	70	62	66	47	65	69	56
Academic planning	61	56	63	61	62	62	55	56
Career clusters	60	62	59	62	43	62	46	47
Leadership development	51	54	49	50	59	50	54	53
Closing the achievement gap	49	57	46	51	30	51	43	35
Cultural competence	44	51	42	46	31	44	48	42
Parent and community outreach	42	49	40	43	37	42	46	45
Dropout prevention	39	38	39	41	15	41	33	26
None	3	3	3	3	5	3	5	4

administrators willing to invest), parent and community outreach (42% trained to 60% willing to invest), and dropout prevention (39% trained to 59% willing to invest). Each of these topics demonstrates an opportunity to further train counselors with school district support but also shows that there is an obstacle preventing administrators from implementing the training programs they want.

How Schools Use Counselors

Administrators say that their school generally takes advantage of the unique role and special contribution of counselors, although administrators report more favorable evaluations than counselors did in 2011. Administrators' views in 2012 are aligned most closely with those reported by counselors on counselors' ability to "establish a relationship of trust with students and be another adult to talk to when they are in situations of conflict." More than 4 in 5 (81% of high school, 84% of middle school) administrators rate their schools as an eight or higher in terms of the degree to which their school takes full advantage of this aspect. Compared with middle school counselors in the 2011 survey (80%), administrators are only four points higher at 84%. High school counselors evaluate their schools slightly less favorably than the other groups for counselors' establishing a relationship of trust with students; 73% rate their schools as an eight or higher (or 8 points lower than high school administrators).

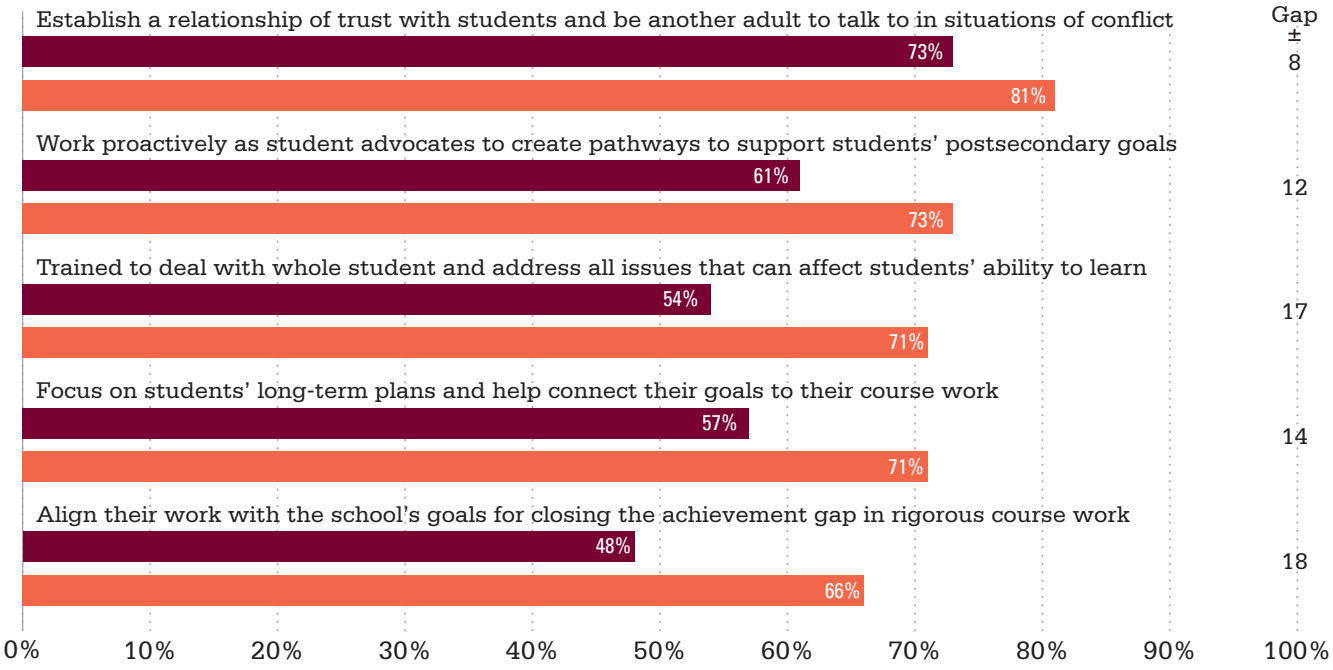
Compared with counselors, administrators also believe that their schools do a better job taking advantage of school counselors' ability to "work proactively as student advocates and actively intervene to create pathways and support to ensure that all students have opportunities to achieve their postsecondary goals." Of note, student advocacy is the aspect counselors most commonly choose (74%) as one of the two or three most important contributions counselors can make to achieve the goal of an education system in which all students graduate from the 12th grade ready for college and career. However, while 61% of all counselors rate their school as an eight or higher, 71% of school administrators say that their school takes full advantage of this ability.

The biggest gap between high school administrators and high school counselors appears for counselors' "align[ing] their work with the school's goals for closing the achievement gap and access to, and success in, rigorous course work." High school administrators are more likely to rate their school as an eight or higher (66%) than are high school counselors (48%), a difference of 18 points.

Table 6: Areas of Additional Training and Willingness to Commit Resources and Time to Each

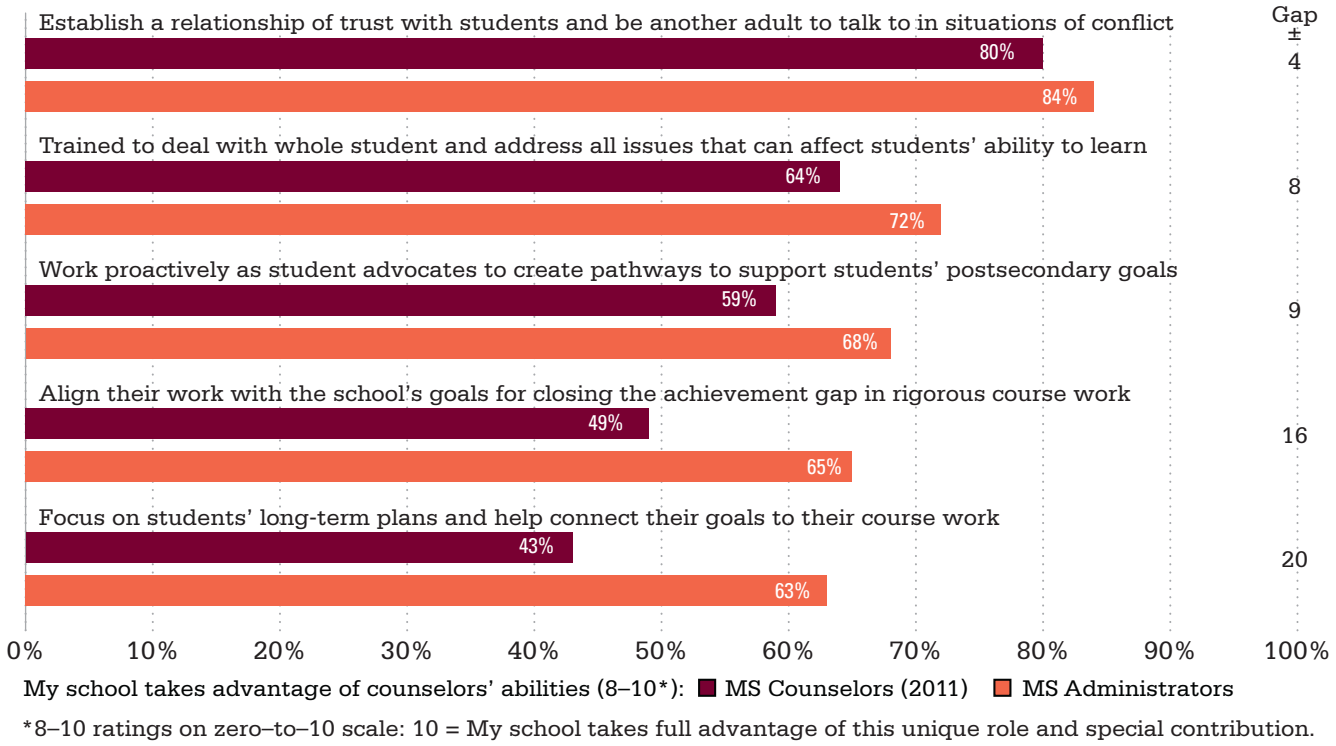
	Have Received Additional Training in Each	Willing to Commit Time/Resources to Each		
	All Counselors %	All Administrators %	Middle School %	High School %
College and career readiness counseling	75	69	52	75
Use of technology	74	45	41	46
Use of data	68	70	73	69
Working with special populations (e.g., minority males, undocumented and ESL students, Special Ed)	64	63	68	62
Academic planning	61	65	64	65
Career clusters	60	44	44	43
Leadership development	51	57	51	59
Closing the achievement gap	49	61	71	57
Cultural competence	44	41	48	38
Parent and community outreach	42	60	69	56
Dropout prevention	39	59	55	60
None	3	1	1	1

High school administrators believe they take more advantage of counselors' abilities than do high school counselors.



*8–10 ratings on zero–to–10 scale: 10 = My school takes full advantage of this unique role and special contribution.

Middle school administrators believe they take more advantage of counselors' abilities than do middle school counselors.



*8–10 ratings on zero–to–10 scale: 10 = My school takes full advantage of this unique role and special contribution.

While middle school administrators' more favorable evaluation of their schools on this alignment dimension (65% of administrators compared with 49% of counselors) is similar to that of high school administrators, an even larger gap appears between administrators and counselors on the degree to which middle schools take advantage of school counselors' focus on students' long-term plans. Although just 2 in 5 (43%) counselors rate their schools as an eight or higher, a strong majority (63%) of middle school administrators say that their schools take advantage of counselors' ability to "focus on students' long-term plans" and to connect students' "goals to the course work and skills they will need to succeed."

How Administrators Would Reallocate Counselors' Time

Given that administrators generally think they are doing a better job than counselors are at taking full advantage of the unique role and special contribution of counselors, it comes as no surprise that they also are less likely than counselors to believe that there should be changes to how counselors spend their time to improve student success. Across a number of job responsibilities, school administrators are more likely to believe that counselors should continue to devote the same amount of time to each activity. While, on average, 43% of school administrators report that counselors should spend the same amount of time on each of the items listed in the figure below, an average of 33% of school counselors reported the same in 2011.

Table 7 shows that high school administrators see eye to eye with counselors on several dimensions with respect to how counselors should reallocate their time. High school administrators (65%) and high school counselors (61%) agree that counselors should spend more time addressing students' academic planning. Likewise, 59% of high school administrators and 54% of high school counselors believe that counselors should spend more time building a college-going culture.

High school administrators are, however, notably less likely to say that counselors should spend more time counseling students about jobs and careers (58%) than are high school counselors (76%, a difference of 18 points). At the same time, high school administrators are more likely to believe that their counselors should spend more time on administrative duties

Administrators: To improve student success, how much time should your counselors spend on each of these?

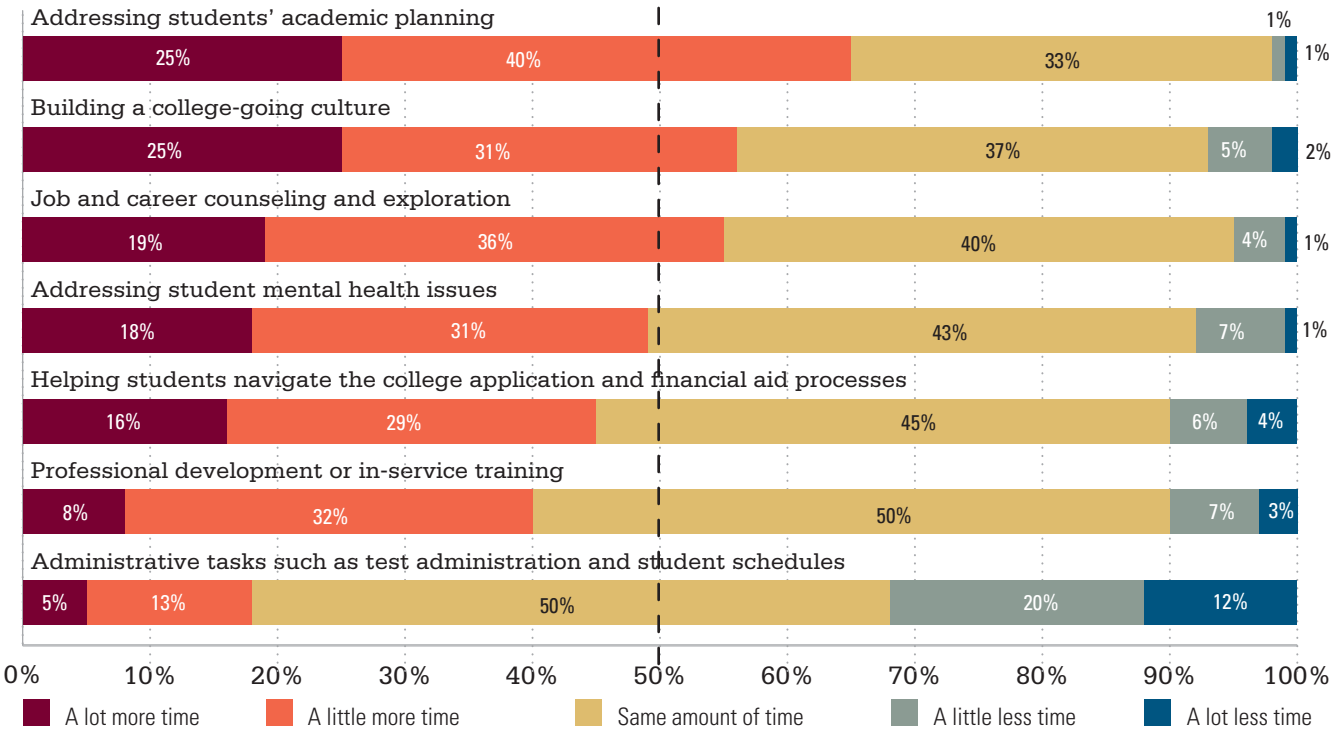


Table 7: Proportion of Administrators and Counselors Who Say They Would Like School Counselors to Spend "A Lot More" or "A Little More" Time on Each Item ✓

	High School Admin %	Middle School Admin %	High School Counselors* %	Middle School Counselors* %	HS Admin/ Counselors Gap ±	MS Admin/ Counselors Gap ±
Addressing students' academic planning	65	68	61	70	4	2
Building a college-going culture	59	47	54	59	5	12
Job and career counseling and exploration	58	45	76	70	18	25
Addressing student mental health issues	45	59	59	69	14	10
Helping students navigate the college application and financial aid processes	54	20	58	30	4	10
Professional development or in-service training	39	42	52	58	13	16
Administrative tasks such as test administration and student schedules	20	11	6	5	14	6

*From the 2011 National Survey of School Counselors

(20%, compared with just 6% of high school counselors). This is likely to be a point of contention between high school administrators and counselors, as we already have seen that counselors report a disapproval of administrative duties in no uncertain terms. In 2011, about two-thirds (65%) of high school counselors said that they should spend less time on administrative tasks.

With the exception of administrative tasks, which fewer middle school administrators believe their counselors should spend more time on (11%, compared with 5% of middle school counselors), middle school administrators generally are less likely than their counselors to believe their counselors should spend more time on a variety of activities. As Table 7 shows, whereas just 45% of middle school administrators believe that counselors should spend more time engaging in job and career counseling and exploration, 70% (25 points higher) of middle school counselors said they thought they should spend more time on this. Similarly, middle school administrators are less likely to believe that their counselors should spend more time on professional development and in-service training (42%) than middle school counselors (58%, 16 points higher).

Section 2: The Mission of School Counselors and the Education System

What Is the Mission of the Education System Ideally and in Reality?

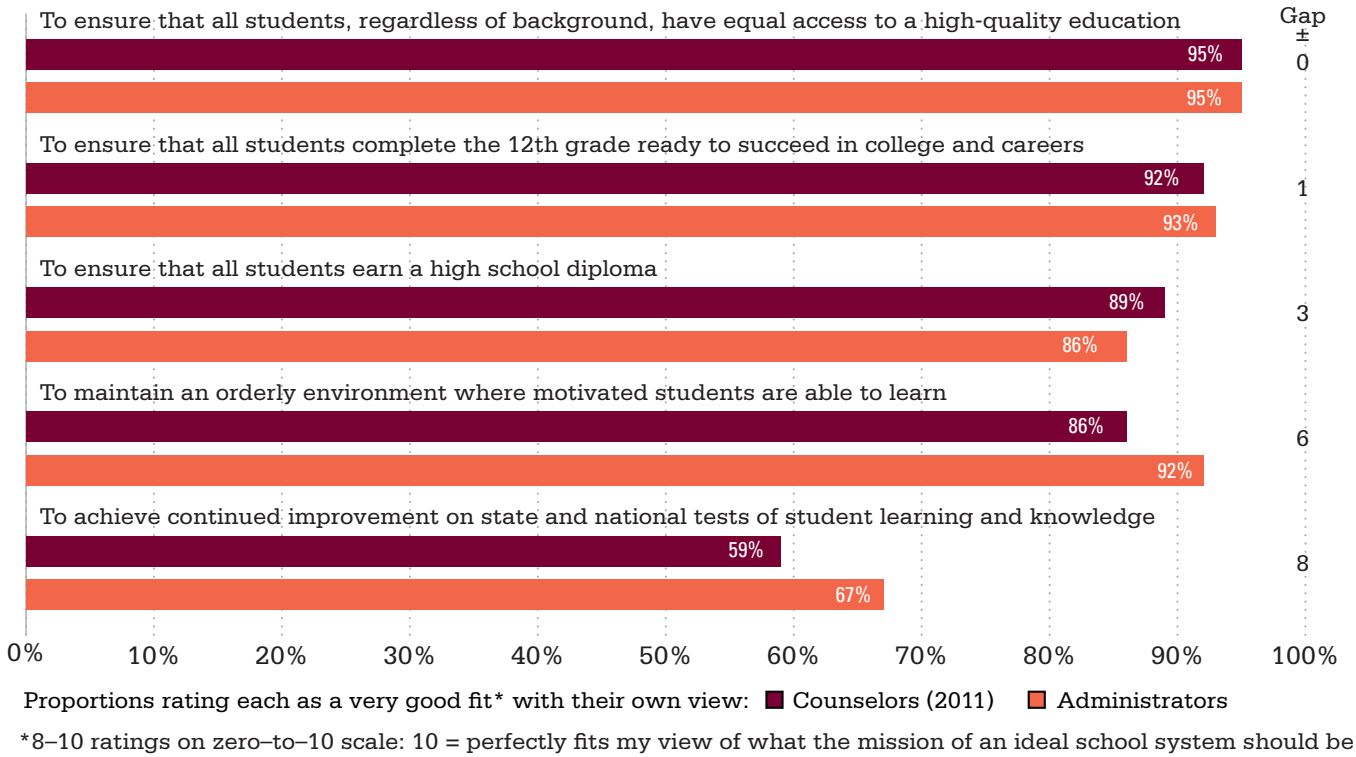
In the 2011 National Survey of School Counselors, counselors rated five potential missions on a zero-to-10 scale regarding the extent to which each one fit their view of what the education system's mission should be ideally and their view of how well each mission fit the reality of the schools in which they work. Comparing results from the 2012 survey of administrators to the 2011 survey of counselors reveals that, although administrators and counselors generally see eye to eye on what the education system's ideal mission should be, administrators have a more positive view than do counselors of how successful their schools are in fulfilling these missions.

As the figure below shows, school administrators' views are very similar to counselors' in how they see the education system's ideal mission. Just as among school counselors, the mission "to ensure that all students, regardless of background, have equal access to a high-quality education" receives the highest ratings from school administrators, with fully 95% (and 95% of counselors) rating it as an eight or higher for how well it fits their ideal mission for the education system. Also similar to their counselor colleagues (92%), a large majority of school administrators (93%) say that "ensuring that all students complete the 12th grade ready to succeed in college and careers" fits their ideal view of the education system.

Administrators See Greater Success than Counselors Do

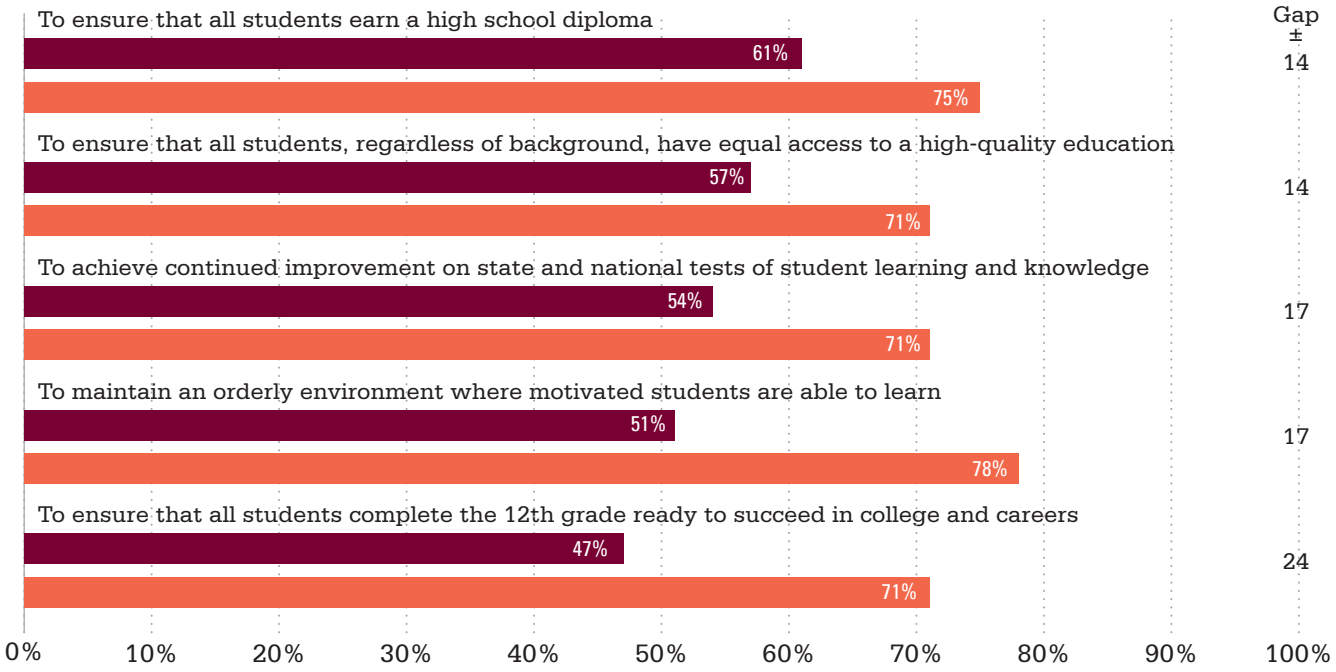
While school administrators and counselors share the same vision of student success, administrators are noticeably more optimistic when evaluating how well their school lives up to their ideals in reality. In fact, school administrators evaluate their education system much more favorably (at least 14 points higher for every mission) than do school counselors. For example, whereas more than (57%) of school counselors

What should be the mission of the education system?



*8–10 ratings on zero–to–10 scale: 10 = perfectly fits my view of what the mission of an ideal school system should be

In reality, how well does this fit the mission of the education system in which you work?



rate "ensuring all students have access to a high-quality education" as an eight or higher for how well that mission fits the reality of the education system in which they work, 71% (14 points higher) of school administrators say the same. Even more dramatically, while fewer than half (47%) of school counselors say that "ensuring that all students complete the 12th grade ready to succeed in college and career" fits the reality of their school, 71% of school administrators (a difference of 24 points) say this fits the reality of their school.

Nevertheless, school administrators see counselors as integral to their school's success in ensuring that all students complete the 12th grade ready to succeed in college and career, as described by one principal from Dallas:

> "Counselors are resource investigators. They're great communicators — communicating access to resources that the teacher can't necessarily get into because they have so many things to cover. Students want to prepare to go to college, but how do they prepare for the SAT® How do they find the money to go? Educating the kids on the nuts and bolts of the career readiness and the college readiness — that's the unique skill set that they bring."
>
> — School administrator, Dallas

Uniform Support for Ensuring That All Students Graduate from High School College and Career Ready

School counselors overwhelmingly support the goal of ensuring that all students graduate from high school ready to succeed in college and career. More than 9 in 10 (95%) counselors report that "ensur[ing] all students complete the 12th grade and earn a high school diploma, ready to succeed in college and career" is extremely important to them personally as indicated by a rating of eight or higher on a zero-to-10 scale. Across all subgroups, the majority of counselors agree that this is an extremely important goal; all the subgroups report a mean rating near 9.5. There is virtually no difference between counselors at schools with higher rates of college attendance (96%) and counselors at schools with lower rates of college attendance (94%) or between counselors at schools with 75% or more students on free or reduced-price lunch (95%) and counselors at schools with less than 25% of the student population on free or reduced-price lunch (96%).

What Do Counselors Believe Should Be the Most Important Focus of Their Job?

As noted earlier, school counselors have a host of responsibilities, some of which it could be argued are more directly related to improving student success than others. To understand what counselors believe their unique role and special contribution to education should be, the survey offered nine potential domains for counselors to rate the degree to which they believe each should be an important focus of the counselor's job.

The first point to note in reviewing Table 8 is that counselors believe their role in schools should be multifaceted and that many aspects are of great importance. In fact, at least 80% of school counselors rate all but one of the components as an eight or higher on a zero-to-10 scale, on which a "10" means the component should be an extremely important focus of the school counselor's job. Topping this list are "students' personal, social, and emotional development" (93%) and "students' academic development" (91%), both of which receive ratings of eight or higher from more than 9 in 10 counselors. School counselors also report that preparing students to succeed in college and career is an extremely important part of their job. Approximately the same proportion of counselors overall say that "students' college readiness" (86%) and "students' career development" (85%) should be important parts of their job.

Counselors also are prepared to take a leadership role in their schools. More than 4 in 5 (81%) say that "being part of the school's leadership team" should be an extremely important focus of the counselor's job. And importantly, school administrators agree. Virtually all (98%) school administrators agree (79% strongly agree) that "it is important for school counselors to exercise leadership in advocating for students' access to rigorous academic preparation, as well as other college and career readiness counseling, even if others in the school don't see counselors in this leadership role."

> "I strongly agree that we should be leaders for advocacy for our students, whether it is to get into the highest-level course that they have or to make sure that there are enough courses offered for the middle-of-the-road and the lower-performing students, so that they have as many opportunities to be challenged at their level as the high-achieving students."
>
> — High school counselor, Charlotte

In stark contrast to all the other aspects of the counselors' job, "performing administrative or clerical tasks such as test coordinator, hall duty, or lunchroom duty" stands out because of the few counselors who believe this should be a focus of their job. Only 5% of all counselors rate "performing administrative and clerical duties" as an eight or higher, while a full 87% rate it as a zero to five. This result echoes the finding from the 2011 survey of school counselors in which two-thirds (67%) of school counselors reported that they would like to spend less time on administrative tasks such as test administration and student schedules.

As Table 8 shows, middle and high school counselors prioritize different aspects of their job. Middle school counselors are especially likely to say they value supporting students' personal development and helping students deal with personal problems. While high school counselors rate "students' personal, social, and emotional development" highest (92%) of all their job aspects, 96% of middle school counselors rate this as an eight or higher. Similarly, middle school counselors (88% compared with 78% of high school counselors) are more likely to believe that "responding to students with disruptive behavior or to students facing an emotional crisis" is an extremely important part of their job. High school counselors, in contrast, are more likely to prioritize "helping students navigate the college application and financial aid processes" (90% compared with 69% of middle school counselors) and "building a college-going culture" (84% compared with 72% of middle school counselors).

> "I think the key is how social–emotional development can help with the academics. The teachers are there for the academics, but we can help kids be prepared for life so they can learn. We're a Title I school and sometimes students come to school and they don't have food. We help them get the things that they need so they can learn."
>
> — Middle school counselor, Dallas

> "I think a counselor in the ideal is able to touch on the social–emotional piece in children and is able to help students matriculate to high school, help with the application process, and so forth. But, unfortunately, in my experience, they've become case managers. They end up dealing with paperwork and IEPs, and they're dealing with multiple jobs as one individual."
>
> — School administrator, Chicago

Table 8: Proportion of Counselors Who Believe Each Should Be an Important Focus* of the Counselor's Job

						High School Counselors Only	
	All Counselors %	Middle School %	High School %	Public School %	Private School %	High College Attendance (86%+) %	Lower College Attendance (up to 64%) %
Students' personal, social, and emotional development	93	96	92	94	84	93	93
Students' academic development	91	92	91	92	93	92	90
Students' college readiness	86	79	88	85	89	88	87
Students' career development	85	83	86	87	71	84	90
Helping students navigate the college application and financial aid process	85	69	90	84	90	91	91
Responding to students with disruptive behavior or to students facing an emotional crisis	80	88	78	82	68	80	80
Building a college-going culture	81	72	84	80	87	82	83
Being part of the school's leadership team	81	83	80	81	82	75	79
Performing administrative or clerical tasks such as test coordinator, hall duty, or lunchroom duty	5	6	5	5	6	4	4

*8–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = should be an extremely important focus of the counselor's job

Interesting differences also appear between the priorities of counselors in private schools and counselors in public schools. Compared with school counselors at public schools, counselors in private schools place even greater importance on preparing students for college but relatively less on preparing students for their careers. Specifically, while counselors at public schools place similar levels of importance on "students' career development" (87%) and "students' college readiness" (85%), counselors at private schools show a distinct preference for college readiness (89%) over career development (71%). Examining a variety of subgroups reveals that counselors in private schools are the only counselors who prioritize college readiness over career development. It is important to note that despite these differences, most counselors in public and private schools place a high priority on all of these activities.

Counselors' Role During the Summer

As the previous sections show, counselors view many aspects of their job as extremely important. Many high school counselors also believe that their work should not end when the school year ends but they should continue to provide graduating seniors with support during the summer after they graduate (see Table 9). Fifty-four percent (54%) of high school counselors say the statement "I believe it is important to assist seniors throughout the summer after they graduate to provide them with resources and support in order to aid their transition to college" is true of them, as indicated by a rating of six or higher on a zero-to-10 scale, on which a 10 corresponds to "completely true." Hispanic high school counselors (66%) and African American high school counselors (82%) are especially likely to say they believe it is important to work with seniors during the summer after graduation.

Furthermore, counselors at more traditionally underserved schools place particular value on summer work. Nearly twice as many high school counselors who work at schools in which at least three-quarters of the student body receive free or reduced-price lunch say that assisting students in the summer after they graduate is important (72%), compared with high school counselors who work at schools in which fewer than one in four of the students receives free or reduced-price lunch (38%). In a similar vein, high school counselors who work at schools where 64% or fewer of their students go on to college are more likely to believe it is important to help transition graduating seniors to college during the summer (60%) than counselors who work at high schools with higher rates of college attendance (43%).

Table 9: Proportion of High School Counselors Who Say That Helping Seniors Transition to College Throughout the Summer After They Graduate Is Important* and That Their School Does This*

	"Assisting seniors throughout the summer after they graduate to provide them with resources and support in order to aid their transition to college"		
	I Believe This Is Important* %	My School Does This* %	Gap ±
High school counselors	54	24	30
Race of counselor			
White counselors	49	23	26
African American counselors	82	27	55
Hispanic counselors	66	22	44
Region			
Northeast	55	24	31
Midwest	49	20	29
South	51	24	27
West	50	20	30
Type of school			
All public	55	23	32
Urban public	61	25	36
Suburban public	47	17	30
Rural public	54	29	25
All private	51	34	17
Percentage of student population that is minority			
0 to 24%	47	22	25
25 to 49%	49	22	27
50 to 74%	63	16	47
75% or more	69	28	41
Percentage of student population on free or reduced-price lunch			
0 to 24%	38	20	18
25 to 49%	54	19	35
50 to 74%	67	25	42
75% or more	72	31	41
Title I			
Schoolwide	67	27	40
Not schoolwide	43	20	23
Number of students in caseload			
Fewer than 250	55	29	26
250–349	53	25	28
350–449	55	25	30
450 or more	55	14	41
College attendance rates (high school only)			
High college attendance (86% or more)	43	23	20
Lower college attendance (64% and below)	60	22	38

*6–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = completely true statement

Although more than half of high school counselors believe that helping students transition to college during the summer after they graduate is important, fewer than 1 in 4 say that this is something their school actually does. Only 24% of high school counselors say that their school "assists seniors throughout the summer after they graduate to provide them with resources and support to aid their transition to college," as indicated by a six or higher on a zero-to-10 scale. High school counselors at private schools (34% compared with 23% in public schools) are more likely than most to say that their school helps students who have graduated during the summer.

It also appears that compared with counselors at more advantaged schools, counselors in disadvantaged schools are more likely to help graduating seniors transition to college during the summer after they graduate. While only 20% of counselors at advantaged schools say that this already happens in their schools, 31% of counselors in disadvantaged schools say that it does. Nevertheless, large gaps exist across groups between the proportion who believe assisting graduated students in the summer after they graduate is important and the proportion who report that this is something their school actually does. African American counselors show the largest discrepancy, as 82% believe that helping seniors transition to college the summer after they graduate is important, while only 27% say this happens in their schools (a gap of 55 points.)

Section 3: Commitment — Counselors' and Administrators' Commitment to the Eight Components

Counselors' Commitment to NOSCA's Eight Components

The 2011 national survey of school counselors demonstrated that the eight components developed by NOSCA to ensure that all students graduate from high school ready to succeed in college and career deeply resonate with school counselors' own practice. Not only do school counselors strongly believe that each of the components is important to a counseling system focused on college and career readiness, but they also are personally committed to each and every one of the eight components. When asked to rate each component on a zero-to-10 scale on which a zero means "not at all committed" and a 10 means "extremely committed," every component received an eight or higher from a large majority of counselors. At the top (see Table 10) is commitment to "Academic planning for college and career readiness." Nine in 10 (90%) counselors say that they are very committed (as indexed by an eight or higher) to "advancing students' planning, preparation, participation, and performance in a rigorous academic program that connects to their college and career aspirations and goals."

Ensuring that students' academic pursuits and preparation connect to their future goals emerges again in the second most popular component: "Provide early and ongoing exposure to experiences and information necessary to make informed decisions when selecting a college or career that connects to academic preparation and future aspirations." Fully 89% of school counselors say that they are very committed to this component. Although "enrichment and extracurricular engagement" are at the bottom of the list, a large majority (77%) of counselors still say that they are very committed to this component, which is described as "ensur[ing] equitable exposure to a wide range of extracurricular opportunities that build leadership, nurture talents and interests, and increase engagement with school."

Of interest, "enrichment and extracurricular engagement" is the one component in which middle school counselors demonstrate stronger personal commitment (80%) than do high school counselors (76%). Perhaps because of temporal proximity, middle school counselors may see components related explicitly to the process of college admittance as more the domain of high school counselors. The data certainly support this possibility, as high school counselors evince stronger commitment to seven of the eight components and the most dramatic differences appear on components related to the logistics of getting into college. For example, while 9 in 10 high school counselors (90%) say they are very committed to "ensuring that students and families have an early and ongoing understanding of the college application and admission processes so they can find the postsecondary options that are the best fit with their aspirations and interests," only 72% of middle school counselors say the same (a difference of 18 points). Even so, middle school counselors remain strongly devoted to setting their students up to succeed in college and career, as 80% say they are very committed to nurturing students' college aspirations by working to build a college-going culture in their schools.

Administrators' Support for the Eight Components

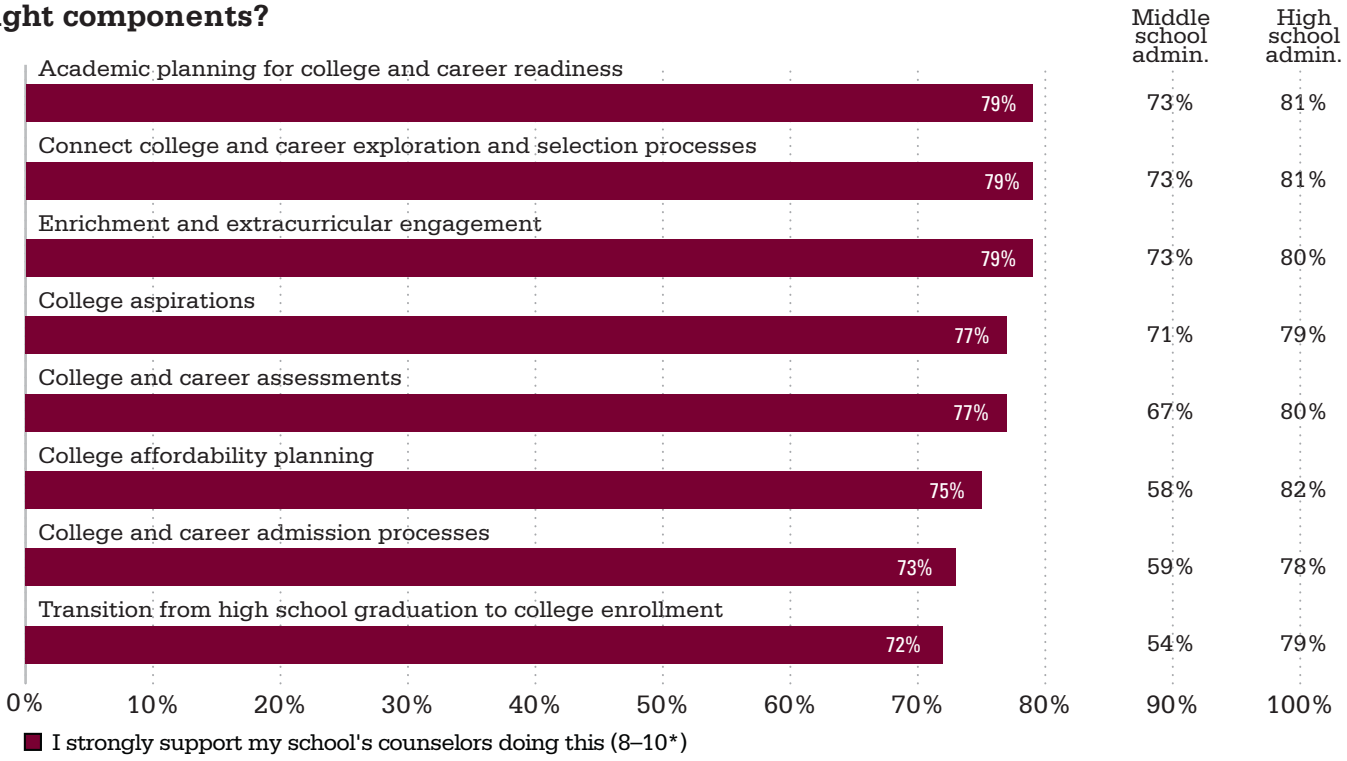
School counselors receive administrators' support and encouragement to adopt NOSCA's eight components into their counseling practice. For each of the eight components, at least 7 in 10 school administrators rate themselves as an eight or higher on a zero-to-10 scale regarding the extent to which they support school counselors in their school incorporating each of the eight components into their

Table 10: Proportion of Counselors Who Are Very Committed* to Each of the Eight Components

						High School Counselors Only	
	All Counselors %	Middle School %	High School %	Public School %	Private School %	High College Attendance (86%+) High School Only %	Lower College Attendance (up to 64%) High School Only %
Academic planning for college and career readiness: Advance students' planning, preparation, participation, and performance in a rigorous academic program that connects to their college and career aspirations and goals	90	83	92	90	93	94	89
Connect college and career exploration and selection processes: Provide early and ongoing exposure to experiences and information necessary to make informed decisions when selecting a college or career that connects to academic preparation and future aspirations	89	83	91	89	88	91	90
College aspirations: Build a college-going culture by nurturing in students the confidence to aspire to college. Maintain high expectations by providing adequate supports and conveying the conviction that all students can succeed in college	87	80	89	86	96	87	87
College and career admission processes: Ensure that students and families have an early and ongoing understanding of the application and admission processes so they can find the postsecondary options that are the best fit with their aspirations and interests	85	72	90	85	90	91	89
College and career assessments: Promote preparation and participation in college and career assessments by all students	82	77	84	82	84	86	85
Transition from high school graduation to college enrollment: Connect students to school and community resources to help ensure a successful transition from high school to college	81	74	84	82	79	86	83
College affordability planning: Provide information about college costs, financing, and the financial aid and scholarship processes, so students are able to plan for and afford a college education	81	68	86	81	84	85	86
Enrichment and extracurricular engagement: Ensure equitable exposure to a wide range of extracurricular opportunities that build leadership, nurture talents and interests, and increase engagement with school	77	80	76	77	75	81	73

*8–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = I am completely committed to this as part of my counseling practice.

Administrators: How much do you support your school's counselors on the eight components?



*Ratings on zero–to–10 scale: 10 = completely supportive of my school's counselors doing this to ensure all graduate college/career ready

counseling practice. Looking at administrators overall, there is little variation across the components; at the top of the list, 79% of school administrators rate their support as an eight or higher for "advancing students' planning, preparation, participation, and performance in a rigorous academic program that connects to their college and career aspirations and goals," while the lowest-rated component ("connecting students to school and community resources to help ensure a successful transition from high school to college") still receives high support from 72% of administrators.

The figure above shows, however, that while high school administrators are uniformly supportive of the eight components — with support ranging from 79% to 81% — middle school administrators not only are less supportive across the board but show more variations in levels of support across the components. Middle school administrators are most supportive of academic planning for college and career readiness (73%), connecting college exposure and selection processes (73%), and enrichment and extracurricular engagement (73%). In contrast, middle school administrators are notably less supportive of components more closely related to the college admission and enrollment processes, including college-affordability planning (58%), college and career admissions processes (59%), and helping students transition from high school graduation to college enrollment (54%). This suggests real opportunities to increase support among middle school administrators for the eight components if the case can be made that helping students plan for the logistics of college admissions and enrollment at an early age (i.e., middle school) will increase students' chances of success in college and career when they graduate from high school.

Counselors' Commitment to Example Action Items for Achieving the Eight Components

To help counselors reach the goal of ensuring that every student graduates from high school ready for college and career, NOSCA developed guides outlining specific and concrete practices for counselors to employ to achieve success on each of the eight components. Taking a systemwide approach, the guides describe specific steps for each component, including how to work with students, the school, the district, parents and families, and the community.[1] Because of the guides' extensiveness and the time constraints of counselors taking the survey, the survey

1. Lee, V. V., & Goodnough, G. E. (2011). Systemic data-driven school counseling practice and programming for equity. In B. T. Erford (Ed.) *Transforming the school counseling profession* (3rd). Boston, MA: Pearson Merrill Prentice-Hall.

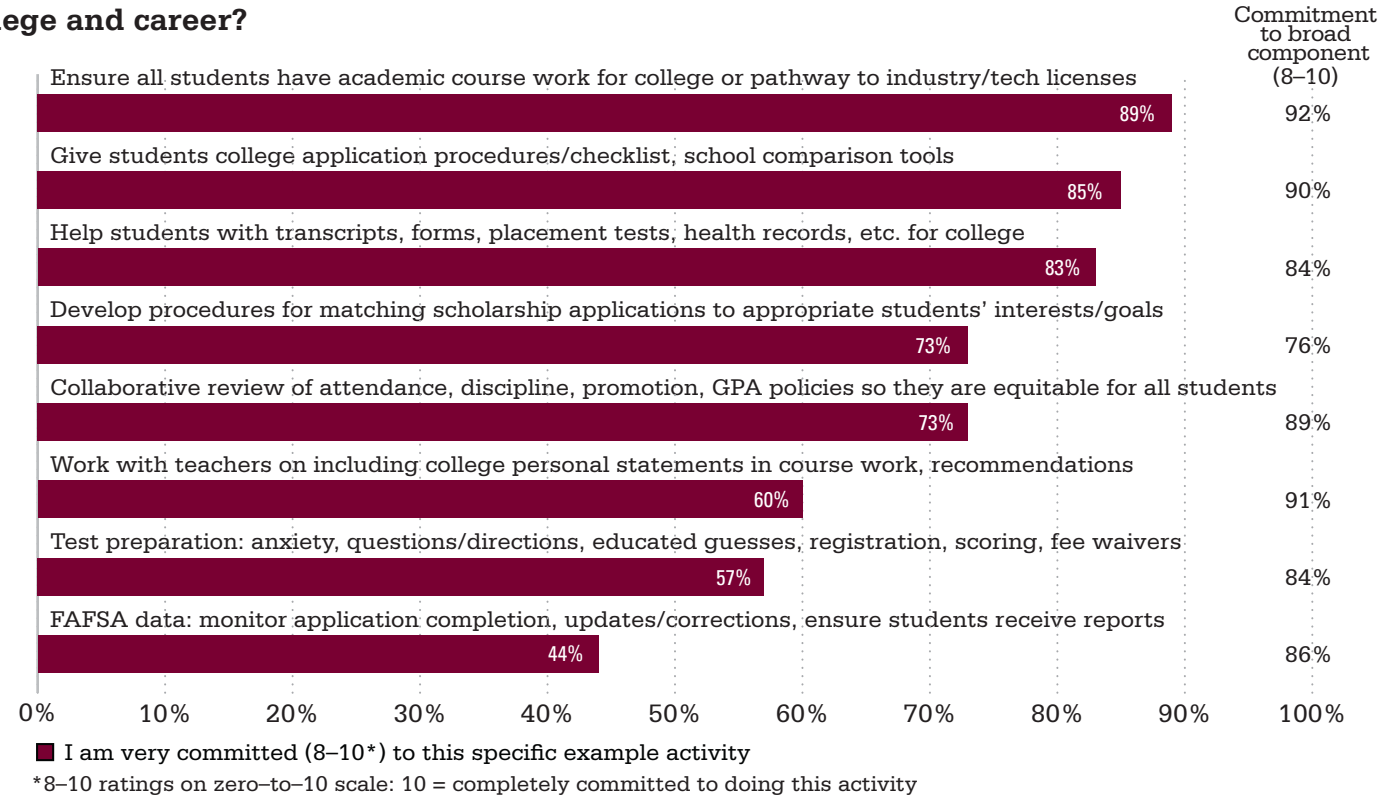
Full Text of the Eight Components and Specific Example Action Items[2]

Component	Description of Broad Component	High School Example Activity	Middle School Example Activity
College aspirations	Build a college-going culture by nurturing in students the confidence to aspire to college. Maintain high expectations by providing adequate supports and conveying the conviction that all students can succeed in college.	Collaborating with teachers and administrators to review attendance, discipline, promotion/ retention, and GPA policies to ensure equity for all student groups.	Collaborating with teachers to connect their course content to college and careers so students understand how their interests, talents, and abilities link to postsecondary goals.
Academic planning for college and career readiness	Advance students' planning, preparation, participation, and performance in a rigorous academic program that connects to their college and career aspirations and goals.	Ensuring that all students have a program of study that meets the requirements for admission to in-state universities or creates a pathway to industry and technology licenses and certifications.	Examining enrollment, performance, and completion data for rigorous, honors, and accelerated courses, reviewing policies to ensure equity for all students.
Enrichment and extracurricular engagement	Ensure equitable exposure to a wide range of extracurricular opportunities that build leadership, nurture talents and interests, and increase engagement with school.	Developing policies and procedures to distribute scholarship applications so all students receive materials that match their interests, talents, and educational and career goals.	Teaching students how to identify and research colleges, careers, and technical schools that offer majors and extracurricular activities that appeal to students' interests and abilities.
Connect college and career exploration and selection processes	Provide early and ongoing exposure to experiences and information necessary to make informed decisions when selecting a college or career that connects to academic preparation and future aspirations.	Working with teachers to include elements of college applications such as personal statements into their courses and helping them write recommendations that highlight student assets.	Providing students with information about different types of institutions (e.g., two- and four-year, public and private, in-state and out-of-state).
College and career assessments	Promote preparation and participation in college and career assessments by all students.	Providing test preparation that includes overcoming test anxiety, types of test questions and directions, how to make an educated guess, registration, scoring, and fee waivers.	Creating opportunities for all students, especially underserved groups, to learn how to use assessments to link their academic planning and career and college exploration to future career options.
College affordability planning	Provide information about college costs, financing, and the financial aid and scholarship processes, so students are able to plan for and afford a college education.	Using student FAFSA completion data to monitor application completion, to make application updates and corrections, and to ensure that students receive and review aid reports.	Providing early information to parents and students about ways to plan and pay for college, including information about grants, scholarships, loans, work-study, and saving plans.
College and career admission processes	Ensure that students and families have an early and ongoing understanding of the application and admission processes so they can find the postsecondary options that are the best fit with their aspirations and interests.	Providing students with college application completion procedures and checklists, calendars, and school comparison tools to assist them with completing applications and making their final decisions.	N/A
Transition from high school graduation to college enrollment	Connect students to school and community resources to help ensure a successful transition from high school to college.	Helping 12th-grade students request final transcripts, fill out forms, take placement tests, and gather health records and IEP information as needed as they make the transition from graduation to college.	N/A

This table is also available in Appendix C.

2. The College Board (2011). *High School Counselor Guide: NOSCA's Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling.*

High school counselors: How committed are you to this activity to prepare students for college and career?



*8–10 ratings on zero–to–10 scale: 10 = completely committed to doing this activity

contained one example strategy for each component for a total of eight example strategies (see the following table or Appendix C). These example strategies were selected to capture the essence of the associated component as well as to represent a cross section of strategies (i.e., at the student, school, district, family, and community levels). While these strategies provide insight into how counselors and administrators view concrete action items for achieving the eight components, they do not represent a comprehensive overall approach. Nevertheless, counselors' and administrators' evaluations of the example strategies provide valuable insight into the practicalities of implementing a college and career readiness framework based on the eight components.

As the figure above shows, in many cases high school counselors are less committed to the specific strategy associated with the eight components than they are to the broader components themselves. While at least three-quarters of high school counselors say they are committed to each of the eight components, the proportion of high school counselors rating their commitment to the strategy items ranges from 89% all the way down to 44% (see Table 11).

Counselors are most committed to "ensuring that all students have a program of study that meets the requirements for admission to in-state universities or creates a pathway to industry and technology licenses and certifications." Eighty-nine percent of high school counselors rate their personal commitment to this strategy associated with the component "academic planning for college and career" as an eight or higher on a zero-to-10 scale. This is nearly the same proportion of high school counselors who rate the broader component, "academic planning for college and career," as an eight or higher (92%). High school counselors show comparably high levels of commitment to the strategy item associated with "colleges and career admission processes" (85%), described as "providing students with college application completion procedures and checklists, calendars, and school comparison tools to assist them with completing applications and making their final decisions." They also are committed to the strategy example for "transition from high school to college enrollment" (83%): "helping 12th-grade students request final transcripts, fill out forms, take placement tests, and gather health records and IEP information as needed as they make the transition from graduation to college."

Table 11: Proportion of High School Counselors Who Rate Themselves as Very Committed* to Specific Example Action Items for the Eight Components

	All High School Counselors %	Public High School %	Private High School %	High College Attendance (86%+) %	Lower College Attendance (up to 64%) %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (less than 25%) %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (75% +) %
Academic planning for college and career: Ensuring that all students have a program of study that meets the requirements for admission to in-state universities or creates a pathway to industry and technology licenses and certifications	89	89	91	92	85	92	90
College and career admission processes: Providing students with college application completion procedures and checklists, calendars, and school comparison tools to assist them with completing applications and making their final decisions	85	84	90	88	82	88	79
Transition from high school to college enrollment: Helping 12th-grade students request final transcripts, fill out forms, take placement tests, and gather health records and IEP information as needed as they make the transition from graduation to college	83	83	86	83	82	81	84
Enrichment and extracurricular engagement: Developing policies and procedures to distribute scholarship applications so all students receive materials that match their interests, talents, and educational and career goals	73	74	70	71	76	69	78
College aspirations: Collaborating with teachers and administrators to review attendance, discipline, promotion/retention, and GPA policies to ensure equity for all student groups	73	74	68	73	70	70	79
Connect college and career exploration and selection processes: Working with teachers to include elements of college applications such as personal statements into their courses and helping them write recommendations that highlight student assets	60	59	74	60	56	54	66
College and career assessments: Providing test preparation that includes overcoming test anxiety, types of test questions and directions, how to make an educated guess, registration, scoring, and fee waivers	57	57	62	53	60	51	64
College affordability planning: Using student FAFSA completion data to monitor application completion, to make application updates and corrections, and to ensure students receive and review aid reports	44	46	29	37	49	28	72

*8–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = I am completely committed to making sure this happens.

Support for the strategy items drops off when we turn to "college and career exploration and selection processes." Compared with 91% of high school counselors who say they are committed to the broader component, far fewer (60%, or 31 points less) say they personally are committed to the example strategy for achieving this component of "working with teachers to include elements of college applications such as personal statements into their courses and helping them to write recommendations that highlight students' assets." Interestingly, counselors at private high schools are

notably more likely to report high levels of commitment to this example strategy (74%) than are counselors in public high schools (59%).

High school counselors also show a disconnect between their levels of commitment to the "college and career assessments" component and its example strategy item. Just 57% of high school counselors rate themselves as an eight or higher in commitment to "providing test preparation that includes overcoming test anxiety, types of test questions and directions, how to make an educated guess, registration, scoring, and fee waivers." In contrast, 84% of these same high school counselors say that they personally are committed to the actual description of the broader component.

The least popular strategy item by far is the one associated with "college affordability planning": "Using FAFSA completion data to monitor application completion, to make application updates and corrections, and to ensure that students receive and review aid reports." Just over 2 in 5 (44%) high school counselors say they personally are committed to this strategy, while nearly twice as many (86%) say that they are committed to the description of the broader component. Counselors in private high schools rate this strategy particularly low, as only 29% (compared with 46% of counselors at public high schools) rate themselves as an eight or higher. Among the counselors most likely to say they are committed to using FAFSA completion data are counselors at high schools with lower rates of college attendance (49%, compared with 37% of counselors at high schools with higher rates of college attendance) and, even more dramatically, counselors at high schools in which at least 75% of the student population receive free or reduced-price lunch (72%, compared with 28% of counselors at schools where fewer than 25% of students receive free or reduced-price lunch).

In fact, counselors in disadvantaged schools report high levels of commitment for several other strategies. For example, larger proportions of counselors at schools with at least 75% of the student body on free or reduced-price lunch say that they are personally committed to "college and career exploration and selection processes" (66%, compared with 54% of counselors at schools with less than 25% of the student body on free or reduced-price lunch) and to "college and career assessments" (64%, compared with 51% of counselors at more advantaged schools).

Administrators' Support for Counselors Doing the Example Action Items for the Eight Components

When counselors were asked to rate the degree to which they believe their school administrators support counselors in their school doing each example strategy item, counselors give administrators fairly high ratings. On five of the eight strategy items, at least 70% of counselors rate their administrators' support as a six[3] or higher (see Table 12). High school counselors perceive the most support from administrators on the example strategy for "Academic planning for college and career"; 82% of high school counselors say that their administrators support counselors, "ensuring that all students have a program of study that meets the requirements for admissions to in-state universities or creates a pathway to industry and technology licenses and certifications."

A similarly large majority (77%) of school counselors rate their administrators' level of support as a six or higher for the example strategy associated with "college and career admission processes": "Providing students with college application completion procedures and checklists, calendars, and school comparison tools to assist them with completing applications and making their final decisions." Counselors in high schools with 75% or more of the student body on free or reduced-price lunch are less likely to believe that their administrators support this activity (70%) than counselors at high schools with fewer than 25% of the student body on free or reduced-price lunch (80%).

Just as counselors personally are less committed to "using student FAFSA completion data to monitor application completion, to make application updates and corrections, and to ensure that students receive and review aid reports" ("college affordability planning"), they believe that their administrators are less supportive of this as well. Only a slight majority (53%) rate administrators' support for this example strategy as a six or higher. However, counselors at schools with lower college attendance rates are more likely to see their administrators as supportive of this strategy (57%, compared with 44% of counselors at high schools with higher rates of college attendance). Counselors at high schools with higher proportions of disadvantaged students are even more likely to see their administrators as supportive of using FAFSA completion data and ensuring that students receive and review aid reports; 64% of counselors at disadvantaged schools (i.e.,

3. A proportion based on ratings of six or higher is used rather than eight or higher because these are counselors' ratings of others — their administrators, specifically. For counselors, we conceptualize any rating lower than an eight as a potential barrier because it signifies incomplete commitment. We set the bar lower for counselors' perceptions of the support of administrators to assess simply whether counselors see the administrators as "on their side" (indicated by a six or higher).

Table 12: Proportion of High School Counselors Who Believe They Have Support* from Their Principal and School Administrators for Each Example Action Item ✓

	High School %	Public School %	Private School %	High College Attendance (86%+) %	Lower College Attendance (up to 64%) %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (less than 25%) %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (75% +) %
Academic planning for college and career: Ensuring that all students have a program of study	82	82	87	84	81	85	79
College and career admission processes: Providing students with college application completion materials	77	76	83	80	74	80	70
Transition from high school to college enrollment: Helping 12th-grade students transition from high school to college	75	74	79	75	77	75	69
College aspirations: Collaborating with teachers and administrators to review policies for equity	73	73	71	74	72	73	73
Enrichment and extracurricular engagement: Developing policies and procedures to distribute scholarship applications	72	71	73	70	76	68	75
College and career assessments: Providing test preparation	66	64	73	63	67	63	65
Connect college and career exploration and selection processes: Working with teachers to include elements of college applications in course work	65	63	74	63	64	61	64
College affordability planning: Using student FAFSA completion data to monitor application progress	53	53	49	44	57	42	64

*6–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = principal and school administrators are completely supportive of my doing this

See Appendix C for full text of descriptions.

those with 75% or more of students receiving free or reduced-price lunch) rate their administrators as a six or higher, whereas only 42% of counselors at high schools with lower proportions of disadvantaged students do the same.

Although there is less variation across the strategy items, middle school counselors see levels of support from their administrators that are similar to those experienced by high school counselors (see Table 13). Middle school counselors perceive their administrators as most supportive of "examining enrollment, performance, and completion data for rigorous, honors, and accelerated courses, and reviewing policies to ensure equity for all students"; three-quarters (75%) of middle school counselors rate their administrators as a six or higher in this category. And as with high school counselors, middle school counselors believe that their administrators are least supportive of the strategy associated with "college affordability planning"; 64% of middle school counselors rate their administrators as a six or higher on this component.

Providing administrators with the opportunity to report their own personal levels of support reveals that high school counselors are substantially underestimating how much high school administrators support counselors' practicing the example activities (see figures below) while middle school counselors and administrators are more in step with one another. On average, high school administrators (mean = 8.2) rate their own level of support one full point higher than high school counselors rate administrators (mean = 7.1). In contrast, middle school administrators and middle school counselors rate the support of administrators essentially the same on average (both means = 7.0).

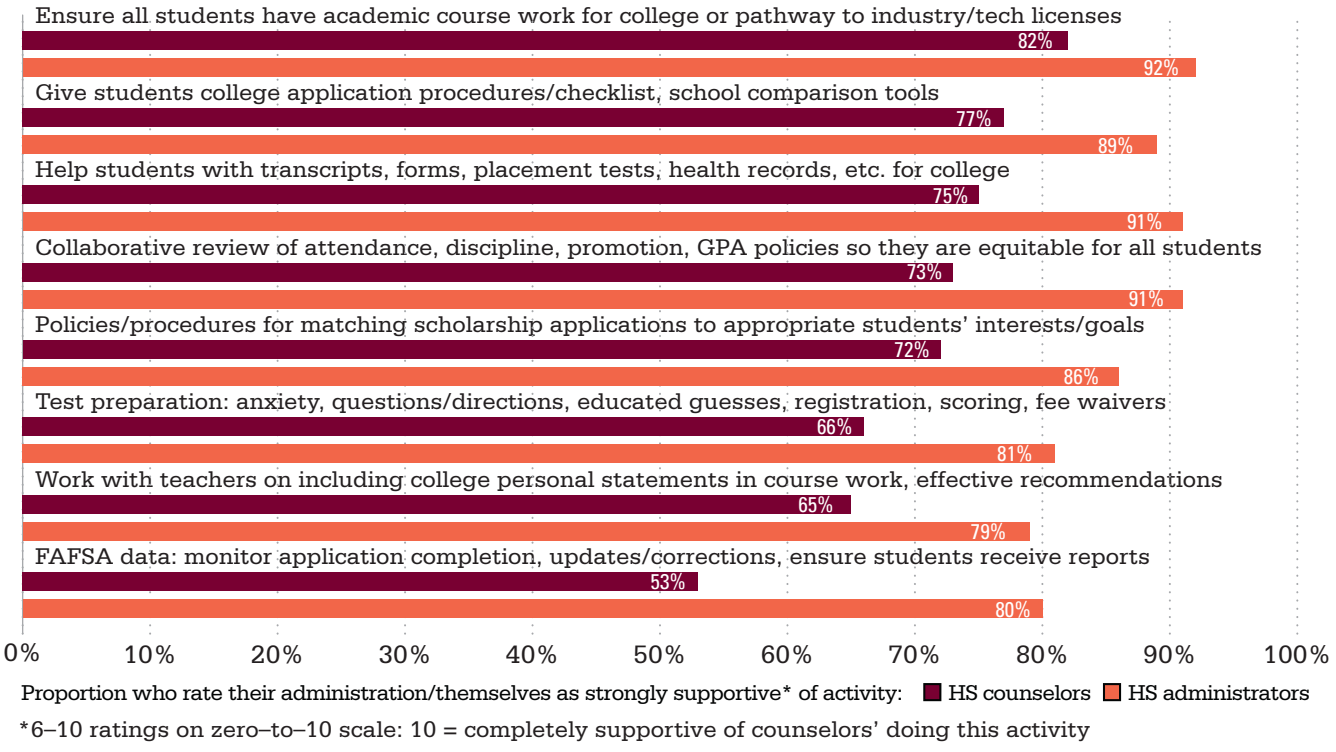
Table 13: Proportion of Middle School Counselors Who Believe They Have Support* from Their Principal and School Administrators for Each Example Action Item

	Middle School %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (less than 25%) %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (75% +) %
Academic planning for college and career: Examining enrollment, performance, and completion data for advanced courses to ensure equity	75	79	77
College and career assessments: Creating opportunities for all students to link assessments to college and career goals	74	74	79
College and career exploration and selection processes: Providing students with information about different types of colleges and institutions	70	69	75
Enrichment and extracurricular engagement: Teaching students how to identify and research colleges, careers, and technical schools that match their interests and abilities	69	67	73
College aspirations: Collaborating with teachers to connect their course content to colleges and careers	65	65	70
College affordability planning: Providing early information to parents and students about ways to plan and pay for college	64	63	70

*6–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = principal and school administrators are completely supportive of my doing this

See Appendix C for full text.

High schools: How much does your administration support this activity to prepare students for college and career?



*6–10 ratings on zero–to–10 scale: 10 = completely supportive of counselors' doing this activity

Middle schools: How much does your administration support this activity to prepare students for college and career?

The largest discrepancy between high school administrators' self-reported support and high school counselors' perception of administrative support is in counselors' using FAFSA data to monitor student progress on applications. Compared with just 53% of high school counselors who rate administrative support as a six or higher, fully 80% (27 points higher) of high school administrators rate their own level of support as a six or higher.

While middle school counselors' and administrators' views of administrative support may be more in line, it is clear that middle school administrators (mean = 7.0) generally are less supportive of the eight components example activities than are high school administrators (mean = 8.2). Part of this may be due to how much the eight components example activities revolve around preparing for college, which middle school administrators may not view as a middle school domain as much as social–emotional development. In the words of one school administrator:

> "You're going to have that social–emotional development more in those lower grade levels through middle school. Then when high school kicks in, then it's about preparing them for the next level of getting through high school, making sure you have all of the credits that you need to graduate. And then latter years, making sure that you have all of the applications filled out, the college essays written, and FAFSA — all of those things."
>
> — School administrator, Dallas

School Districts' Support for Counselors Doing the Example Action Items for the Eight Components

Compared with how high school counselors see their school administrators, high school counselors generally see their school districts as less supportive when it comes to counselors engaging in the example action items associated with the eight components (see Table 14). Middle school counselors, in contrast, see about the same levels of support from their school district as they do from administrators (see Table 15).

High school and middle school counselors alike believe that their school districts are most supportive of the example strategy associated with "academic planning for college and career." Three-quarters of high school counselors (76%) and

Table 14: Proportion of High School Counselors Who Believe They Have Support* from Their School District for Each Example Action Item

	High School %	High College Attendance (86%+) %	Lower College Attendance (up to 64%) %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (less than 25%) %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (75%+) %
Academic planning for college and career: Ensuring that all students have a program of study	76	88	70	86	71
College and career admission processes: Providing students with college application completion materials	68	83	66	77	69
Transition from high school to college enrollment: Helping 12th-grade students transition from high school to college	67	76	70	71	61
College aspirations: Collaborating with teachers and administrators to review policies for equity	64	73	62	67	62
Enrichment and extracurricular engagement: Developing policies and procedures to distribute scholarship applications	64	71	65	70	64
College and career assessments: Providing test preparation	56	63	54	62	56
Connect college and career exploration and selection processes: Working with teachers to include elements of college applications in course work	54	60	50	56	57
College affordability planning: Using student FAFSA completion data to monitor application progress	46	41	49	36	57

*6–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = school district is completely supportive of my doing this

See Appendix C for full text.

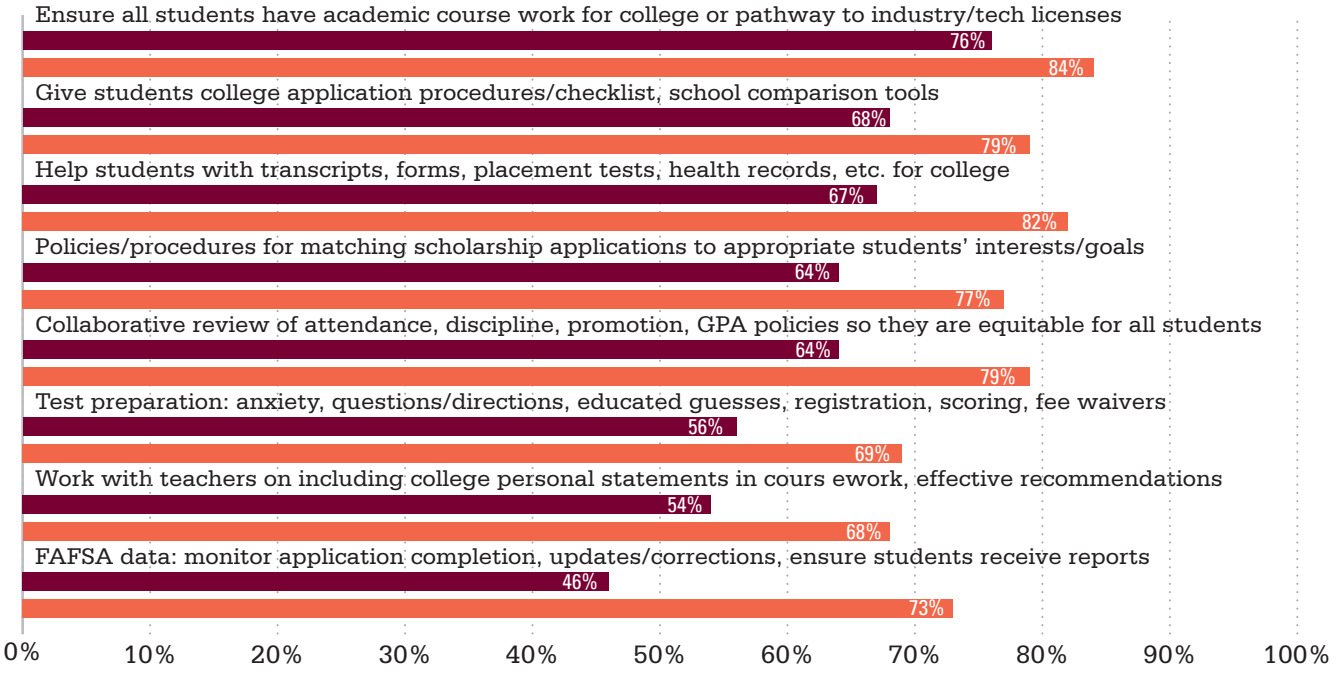
Table 15: Proportion of Middle School Counselors Who Believe They Have Support* from Their School District for Each Example Action Item

	Middle School %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (less than 25%) %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (75% +) %
Academic planning for college and career: Examining enrollment, performance, and completion data for advanced courses to ensure equity	74	77	70
College and career assessments: Creating opportunities for all students to link assessments to college and career goals	71	76	69
Enrichment and Extracurricular Engagement: Teaching students how to identify and research colleges, careers, and technical schools that match their interests and abilities	69	74	67
College and career exploration and selection processes: Providing students with information about different types of colleges and institutions	68	75	67
College affordability planning: Providing early information to parents and students about ways to plan and pay for college	66	70	64
College aspirations: Collaborating with teachers to connect their course content to colleges and careers	65	69	70

*6–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = school district is completely supportive of my doing this

See Appendix C for full text.

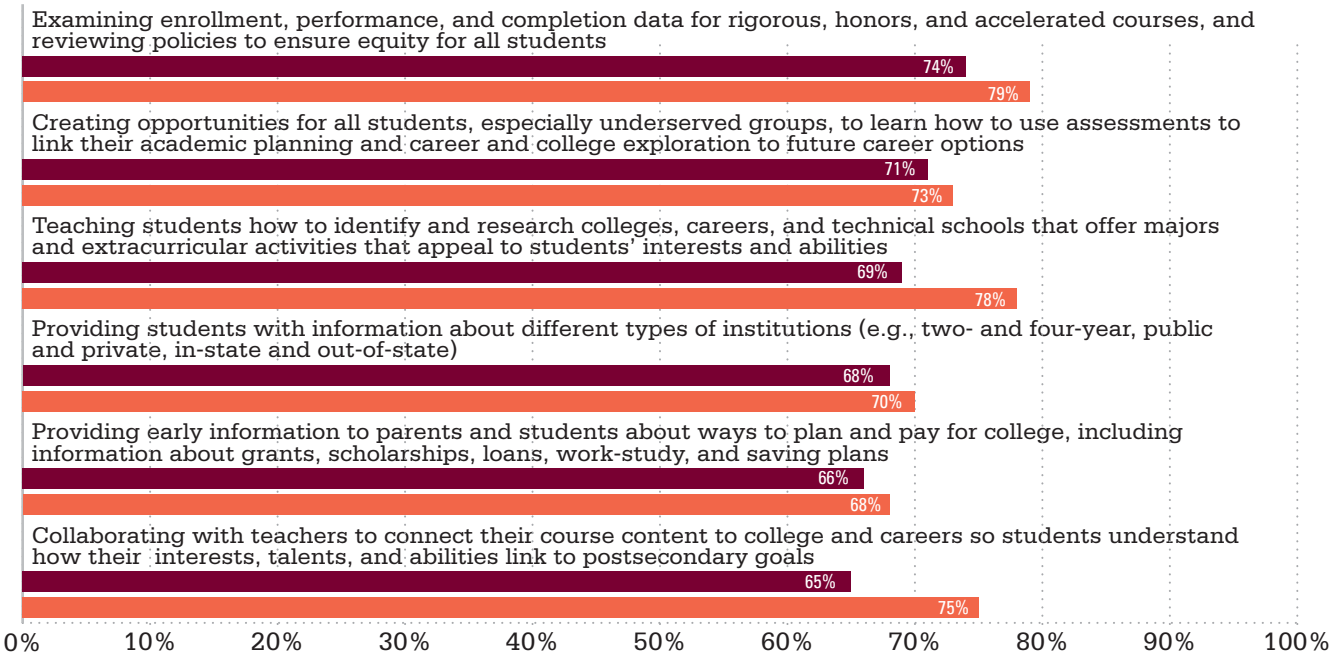
High schools: How much does your school district support this activity to prepare students for college and career?



Proportion who rate their school district as strongly supportive* of each activity: HS counselors HS administrators

*6–10 ratings on zero–to–10 scale: 10 = completely supportive of counselors' doing this activity

Middle schools: How much does your school district support this activity to prepare students for college and career?



Proportions who rate their school district as strongly supportive* of each activity: MS counselors MS administrators

*6–10 ratings on zero–to–10 scale: 10 = completely supportive of counselors' doing this activity

middle school counselors (74%) rate their school districts as a six or higher in terms of level of support for this activity. High school counselors perceive less support from their school district for the items associated with "college and career assessments" (56%), "college and career exploration and selection processes" (54%), and "college affordability planning" (46%).

With the exception of the using FAFSA data to monitor the student application progress (the "college affordability planning" example activity), high school counselors at more successful and advantaged schools see higher levels of support for the example activities from their districts (see Table 14). For example, counselors at high schools with higher rates of college attendance are far more likely to rate their school district's support as a six or higher (88%) than counselors at high schools with lower rates of college attendance (70%) for the "academic planning for college and career" example. Counselors at schools with fewer disadvantaged students (86%) also are more likely to perceive district support for this activity than counselors at high schools with higher numbers of disadvantaged students (71%). Similarly, as Table 15 shows, middle school counselors at schools with higher numbers of disadvantaged students also generally see less support from their school districts for counselors practicing the eight components' strategy items. This pattern appears consistently across the majority of the strategy items for high school as well as middle school counselors, suggesting that one potential barrier for counselors in the most challenged schools is a lack of district support.

As is the case with the perceptions of administrative support, high school counselors see lower levels of support from their school districts for the eight components strategy items than do administrators. And again, the views of middle school counselors and middle school administrators are more in line. Whereas high school administrators (mean = 7.4) rate support from their school district a full point higher than high school counselors (mean = 6.3), the ratings of middle school counselors (mean = 7.1) and middle school administrators (mean = 6.9) on average are much closer.

Similar to their perceptions of administrative support, administrators' and counselors' views of district support differ the most starkly when it comes to using FAFSA completion data to monitor student progress and review aid reports (the example for "college affordability planning"). While only 46% of high school counselors believe that they have the support of school districts to do this activity, a large majority (73%, for 27 more points) of high school administrators rate district support as a six or higher. Smaller, albeit still large, gaps appear for helping 12th-grade students transition from high school to college (67% of high school counselors compared with 82% of high school administrators) and collaborating with teachers to ensure equity for all students (64% of high school counselors, compared with 79% of high school administrators).

Section 4: Training and Resources — Counselors' Ability to Achieve the Eight Components

Counselors' Training and Knowledge Needs for the Eight Components

While counselors may be strongly committed to the eight components, many do not have sufficient knowledge or training in the eight components to ensure that all students graduate from high school ready to succeed in college and career. For each of the eight components, at least 40% — and in many cases more than half — of school counselors say they need some additional training or extensive further training (see figure below). Thus, before counselors can implement these components effectively, they must acquire the requisite training and knowledge base.

Counselors feel the most confident in their knowledge of "academic planning for college and career readiness" regarding how to "advance students' planning, preparation, participation, and performance in a rigorous academic program that connects to their college and career aspirations and goals" (see Table 16). Fifty-seven percent of school counselors (including 64% of high school counselors and 70% of private school counselors) say that they have sufficient knowledge and do not need further training on this component. Counselors also are comparably knowledgeable about "college aspirations": 56% of school counselors say they have sufficient knowledge and do not need further training in how to "build a college-going culture by nurturing in students the confidence to aspire to college" and "maintain high expectations by providing adequate supports and conveying the conviction that all students can succeed in college."

The biggest knowledge deficiencies appear in the "college affordability planning" and "transition from high school to college enrollment" components. Fewer than half of counselors say that they have sufficient knowledge and training in how to "provide information about college costs, financing, and the financial aid and scholarship processes so that students are able to plan for college and afford a college education" (43%) as well as "connect[ing] students to school and community resources to help ensure a successful transition from high school to college" (38%).

Counselors: How much knowledge/training do you have in these components?

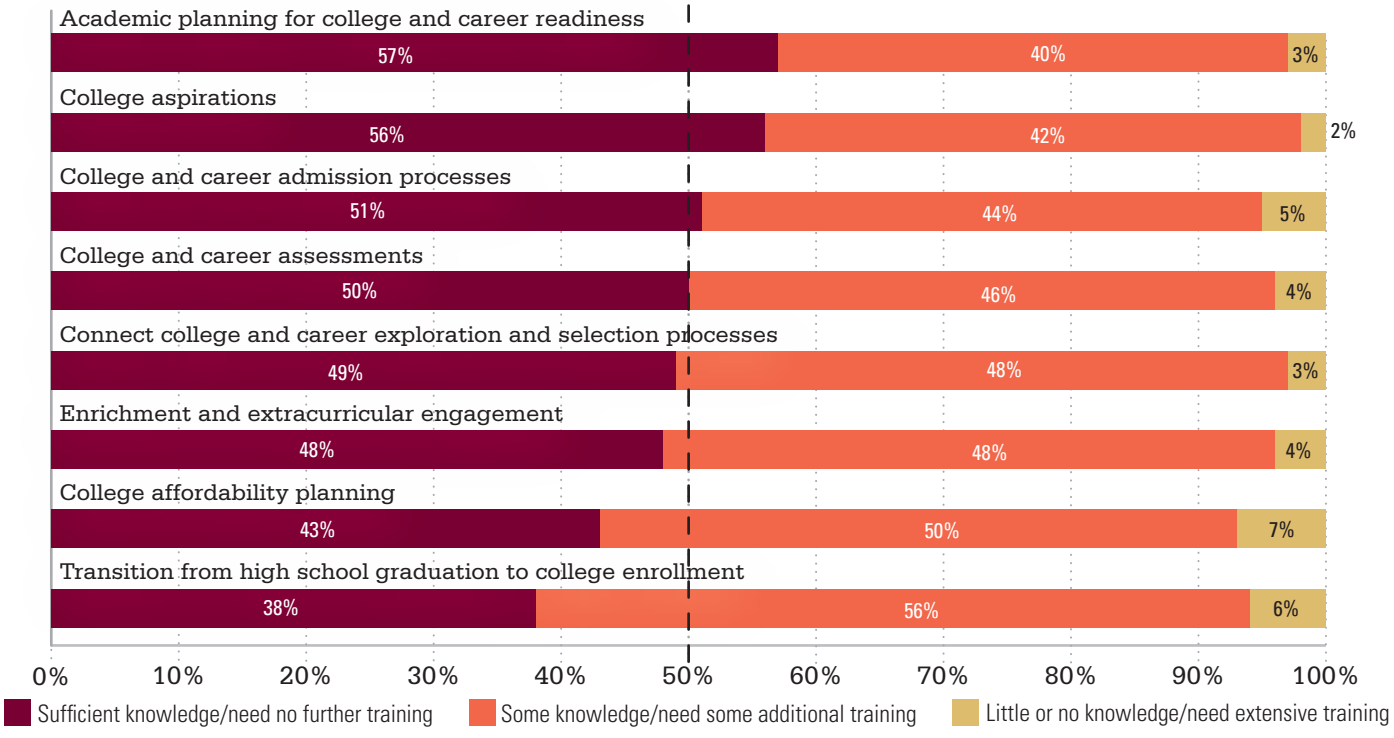


Table 16: Proportion of Counselors Who Say They Have Sufficient Knowledge and Do Not Need Further Training on the Eight Components

	All Counselors %	Middle School %	High School %	Public School %	Private School %	High School Counselors Only	
						High College Attendance (86%+) %	Lower College Attendance (up to 64%) %
Academic planning for college and career	57	41	64	56	70	70	55
College aspirations	56	45	59	54	69	64	54
College and career admission processes	51	31	59	50	68	63	53
College and career assessments	50	43	52	50	55	54	49
Connect college and career exploration and selection processes	49	40	53	49	55	58	48
Enrichment and extracurricular engagement	48	45	50	48	52	57	44
College affordability planning	43	27	49	43	45	46	48
Transition from high school to college enrollment	38	33	40	39	32	43	38

The counselors in schools that arguably need more help supporting students to graduate from high school ready for college and career — that is, schools with lower rates of college attendance — are especially likely to say that they need additional training in the eight components. Compared with counselors at schools with higher rates of college attendance (70%), for example, only about half (55%) of counselors at schools with lower rates of attendance say that they have sufficient knowledge and do not need further training in "academic planning for college and career." This need for further knowledge and training is especially poignant given that earlier we found that "academic planning for college and career" is one of the components counselors at schools with higher (94%) and lower rates (89%) of college attendance alike say they are the most personally committed. It further suggests that with the proper training, school counselors could be an important resource for schools with lower rates of college attendance to ensure that more of their students are academically prepared to attend and excel in college.

Middle school counselors are in even greater need of additional training on the eight components than are high school counselors. Even for the components they are most knowledgeable about, "enrichment and extracurricular involvement" (45%) and "college aspirations" (45%), fewer than half say they have sufficient knowledge and do not need further training. Middle school counselors know the least about "college affordability planning" (27%) and "college and career admission processes" (31%).

Graduate School Training in the Eight Components

To understand how well graduate school counseling programs cover the concepts and goals captured in the eight components, counselors with a graduate degree specializing in school counseling evaluated their graduate programs. The results suggest that even after completing a graduate school program in school counseling, counselors are not fully prepared to enter America's schools and successfully adopt this college and career readiness framework (see figure below).

Only in "promot[ing] preparation and participation in college and career assessments by all students" ("college and career assessments") do more than half (56%) of school counselors say that their graduate program in school counseling covered this component extensively or adequately (see Table 17). School counselors are least likely to feel that their graduate program adequately covered "college and career admission processes" and college affordability planning." Just over 1 in 3 (36%) say that their program extensively or adequately covered how to "ensure that students and families have an early and ongoing understanding of the application and admission processes so they can find the postsecondary options that are the best fit with their aspirations and

Counselors: How well did the training in your graduate school counseling program cover these components?

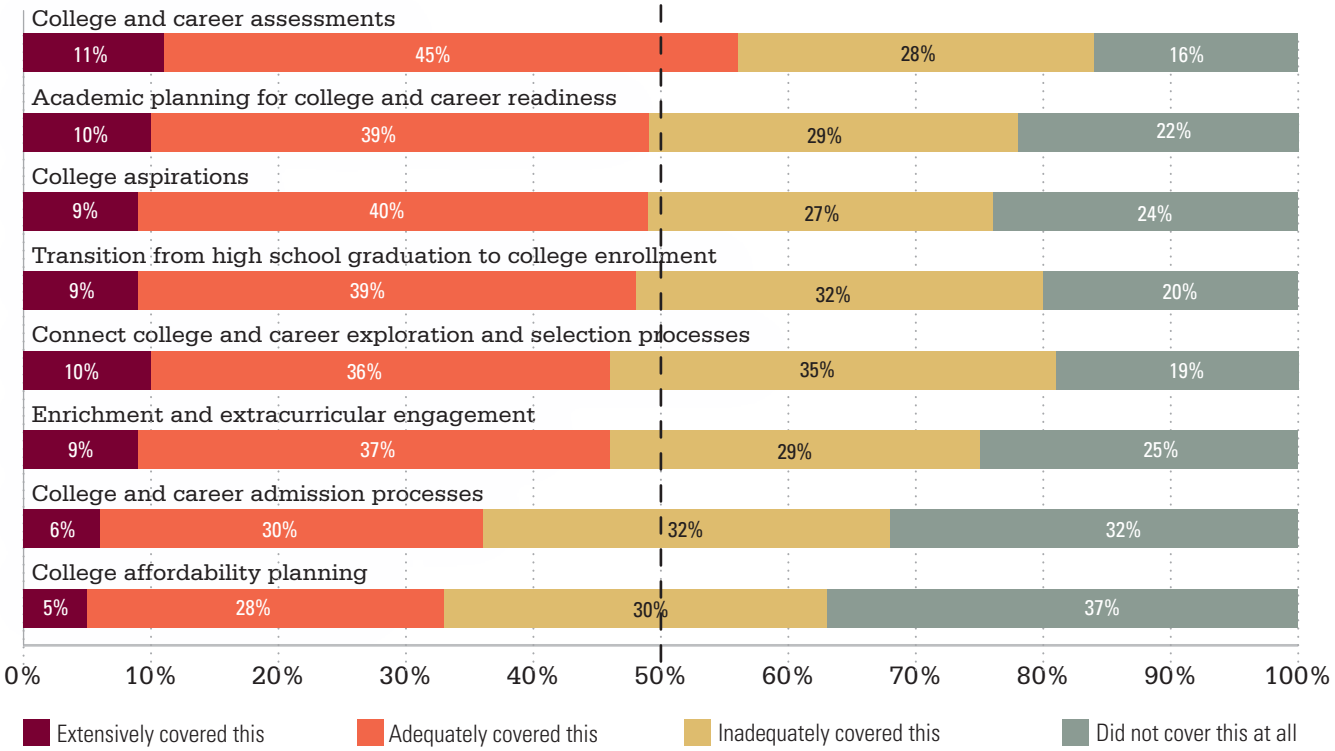


Table 17: Proportion of Counselors Who Say Their Graduate School Counseling Program Covered Each Component Extensively or Adequately

	All Counselors %	Middle School %	High School %	CACREP-Accredited Degree %
College and career assessments	56	68	52	61
Academic planning for college and career readiness	49	58	45	51
College aspirations	49	58	45	52
Transition from high school graduation to college enrollment	48	56	44	49
Connect college and career exploration and selection processes	46	58	41	50
Enrichment and extracurricular engagement	46	57	41	48
College and career admission processes	36	45	32	36
College affordability planning	33	40	30	35

interests." Likewise, only 33% of school counselors with a graduate degree specializing in school counseling say that their program adequately or extensively covered "provid[ing] information about college costs, financing, and the financial aid and scholarship processes, so students are able to plan for and afford a college education."

CACREP accreditation does not seem to provide much advantage either in college or career readiness. As Table 17 shows, by and large, school counselors who attended a CACREP graduate program do not evaluate their programs more favorably than those who did not. The largest difference appears in the "college and career assessments" component: 61% of school counselors who received their degree from a CACREP accredited program say that their program covered this component extensively or adequately, whereas 56% of counselors with graduate degrees in school counseling overall say the same.

Marked differences appear between how middle school counselors and high school counselors evaluate their graduate school training programs in school counseling. Across all components, middle school counselors are more likely to say that their graduate program provided at least adequate coverage. On six of the eight components, more than 50% of middle school counselors say their graduate program provided adequate or extensive coverage. In comparison, graduate programs in school counseling receive only favorable ratings from a majority of high school counselors on one of the eight components ("college and career assessments" (52%).

At first blush, it seems at odds that, compared with high school counselors, middle school counselors overall are more likely to say they want additional training in the eight components, while middle school counselors with graduate degrees specializing in school counseling simultaneously evaluate their graduate training in the eight components more favorably. One potential explanation is that middle school counselors are receiving less in-service training than are high school counselors. In fact, middle school counselors without a graduate degree specializing in school counseling are less likely than their high school counterparts to say that they received training "on the job" (28% compared with 54% of high school counselors) or at workshops and conferences (26% compared with 47% of high school counselors). Furthermore, fewer middle school counselors overall (62%) than high school counselors (79%) say that they have received training in "college and career readiness counseling" since beginning their careers as school counselors.

Counselors' Training in the Example Action Items for the Eight Components

Although many counselors want to receive further training in the broader eight components, high school counselors overall fare better when it comes to their training in the example activities. On all but one of the activities, a majority of high school counselors say that they are trained well enough to do the activity effectively, as indicated by a rating of eight or higher on a zero-to-10 scale. The tables below show that although a majority of middle school counselors also rate their training on the example activities specific for middle school as an eight or higher (mean = 7.3), they do so at lower rates than high school counselors (mean = 8.0).

High school counselors feel the most well trained in the example items for "transitioning from high school to college enrollment," "academic planning for college and career," and "college and career admission processes," all of which deal with providing students with documentation and helpful materials. For "transitioning from high school to college enrollment," 86% of all high school counselors rate their training as an eight or higher to "help 12th-grade students request final transcripts, fill out forms, take placement tests, and gather health records and IEP information as needed as they make the transition from graduation to college." Similarly, 85% of all high school counselors say that they are trained sufficiently in "providing students with college application completion procedures and checklists, calendars, and school comparison tools to assist them with completing applications and making their final decisions" ("college and career admission processes").

High school and middle school counselors alike feel the least trained in "college-affordability planning." Only 42% of high school counselors say they are trained sufficiently in "using student FAFSA completion data to monitor application completion, making application updates and corrections, and ensuring students receive and review aid reports." And just half (50%) of middle school counselors rate their training as an eight or higher for "providing early information to parents and students about ways to plan and pay for college, including information about grants, scholarships, loans, work-study, and saving plans."

However, the following tables show that counselors at schools with at least 75% of the student body on free or reduced-price lunch are far more likely to feel sufficiently trained in enacting the example for "college affordability planning": 57% of high school counselors at disadvantaged schools (compared with 30% of high school counselors at advantaged schools) say they are effective at using FAFSA data to monitor student progress, and 57% of middle school counselors at disadvantaged schools (compared with 44% of middle school counselors at more advantaged schools) say they are trained sufficiently to provide early information about planning and paying for college. Remember that high school counselors at disadvantaged schools also are more committed to using FAFSA data to monitor student progress and are more likely than their counterparts at more affluent schools to perceive support from their administrators and school districts for this item. These facts suggest that administrators and school districts could potentially both show their support and increase commitment among high school counselors by providing the necessary training to effectively engage in this important intervention for supporting students' "college affordability planning."

Table 18: Proportion of High School Counselors Who Believe* They Have the Training to Do Each Example Action Item Effectively

	High School %	Public School %	Private School %	High College Attendance (86%+) %	Lower College Attendance (up to 64%) %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (less than 25%) %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (75% +) %
Transition from high school to college enrollment: Helping 12th-grade students obtain the materials they need to transition from high school to college	86	86	87	91	87	90	82
Academic planning for college and career: Ensuring that all students have a program of study	86	85	90	90	82	91	76
College and career admission processes: Providing students with college application completion materials	85	85	86	89	83	92	73
College aspirations: Collaborating with teachers and administrators to review policies for equity	74	74	77	75	68	74	66
Enrichment and extracurricular engagement: Developing policies and procedures to distribute scholarship applications	73	73	76	70	75	72	66
Connect college and career exploration and selection processes: Working with teachers to include elements of college applications in course work	67	65	80	69	64	64	58
College and career assessments: Providing test preparation	61	60	66	59	61	57	53
College affordability planning: Using student FAFSA completion data to monitor application progress	42	43	32	40	41	30	57

*8–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale, 10 = completely true that I have the training to do this effectively

See Appendix C for full text.

Table 19: Proportion of Middle School Counselors Who Believe* They Have the Training to Do Each Example Action Item Effectively

	Middle School %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (less than 25%) %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (75% +) %
Connect college and career exploration and selection processes: Providing students with information about different types of colleges and institutions	68	64	76
Enrichment and extracurricular engagement: Teaching students how to identify and research colleges, careers, and technical schools that match their interests and abilities	67	65	73
College and career assessments: Creating opportunities for all students to link assessments to college and career goals	61	61	67
Academic planning for college and career: Examining enrollment, performance, and completion data for advanced courses to ensure equity	59	64	62
College aspirations: Collaborating with teachers to connect their course content to colleges	55	55	65
College affordability planning: Providing early information to parents and students about ways to plan and pay for college	50	44	57

*8–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = completely true that I have the training to do this effectively

See Appendix C for full text.

With the exception of "college affordability planning," counselors at disadvantaged high schools are less likely than their counterparts at more advantaged high schools to say they are trained sufficiently in each example activity. The largest discrepancy between high school counselors at disadvantaged versus advantaged schools is in "college and career admission processes." More than 9 in 10 (92%) counselors in more affluent high schools but just 73% of counselors at disadvantaged high schools (a difference of 19 points) say they are sufficiently trained to "provide students with college application completion procedures and checklists, calendars, and school comparison tools to assist them with completing applications and making their final decisions."

Counselors' Resources to Support the Example Action Items for the Eight Components

High school counselors believe the resources are available to support the example activities for the eight components to varying degrees. Similar to their ratings of training, high school counselors believe they have the greatest resource support for activities that involve providing documentation and materials to students. More than 3 in 4 (77%) counselors say that the resources are available to support "helping 12th-grade students request final transcripts, fill out forms, take placement tests, and gather health records and IEP information as needed as they make the transition from graduation to college" ("transition from high school to college enrollment"), as indicated by a rating of eight or higher on a zero-to-10 scale. Three-quarters (75%) of high school counselors also believe they have sufficient resources to support "providing students with college application completion procedures and checklists, calendars, and school comparison tools to assist them with completing applications and making their final decisions" ("college and career admission processes").

At least half of high school counselors report a lack of resources for the example action items associated with "college and career exploration and selection processes," "college and career assessments," and "college affordability planning." Just 50% of high school counselors believe they have sufficient resources to "work with teachers to include elements of college applications such as personal statements into their courses and help them to write recommendations that highlight student assets" ("college and career exploration and selection processes"). Even fewer (45%) say they have sufficient resources to "provide test preparation that includes overcoming test anxiety, types of test questions and directions, how to make an educated guess, registration, scoring, and fee waivers" (college and career assessments") or using FAFSA data to monitor students' application progress (40%, "college affordability planning").

High school counselors at private schools clearly enjoy more resources to support implementing many of these interventions, especially when it comes to "college and career exploration and selection processes" and "academic planning for college and career" (see Table 20). Compared with only 48% of counselors at public high schools, counselors at private high schools (68%) are far more likely to rate their resource support for "college and career exploration and selection processes" as an eight or higher. In terms of "academic planning for college and career," counselors at private high schools are markedly more likely to believe they have the resources to support "ensuring that all students have a program of study that meets the requirements for admission to in-state universities or creates a pathway to industry and technology licenses and certifications" (85%) than are counselors at public high schools (68%).

While counselors at public high schools overall report lower levels of resource support than their counterparts at private high schools, counselors in disadvantaged public middle and high schools perhaps suffer the most from a lack of resources. These counselors — who work at schools in which 75% or more of the student body receive free or reduced-price lunch — see less resource support than counselors at more affluent schools for the example action items for "college and career admission processes" (65%, compared with 81% of counselors at affluent high schools), "academic planning for college and career" (62%, compared with 77%), and "college and career exploration and selection processes" (36%, compared with 50%). Table 21 shows that middle school counselors at disadvantaged schools also see disparities in resources, as only 36% (compared with 46% of counselors at more affluent middle schools) say they have sufficient resources to "collaborate with teachers to connect their course content to colleges and careers so students understand how their interests, talents, and abilities link to postsecondary goals" ("college aspirations").

Overall, middle school counselors, by comparison, rate their resource support for the example action items lower than do high school counselors. On the example intervention for "academic planning for college and career," which receives the highest ratings, only slightly more than half (52%) say they have sufficient resources to support "examining enrollment, performance, and completion data for rigorous honors and accelerated courses, and reviewing policies to ensure equity for all students."

Table 20: Proportion of High School Counselors Who Believe* the Resources Are Available to Support This Example Action Item in Their School

	High School %	Public School %	Private School %	High College Attendance (86%+) %	Lower College Attendance (up to 64%) %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (less than 25%) %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (75% +) %
Transition from high school to college enrollment: Helping 12th-grade students obtain the materials they need to transition from high school to college	77	76	86	82	75	80	78
College and career admission processes: Providing students with college application completion materials	75	73	85	82	69	81	65
Academic planning for college and career: Ensuring that all students have a program of study	71	68	85	78	60	77	62
Enrichment and extracurricular engagement: Developing policies and procedures to distribute scholarship applications	62	62	64	66	61	65	57
College aspirations: Collaborating with teachers and administrators to review policies for equity	59	57	71	59	52	57	59
Connect college and career exploration and selection processes: Working with teachers to include elements of college applications in course work	50	48	68	48	49	50	36
College and career assessments: Providing test preparation	45	44	56	44	43	39	42
College affordability planning: Using student FAFSA completion data to monitor application progress	40	42	30	32	45	31	54

*8–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = It is completely true that the resources are available to support this activity in my school.

See Appendix C for full text.

Table 21: Proportion of Middle School Counselors Who Believe* the Resources Are Available to Support This Example Action Item in Their School

	Middle School %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (less than 25%) %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (75% +) %
Academic planning for college and career: Examining enrollment, performance, and completion data for advanced courses to ensure equity	52	59	50
Enrichment and extracurricular engagement: Teaching students how to identify and research colleges, careers, and technical schools that match their interests and abilities	51	57	50
College and career exploration and selection processes: Providing students with information about different types of colleges and institutions	50	53	56
College and career assessments: Creating opportunities for all students to link assessments to college and career goals	44	50	38
College affordability planning: Providing early information to parents and students about ways to plan and pay for college	39	47	46
College aspirations: Collaborating with teachers to connect their course content to colleges	36	46	35

*8–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = It is completely true that the resources are available to support this activity in my school.

See Appendix C for full text.

Section 5: Success — Counselors' Evaluations of Their Success in Achieving the Eight Components

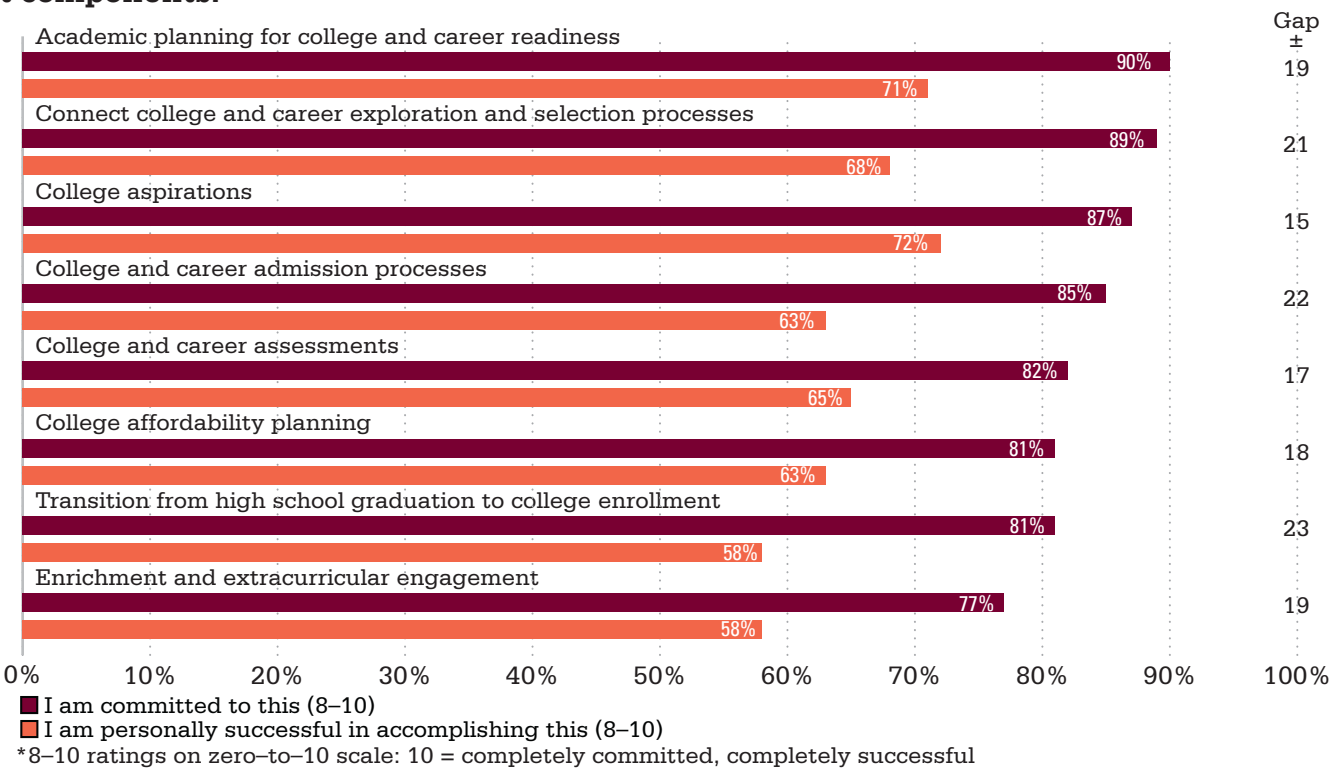
Counselors' Personal Success in Accomplishing the Eight Components

School counselors' personal success in achieving each of the eight components consistently falls short of their personal commitment. They see the largest disparity in helping students "transition from high school graduation to college enrollment" ("connect students to school and community resources to help ensure a successful transition from high school to college"); 81% rate their personal commitment to this component as an eight or higher, but only 58% (a difference of 23 points) rate their personal success as an eight or higher.

Table 22 shows that certain groups of counselors are more likely to believe they accomplish each of the components than other groups. For instance, high school counselors rate their personal success higher than do middle school counselors on seven of the eight components. Middle school counselors fall farthest behind their peers at high schools on "college affordability planning" (43% middle school, compared with 71% high school) and "college and career admission processes" (47% middle school, compared with 69% high school). Of note, these are the two components for which middle school counselors report needing the most additional training in comparison with high school counselors, suggesting that at least in the case of middle school counselors, training and success go hand in hand.

School counselors in private schools and high schools with better graduation rates generally are more likely to say they are successful in achieving the eight components (see Table 22). Most dramatically, counselors at private schools (90%) are far more likely than those at public schools (70%) to say they successfully accomplish "college aspirations: Build[ing] a college-going culture by nurturing in students the confidence to aspire to college, maintain high expectations by providing adequate supports and conveying the conviction that all students can succeed in college."

Counselors see major gaps between their commitment and success in accomplishing the eight components.



*8–10 ratings on zero–to–10 scale: 10 = completely committed, completely successful

Table 22: Proportion of Counselors Who Say They Personally Are Successful* in Accomplishing Each of the Eight Components

	All Counselors %	Middle School %	High School %	Public School %	Private School %	High School Counselors Only	
						High College Attendance (86%+) %	Lower College Attendance (up to 64%) %
College aspirations	72	63	75	70	90	79	67
Academic planning for college and career readiness	71	61	75	70	86	78	63
Connect college and career exploration and selection processes	68	63	70	68	73	74	60
College and career assessments	65	60	67	64	73	70	59
College and career admission processes	63	47	69	62	78	75	62
College affordability planning	63	43	71	62	72	68	70
Transition from high school graduation to college enrollment	58	49	62	59	57	67	60
Enrichment and extracurricular engagement	58	61	57	58	58	64	50

*8–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale, 10 = I am extremely successful in accomplishing this component.

See Appendix C for full text.

Comparing Administrators' and Counselors' Perceptions of the Success of Counselors in Accomplishing the Eight Components

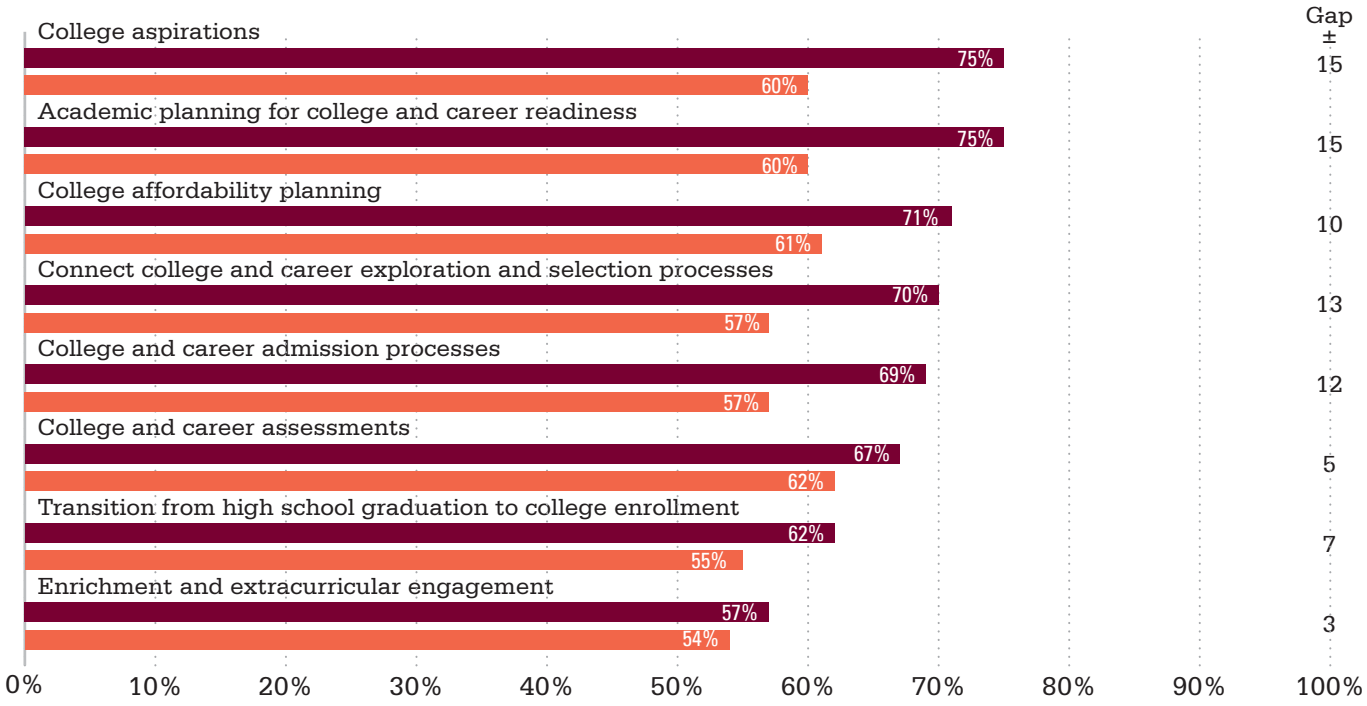
Substantial disparities exist between how counselors and administrators rate counselors' success in accomplishing the eight components. Whether because they are using different standards to gauge success or because administrators simply are unaware of the work counselors are doing in their schools, counselors clearly see themselves as more successful than do administrators (see figures below).

The largest discrepancies between high school counselors and high school administrators are on "college aspirations" and "academic planning for college and career readiness," the two components on which high school counselors see themselves as the most successful. On both components, fully three-quarters (75%) of high school counselors rate themselves as an eight or higher on personal success. In contrast, just 60% of high school administrators say the counselors in their schools are successful (as indicated by an eight or higher) at accomplishing both "college aspirations" and "academic planning for college and career readiness." High school counselors and administrators agree that counselors are the least successful at "enrichment and extracurricular engagement." This is the component that high school counselors (57%) and administrators (54%) are the least likely to say counselors successfully accomplish.

Compared with high school administrators and counselors, even larger disparities exist between middle school administrators' and counselors' views of counselors' success in accomplishing the eight components. As the figure below shows, middle school administrators and counselors differ most dramatically on their perceptions of counselors' success on "college and career exploration and selection processes." Whereas 63% of middle school counselors say they personally are successful in accomplishing this goal, just 36% of middle school administrators say the counselors in their schools are successful (a difference of 27 points).

Taken together, these findings suggest that one potential barrier to administrators' and counselors' working together to ensure that all students graduate from the 12th grade college and career ready — a central goal for both administrators and counselors — might stem from differing views on what constitutes success and what counselors accomplish in their efforts to achieve this goal.

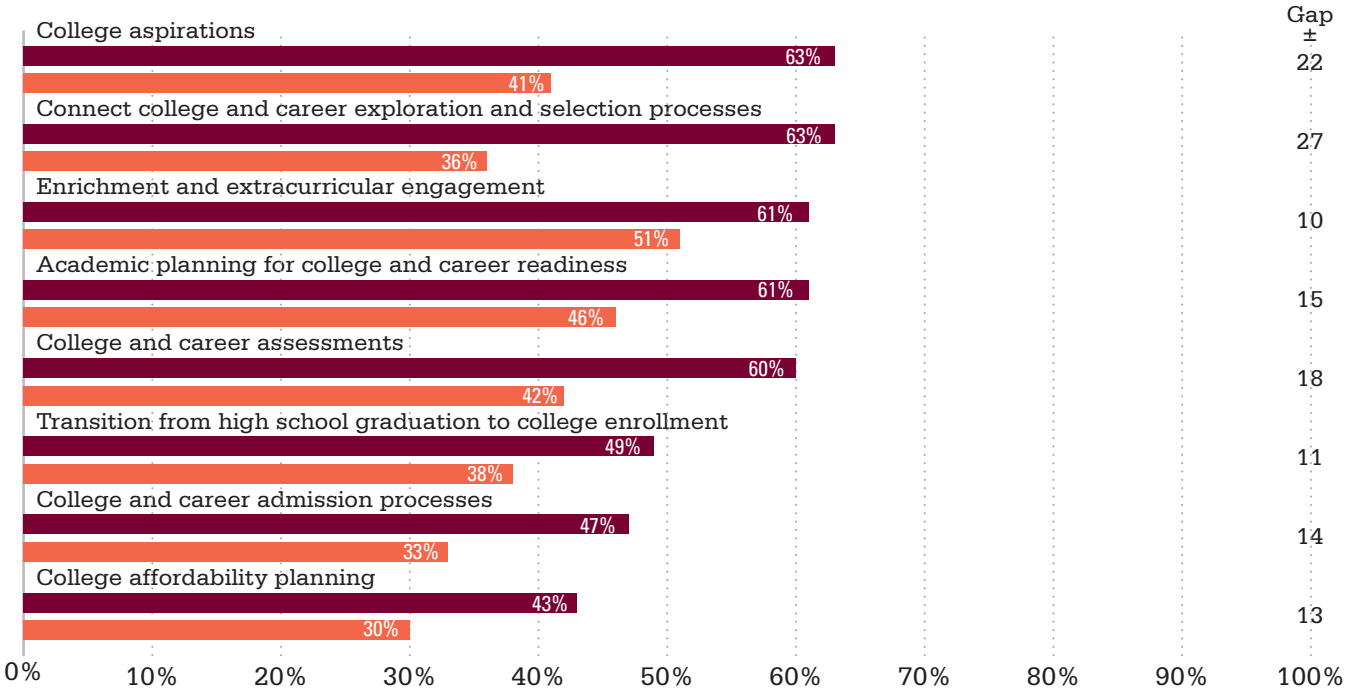
High schools: How successful have you/your counselors been in accomplishing each component?



Proportions rating themselves/their school's counselors as very successful* in each area: HS counselors HS administrators

*8–10 ratings on zero–to–10 scale: 10 = completely successful in accomplishing this component

Middle schools: How successful have you/your counselors been in accomplishing each component?



Proportions rating themselves/their school's counselors as very successful* in each area: MS counselors MS administrators

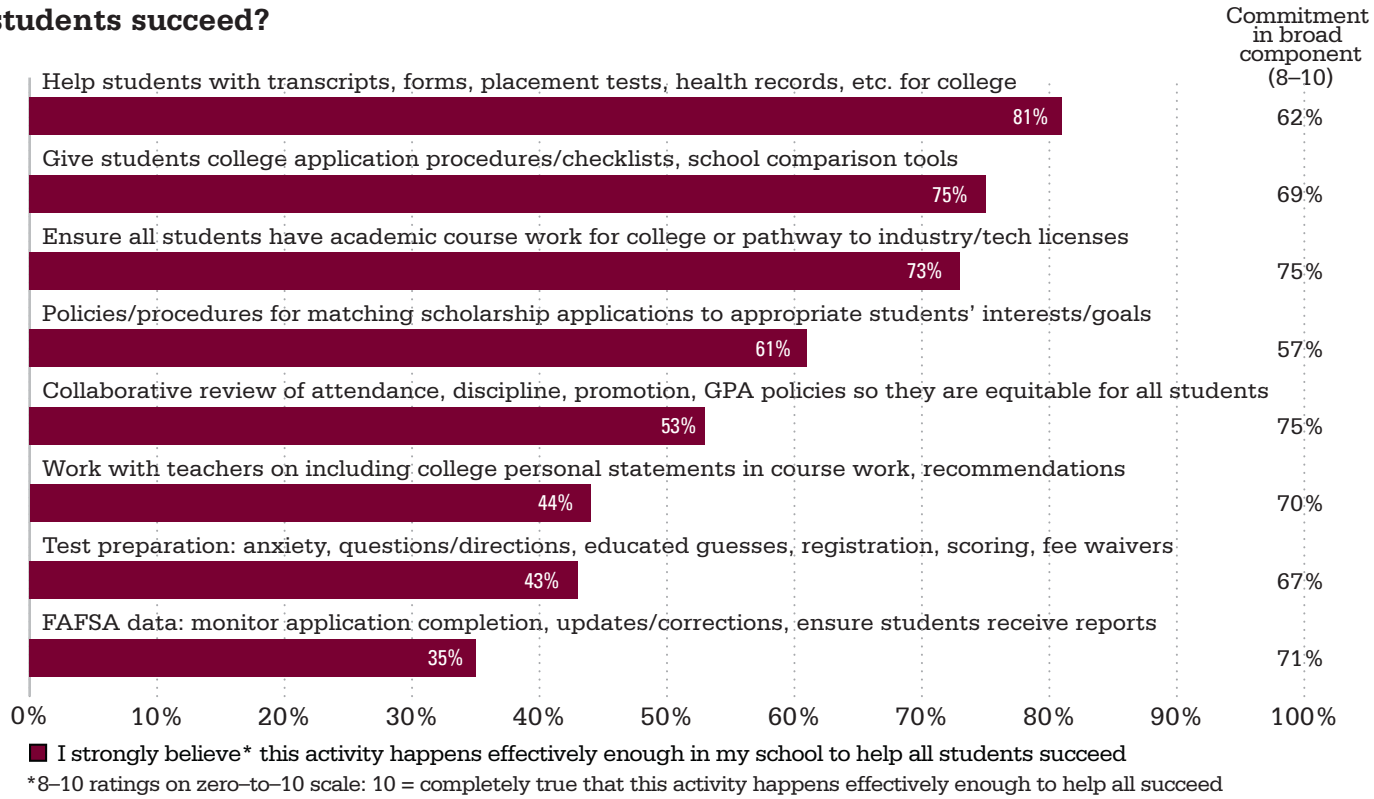
*8–10 ratings on zero–to–10 scale: 10 = completely successful in accomplishing this component

Counselors' Ratings of the Degree to Which Each Example Action Item Happens in Schools Effectively Enough to Help All Students Succeed

Compared with their personal success in accomplishing the broad descriptions of the eight components, high school counselors report even greater variation in the degree to which each example activity happens effectively enough in their school to help all students succeed. As the figure below shows, high school counselors report the greatest success in their school when it comes to "helping 12th-grade students request final transcripts, fill out forms, take placement tests, and gather health records and IEP information as needed as they make the transition from graduation to college." Four in 5 (81%) rate their school's success on this activity as an eight or higher on a zero-to-10 scale — a proportion 19 points higher than high school counselors (62%), who rate themselves as personally successful in achieving the associated broad component, "transition from high school to college enrollment."

Although counselors consider their schools as the most effective with the example activity for helping students "transition from high school to college enrollment," fewer than half as many believe their schools are effective enough in the example action for "college affordability planning." Just 1 in 3 (35%) rates their school as an eight or higher in "using student FAFSA completion data to monitor application completion to make application updates and corrections and to ensure students receive and review aid reports," while 71% rate themselves as successful in achieving the broader component. Given that this example activity similarly scored the lowest in counselors' personal commitment, training, and resources available, this clearly is the most problematic example strategy of the eight components. However, as we have seen in commitment, training, and resources, high school counselors at disadvantaged schools are ready to lead the way, showing other counselors and schools how to use student FAFSA data more effectively. Table 23 shows that more than half (54%, a difference of 21 points) of high school counselors at schools where at least 75% of the student

High school counselors: Does this activity happen effectively enough in your school to help all students succeed?



*8–10 ratings on zero–to–10 scale: 10 = completely true that this activity happens effectively enough to help all succeed

body receive free or reduced-price lunch rate their school's effectiveness highly.

Other challenging activities for high schools include the example action items associated with "college and career exploration and selection processes," and "college and career assessments" — both of which receive ratings of eight or higher from fewer than half of high school counselors. In terms of "working with teachers to include elements of college applications such as personal statements into their courses and helping them to write recommendations that highlight student assets," just 44% say this happens in their school effectively enough to help all students succeed. However, Table 23 shows that counselors at private high schools (60%) are far more likely to believe that this happens effectively enough in their schools than are their public school counterparts (41%). A similarly low proportion of high school counselors (43%) believe that their schools are highly effective in "providing test preparation that includes overcoming test anxiety, types of test questions and directions, how to make an educated guess, registration, scoring, and fee waivers." Again, counselors at private high schools (59%) are more likely than counselors at public high schools (40%) to believe this happens effectively enough in their schools.

Table 23 also shows that counselors at high schools with lower rates of college attendance are less likely than their counterparts at high schools with higher rates of college attendance to believe the example item for "academic planning for college and career" happens effectively enough at their schools to succeed. Compared with 81% of counselors in high schools with high rates of attendance, only 65% of counselors at schools with lower rates of attendance say

Table 23: Proportion of High School Counselors Who Believe Each Example Action Item Happens Effectively Enough in Their School to Help All Students Succeed*

	High School %	Public School %	Private School %	High College Attendance (86%+) %	Lower College Attendance (up to 64%) %	Free or Reduced-Price (2 times) Lunch (less than 25%) %	Free or Reduced-Price (2 times) Lunch (75% +) %
Transition from high school to college enrollment: Helping 12th-grade students obtain the materials they need to transition from high school to college	81	80	88	81	79	83	76
College and career admission processes: Providing students with college application completion materials	75	72	91	78	70	78	66
Academic planning for college and career: Ensuring that all students have a program of study	73	72	85	81	65	78	63
Enrichment and extracurricular engagement: Developing policies and procedures to distribute scholarship applications	61	61	62	60	61	61	56
College aspirations: Collaborating with teachers and administrators to review policies for equity	53	52	63	54	49	51	52
Connect college and career exploration and selection processes: Working with teachers to include elements of college applications in course work	44	41	60	42	40	40	44
College and career assessments: Providing test preparation	43	40	59	40	39	36	39
College affordability planning: Using student FAFSA completion data to monitor application progress	35	36	26	25	37	21	54

*8–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale, 10 = completely true that this happens effectively enough in my school to help all students succeed

See Appendix C for full text.

Table 24: Proportion of Middle School Counselors Who Believe Each Example Action Item Happens Effectively Enough in Their School to Help All Students Succeed*

	Middle School %	Free or Reduced-Price (2 times) Lunch (less than 25%) %	Free or Reduced-Price (2 times) Lunch (75% +) %
Academic planning for college and career: Examining enrollment, performance, and completion data for advanced courses to ensure equity	50	53	48
College and career assessments: Creating opportunities for all students to link assessments to college and career goals	46	55	42
Connect college and career exploration and selection processes: Providing students with information about different types of colleges and institutions	44	47	45
Enrichment and Extracurricular Engagement: Teaching students how to identify and research colleges, careers, and technical schools that match their interests and abilities	42	49	40
College aspirations: Collaborating with teachers to connect their course content to colleges	32	38	28
College affordability planning: Providing early information to parents and students about ways to plan and pay for college	31	38	28

*8–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale, 10 = completely true that this happens effectively enough in my school to help all students succeed

See Appendix C for full text.

that their school "ensures that all students have a program of study that meets the requirements for admission to in-state universities or creates a pathway to industry and technology licenses and certifications." This relationship suggests that ensuring that students have a program of study that meets college requirements is one potential avenue for schools to increase rates of college attendance.

There is a great deal of room for improvement in how effectively each of the example activities for the eight components happens in middle schools (see Table 24). Even on the highest-rated example activity ("academic planning for college and career"), only half (50%) of middle school counselors say that it happens effectively enough in their schools to help all students succeed: "examining enrollment, performance and completion data for rigorous, honors, and accelerated courses, and reviewing policies to ensure equity for all students."

Middle school counselors report the lowest levels of success for the example items for "college aspirations" and "college affordability planning." Just 1 in 3 (32%) middle school counselors says that "collaborating with teachers to connect their course content to colleges and careers so students understand how their interests, talents, and abilities link to postsecondary goals" happens effectively enough in their school to help all students succeed. Likewise, just 31% say the same for "providing early information to parents and students about ways to plan and pay for college, including information about grants, scholarships, loans, work-study, and saving plans."

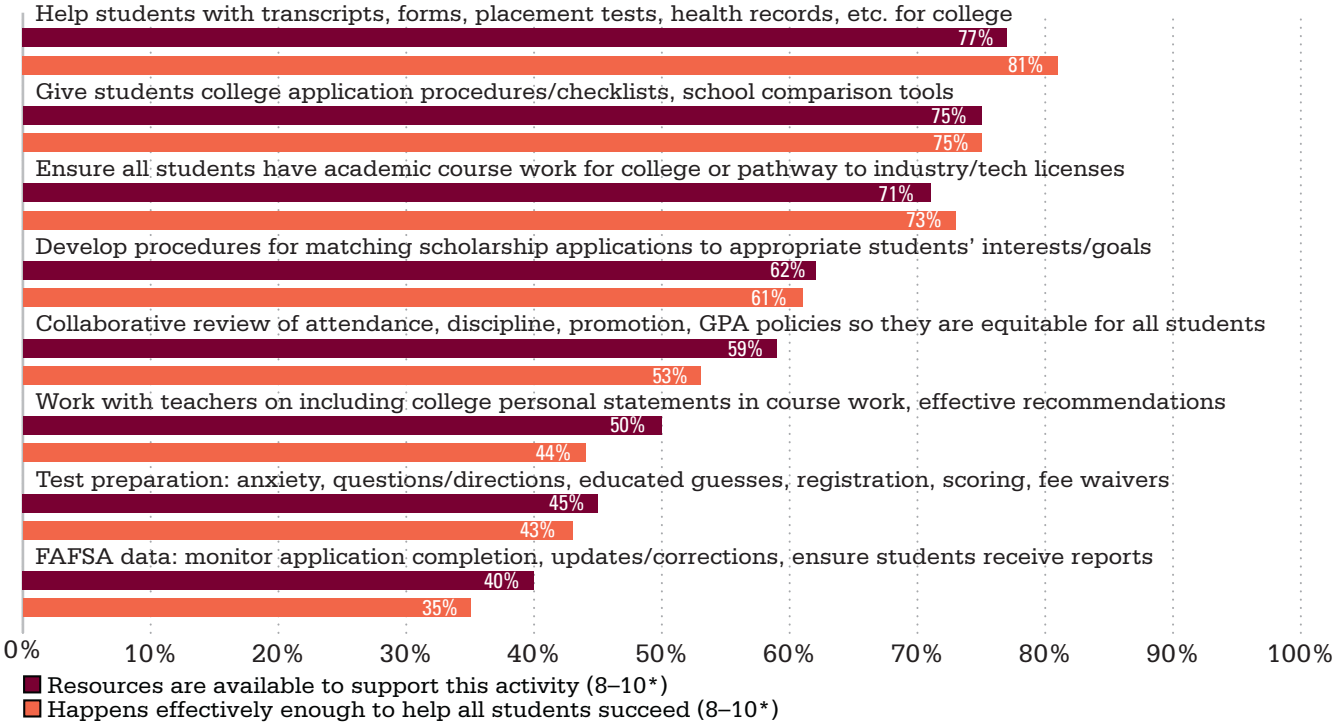
A Strong Correlation Between School Resources and High School Success in Achieving the Example Action Items

The availability of resources that schools have for supporting the example strategies associated with the eight components is strongly related to high schools' success in ensuring that the activities happen effectively enough to help all students succeed (see figure below). For each example activity, as more high school counselors report sufficient resources, more high school counselors also say that the example strategy happens effectively in their school. For example, high school counselors see the lowest resources to support using FAFSA data to monitor student application data (40%) and also see the lowest success (35%) on this strategy. Likewise, high school counselors see the most resources for helping students request transcripts and other forms to transition from high school to college (77%), just as they see the greatest success on this strategy (81%).

Furthermore, this relationship bears out after controlling for high school counselors' commitment, training, administrative

support, and district support. In regression analyses using counselors' mean ratings of personal commitment, training, administrative support, district support, and resources to predict school success on the example strategies, resources are the strongest and most highly significant predictor. This finding suggests that providing sufficient resources for each of the example activities could serve as an important way to support school counselors' efforts to ensure that all students graduate from high school ready to succeed in college and career.

High school counselors: Availability of resources and success in helping students with each activity



*8–10 ratings on zero–to–10 scale: 10 = completely true (resources are available, happens effectively enough to help all students succeed)

Section 6: Counselors' Evaluations of All of the Eight Components and Example Activities as One Overall Approach to Counseling Students

After completing all the questions about their commitment, support, success, training, and resources for the eight components and example activities individually, counselors were asked to think of the components and example activities as one overall approach to counseling students. With this overall approach in mind, counselors rated the degree to which a series of statements were completely true for them.

The figure below illustrates that the counselors' greatest assets for achieving this approach are their commitment, data analysis skills, prioritization and ability to implement equity,[4] and training and knowledge. At least half of all counselors rate themselves as an eight or higher for each of these aspects, and middle school counselors do the same with the exception of their training and knowledge. Nevertheless, there is substantial room for improvement on each aspect, as more than one-third of counselors rate themselves less than an eight on each of the aspects.

The counselors' biggest challenges involve a substantial time commitment and management of other people. The lowest-scoring statements among counselors overall revolve around collaborating and working with parents, teachers, and outside organizations. At the bottom of the list, fewer than 1 in 3 high school (32%) and middle school (30%) counselors say they intentionally collaborate with outside organizations and businesses to support these types of interventions.

Overall Evaluations of Commitment, Training, Accountability, and Removal of Barriers

The counselors' greatest strength is their commitment. Sixty-five percent of high school counselors and 59% of middle school counselors see themselves as committed to the approach outlined in these items, as indicated by a rating of eight or higher on a zero-to-10 scale. The most committed counselors are in more challenged schools (see Table 25). Compared with counselors at schools in which fewer than 25% of students are on free or reduced-price lunch (59%), 73% (14 points higher) of counselors at schools with at least 75% of students on free or reduced-price lunch rate their personal commitment as an eight or higher. Similarly, counselors at schools in which at least 75% of students are minorities (72%) are more likely to say they personally are committed than counselors at schools in which fewer than 25% of students are minorities (58%). Of interest, school administrators (76%) are more likely than counselors (63%) to say that they personally are committed to the approach outlined in these items.

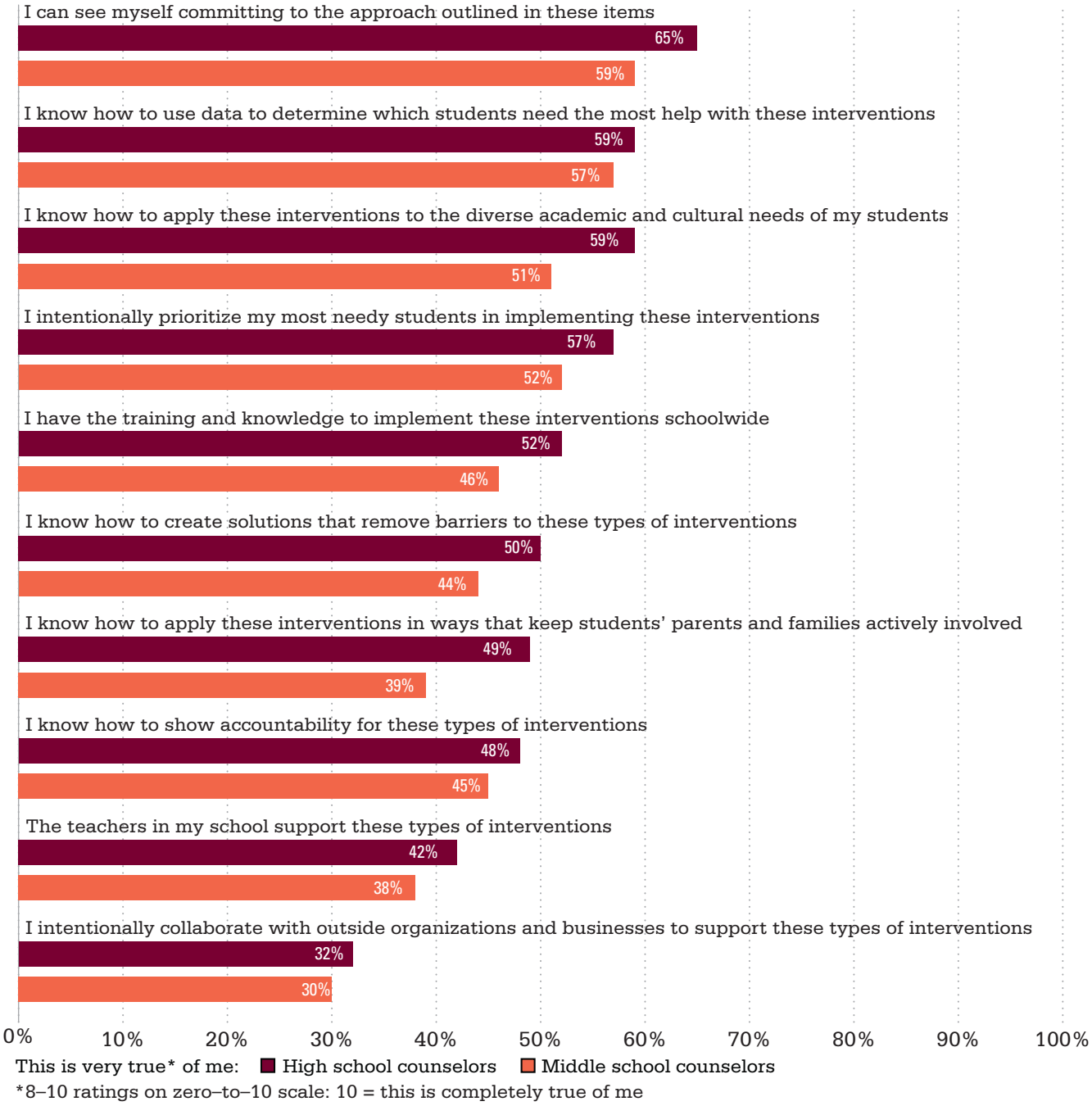
Only half (50%) of all counselors say they have sufficient training and knowledge to implement these interventions schoolwide. As Table 25 shows, similar proportions (48% to 55%) of counselors report their training as an eight or higher across a variety of subgroups. Administrators agree as well, with 54% saying that the counselors in their schools have the training and knowledge to implement these interventions schoolwide. The converse of this is that half of counselors say they need more training and knowledge to successfully adopt the eight components as their overall approach to counseling students.

About half of school counselors also need assistance in solving problems related to implementing the eight components approach. Only 48% of school counselors (50% high school, 44% middle school) say they know how to create solutions that remove barriers to these types of interventions. Similar to counselors' ratings of their training and knowledge, there is great consistency across subgroups on their perceived ability to create solutions and remove barriers. High school and middle school administrators, however, do not see the same degree of problem-solving abilities. While 57% of high school administrators say the counselors in their schools know how to create solutions and remove barriers, only 42% of middle school administrators say the same.

Table 25 shows that in addition to needing further training on how to implement these interventions schoolwide and remove barriers, counselors need further training in how to show accountability for this approach. Fewer than half (47%) of counselors overall say they "know how to show accountability for these types of interventions." Counselors in more challenged schools are more confident in their ability to

4. Equity questions related to counselors' overall evaluations are explored in greater detail in Section 7.

Counselors' evaluations of the eight components and strategies as one overall approach to counseling students



*8–10 ratings on zero–to–10 scale: 10 = this is completely true of me

Table 25: Overall Evaluation of Counselors on the Eight Components and Example Action Items as One Overall Approach to Counseling

	Committed to This Approach* %	Have Training and Knowledge to Implement* %	Know How to Show Accountability for These Interventions* %	Know How to Create Solutions That Remove Barriers to These Interventions* %
All counselors	63	50	47	48
Middle school counselors	59	46	45	44
High school counselors	65	52	48	50
Type of School				
All public	63	50	47	48
Urban public	66	51	49	51
Suburban public	60	48	47	47
Rural public	62	52	43	47
All private	60	51	51	49
Percentage of student population that is minority				
0 to 24%	58	48	42	45
25 to 49%	62	51	47	47
50 to 74%	65	51	51	52
75% or more	72	52	52	52
Number of students in caseload				
Less than 250	65	51	50	50
250–349	62	52	47	47
350–449	63	49	46	47
450 or more	63	49	46	49
Percentage of student population on free or reduced-price lunch				
0 to 24%	59	48	44	47
25 to 49%	60	50	45	45
50 to 74%	64	51	47	50
75% or more	73	53	54	53
Title I				
Schoolwide	67	51	47	49
Not schoolwide	57	50	45	48
College attendance rates (high school counselors only)				
High college attendance (86% or more)	65	55	51	53
Lower college attendance (64% or less)	62	51	43	52
Administrators				
All administrators	76	54	NA	53
Middle school administrators	72	50	NA	42
High school administrators	77	55	NA	57

*For each statement, 8–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = This is completely true of me/counselors in my school.

show accountability, however. Compared with counselors at schools in which fewer than 1 in 4 of the student population is a minority (42%), counselors at schools with at least 75% of students being minorities are more likely to say they know how to show accountability (52%). Counselors at schools with higher proportions of students on free and reduced-price lunch (54%) also are more likely to know how to show accountability than are their counterparts at schools with fewer than 25% of students on free or reduced-price lunch (44%).

Collaborations with Others in Adopting the Eight Components and Example Strategies as One Overall Approach

The greatest challenges for counselors in adopting the eight components and example activities as one overall approach to counseling students require not just efforts on the part of counselors, but also the involvement and support of families, teachers, and the community. As noted previously, counselors are the least likely to say that statements involving collaborations with others are true. Furthermore, these collaborations prove even more difficult for middle school counselors.

Table 26: Overall Evaluation of Counselors' Collaborations in Applying the Eight Components and Example Action Items

	Know How to Keep Students' Parents and Families Involved* %	Teachers Support These Interventions* %	Collaborate with Outside Groups to Match Programs and Services* %
All counselors	47	41	31
Middle school counselors	39	38	30
High school counselors	49	42	32
Type of school			
All public	46	39	32
Urban public	45	42	35
Suburban public	48	39	29
Rural public	46	36	32
All private	54	53	26
Percentage of student population that is minority			
0 to 24%	45	37	29
25 to 49%	49	36	30
50 to 74%	44	41	33
75% or more	46	44	38
Number of students in caseload			
Less than 250	50	46	36
250–349	48	41	30
350–449	45	40	31
450 or more	44	37	29
Percentage of student population on free or reduced-price lunch			
0 to 24%	48	37	25
25 to 49%	43	36	32
50 to 74%	46	42	33
75% or more	47	42	39
Title I			
Schoolwide	45	40	33
Not schoolwide	47	34	33
College attendance rates (high school counselors only)			
High college attendance (86% or more)	59	42	33
Lower college attendance (64% or less)	41	35	34
Administrators			
All administrators	N/A	N/A	39
Middle school administrators	N/A	N/A	31
High school administrators	N/A	N/A	41

*For each statement, 8–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = This is completely true of me/counselors in my school.

For example, just half (49%) of high school counselors and only 39% of middle school counselors say that they know how to apply these interventions in ways that keep students' parents and families actively involved (see Table 26). Family and parent involvement appears to be an especially large problem not only at middle schools but also in schools with lower rates of college attendance. Compared with high schools with higher rates of attendance (59%), just 41% (a difference of 18 points) of counselors at high schools with lower rates of college attendance say that they know how to keep parents and families actively involved.

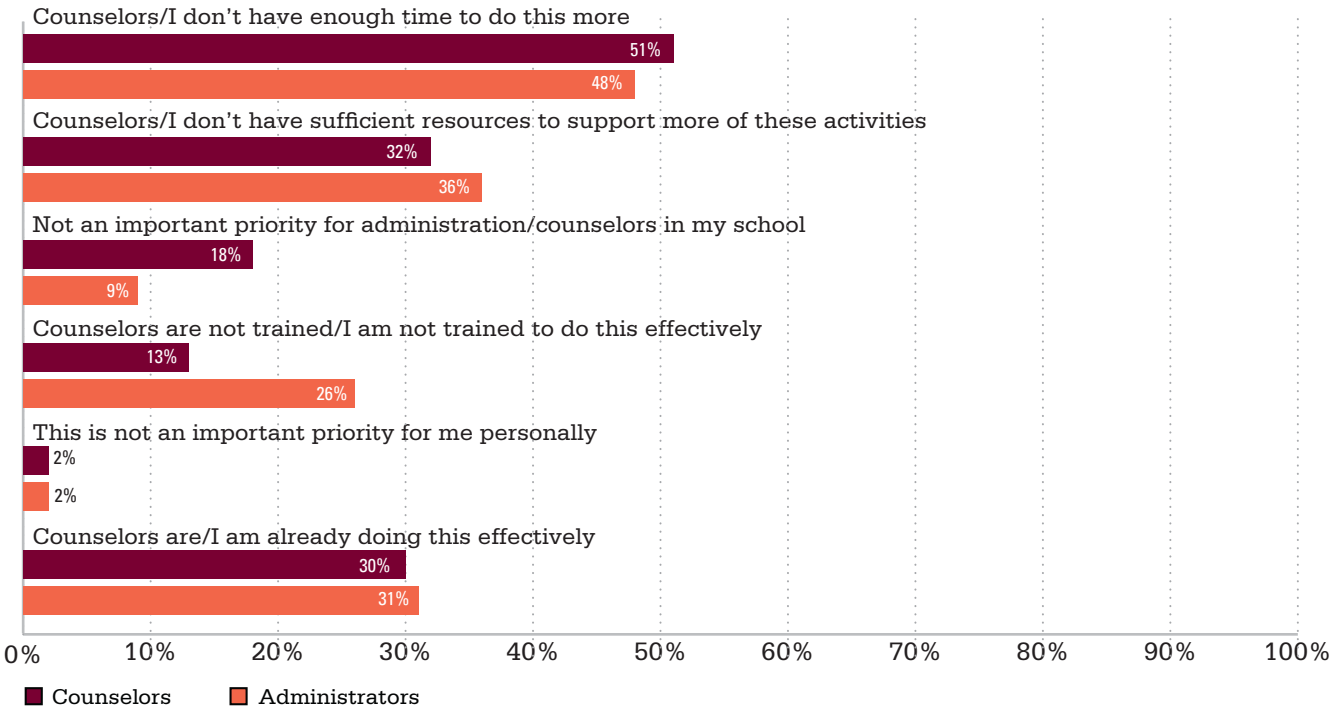
Counselors also do not see much support from the teachers in their schools for counselors adopting this approach to counseling students. Only about 2 in 5 (42% high school, 38% middle school) counselors say that the teachers in their schools support these types of interventions. However, as we saw earlier with respect to counselors' success in working with teachers to incorporate elements of college applications into their courses, counselors in private schools seem to have a better working relationship with their teaching colleagues. More than half (53%) of counselors in private schools say that teachers support them in these interventions, while only 39% of counselors in public schools say the same.

The most challenging and perhaps most multidimensional aspect asked of counselors involves collaborating with potential service providers outside their schools. Only 31% of counselors (32% high school, 30% middle school) say that they "intentionally collaborate with governmental, community, and nonprofit organizations and with businesses to match their programs and services to support these types of interventions." Counselors in more challenged schools seem to have found a way to work more effectively with outside groups. Those in schools with at least 75% minority students (38%, compared with 29% in schools with fewer than 25% minorities) and counselors in schools with 75% or more of students on free or reduced-price lunch (39%, compared with 25% in schools with fewer than 25% of students on free or reduced-price lunch) are more likely to say that they collaborate with these organizations and businesses to match services to interventions.

Barriers to Adopting the Eight Components and Example Strategies as One Overall Approach

As discussed earlier, school counselors' level of success in accomplishing the eight components and their example

Which one/two of these barriers pose the greatest challenge for you/your counselors in trying to take this approach?



strategies falls short of their personal commitment. This survey gave school counselors and administrators the opportunity to share their perspectives on the biggest obstacles counselors face in their efforts to adopt the eight components as their overall approach to counseling students. The results reveal that, for the most part, counselors' and administrators' views are very much in line. While about 3 in 10 (30%) counselors and administrators (31%) say that their counselors already are doing this effectively, the remaining counselors cite time and resources as their greatest obstacles (see above figure).

> "I know this is what I want to do, I'm passionate about it, [and] my principal or administrators are committed. But it doesn't happen in my school. I wish it could, but it's not happening. The missing ingredients are time and resources."
>
> — High school conselor, Charlotte

Time is the largest barrier to counselors' using the eight components of a college and career readiness framework successfully and effectively. School counselors say that they simply do not have enough of it. Just about half (51%) of schools counselors say that one of the greatest challenges for them in trying to take this approach to counseling is that they do not have enough time to do it more (see above figure). High school administrators agree, as 53% say that one of the biggest challenges for counselors in their schools is that they do not have enough time (see Table 27). Middle school administrators (32%), in contrast, are markedly less likely to say that time is their counselors' greatest barrier. Not surprisingly, counselors with larger caseloads are more likely to feel the burden of too little time; 59% of school counselors with at least 450 students say they do not have sufficient time, while just 40% of counselors with fewer than 250 students say the same.

Resources pose the next greatest challenge for counselors, as one-third of counselors (32%) and administrators (36%) say that they do not have sufficient resources to support more of these activities. Counselors in private schools (21%) are less likely than those in public schools (33%) to see a lack of resources as a problem. Of course, it should be noted that counselors in private schools (46%) also are far more likely than counselors in public schools (28%) to say that they already are effective in taking this approach.

School counselors and administrators start to differ, however, when it comes to personalizing the barrier. In short, administrators are more likely to see the barrier as coming from the counselors themselves than are counselors, while counselors are more likely than administrators to fault the administration. By 2 to 1, administrators (26%) are more likely to say that counselors are not trained to take this approach effectively than are counselors themselves (13%). Even more dramatically, while only 2% of school counselors and school administrators alike say that this is not a priority for them personally, fully 18% of school counselors say that it is not a priority for the administration at their schools and 9% of administrators say that it is not a priority for counselors.

While a lack of time (47%) and resources (35%) remain the greatest challenges to counselors in disadvantaged schools, a lack of administrative support also seems to be a barrier. Counselors in schools with at least 75% of the students on free or reduced-price lunch (23%) are more likely to say that this is not a priority for their administrators than counselors in schools with fewer than 25% of students on free or reduced-price lunch (14%).

Table 27: Top One or Two Barriers That Pose the Greatest Challenge for School Counselors in Taking the College and Career Readiness Approach to Counseling

	Lack of Time %	Lack of Resources %	Not Administration Priority %	Lack of Training %	Not Counselor Priority %	Already Effective %
All counselors	51	32	18	13	2	30
Middle school counselors	52	33	26	16	4	20
High school counselors	50	32	15	12	2	33
Type of school						
All public	52	33	18	14	2	28
Urban public	52	32	17	13	3	29
Suburban public	50	31	21	14	3	29
Rural public	54	33	16	12	2	27
All private	37	21	17	11	4	46
Percentage of student population that is minority						
0 to 24%	55	34	16	13	2	27
25 to 49%	54	34	20	12	3	26
50 to 74%	57	32	19	14	1	27
75% or more	45	32	20	14	3	30
Number of students in caseload						
Less than 250	40	30	16	12	3	39
250–349	49	34	17	14	2	30
350–449	55	30	18	13	3	28
450 or more	59	34	20	14	2	22
Percentage of student population on free or reduced-price lunch						
0 to 24%	52	30	14	15	3	32
25 to 49%	56	36	20	12	2	24
50 to 74%	54	32	18	13	2	28
75% or more	47	35	23	15	2	25
Title I						
Schoolwide	53	33	18	13	2	27
Not schoolwide	51	34	21	12	2	32
College attendance rates (high school counselors only)						
High college attendance (86% or more)	48	27	12	10	2	39
Lower college attendance (64% or less)	55	36	17	13	1	28
Administrators						
All administrators	48	36	2	26	9	31
Middle school administrators	32	40	2	31	10	33
High school administrators	53	35	2	24	8	30

Section 7: A Broader Look at the Eight Components Overall and in Challenged Schools

The chart on the following page offers a high-altitude view of the broader findings of this survey on the eight components and the specific example action items. This chart can be viewed as a road map illuminating potential strategies for counselors' role in improving student achievement and to help identify areas where counselors are well supported in their efforts to help students complete the 12th grade ready to succeed in college and their careers. The chart also helps identify the roadblocks and barriers that challenge counselors in their efforts to help all students achieve success. Please note that this chart and similar charts that follow it include high school counselors only.

The first thing to note in the chart is the dark blue column to the far left indicating that most high school counselors express strong personal commitment to each of the eight components. For each of the components, at least 3 in 4 counselors rate themselves as an eight or higher on a zero-to-10 scale, on which a 10 means they are completely committed and a zero means they are not at all committed. High school counselors are the most personally committed to advancing students' academic planning for college and career readiness (92%), providing early and ongoing information about college and career exploration and selection processes (91%), and ensuring that students and families have an early and ongoing understanding of the college- and career-admission processes (90%). Although middle school counselors are not shown in the chart, they also are strongly committed, albeit less so than their high school counterparts. As do high school counselors, middle school counselors say they are most personally committed to academic planning for college and career readiness (83%), and to connecting college and career exploration and selection processes.

The lighter blue and lighter red squares in the third column indicate that lower proportions of counselors feel that they have achieved some of the eight components. Particularly low components include transitioning students from high school graduation to college enrollment (62%) and enrichment and extracurricular engagement (57%).

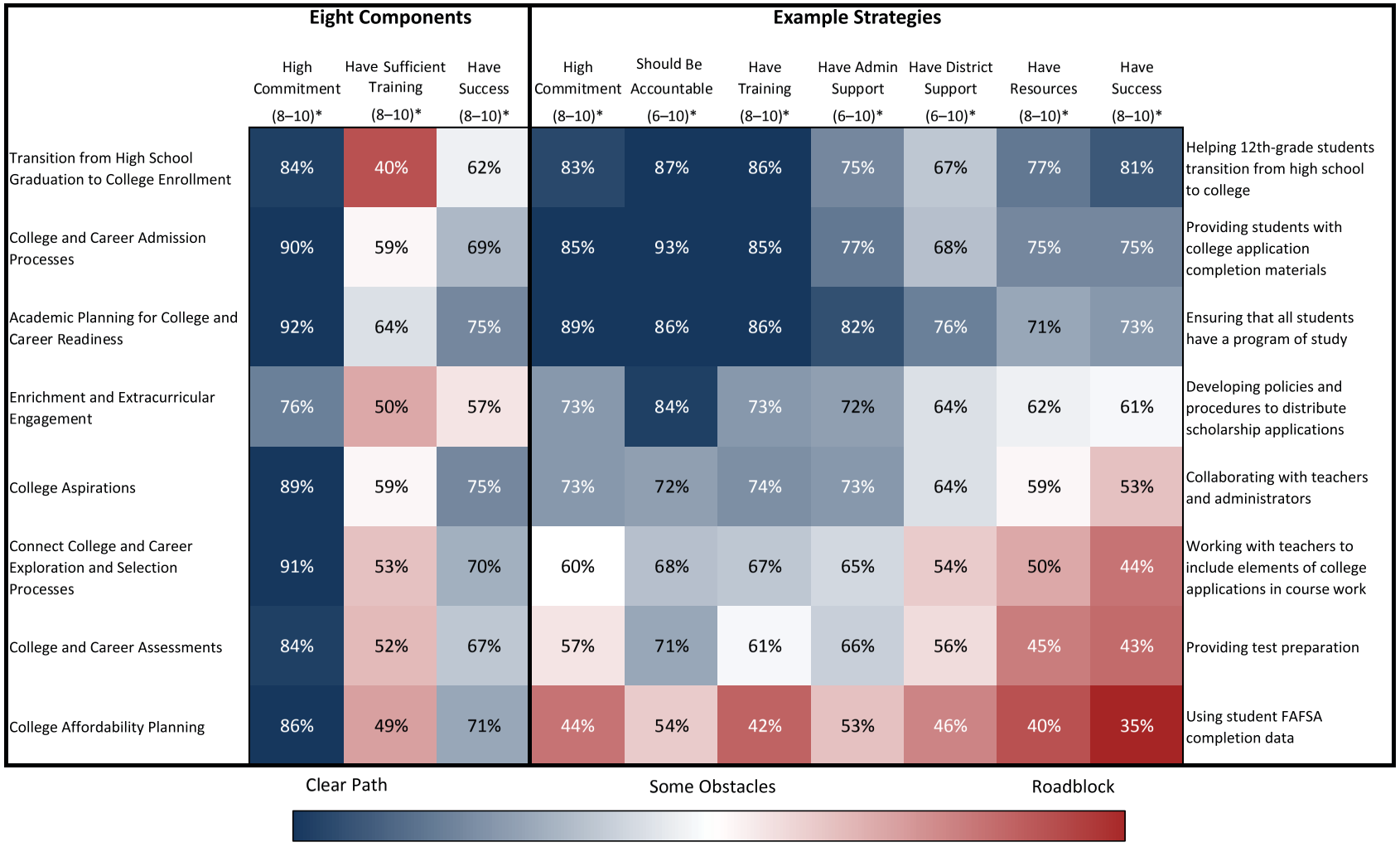
The second column gives the results of a question about training. The lighter and darker red areas indicate large proportions of counselors expressing a desire for greater training. On 7 of the 8 components, fewer than 60% of high school counselors say that they have sufficient knowledge and do not need further training. The remaining counselors either say that they have some knowledge but need additional training or have little-to-no knowledge and need extensive training. For example, only 49% of high school counselors say they have sufficient knowledge and do not need further training when it comes to college affordability planning — leaving 51% of counselors saying they need at least some additional training. Similarly, just 53% of counselors say they have sufficient knowledge and training on connecting college and career exploration and selection processes (and 47% say they need at least some additional training). The finding that 59% of counselors say they have sufficient knowledge in building a college-going culture (college aspirations) may reflect less a gap in counselor education than an expression of how central counselors view college aspirations to their mission and, hence, their desire to further their training in this area.

Moving toward the right side of the rectangle, starting with the fourth column (commitment), we begin to see how counselors evaluate examples of specific strategies for achieving the eight components. Each row now corresponds to the specific strategy (listed on the right) associated with its parent broad component (listed on the left).

One of the first things to catch the eye is the varying shades of red in the row for college-affordability planning and the specific strategy of using student FAFSA data to monitor students' application progress and to review aid reports. This component proves to be particularly problematic for counselors, especially with respect to the specific strategy. As the chart shows, of all eight components, high school counselors express the lowest levels of personal commitment (44%) to using student FAFSA data, as well as the lowest rates of success (35%), administrative support (53%), district support (46%), and resources (40%). As will be discussed in the next section, however, counselors in disadvantaged schools are ready to set an example for their peers in how to use student FAFSA data, as they report higher levels of commitment (72%), training (57%), resources (54%), administrative (64%) and district (57%) support, and success (54%).

At the center of the rectangle are counselors' perceptions of the support they have from their administrators and school districts in implementing the specific strategies for the eight components. It is markedly clear from this comparison that school counselors see their own administrators as more

Overview of All High School Counselors



*Ratings on zero-to-10 scales: in each case, 10 = most positive response; full descriptions in Appendix A

supportive than their school districts of their efforts to engage in each activity. Counselors are correct to evaluate school administrators favorably, as this year's survey of school administrators also reveals high support and commitment for school counselors' efforts to adopt the eight components and specific strategies. It also is important to note here that while counselors in disadvantaged schools generally see their administrators as supportive of the specific strategies of the eight components, they feel a lack of district support on several key elements. For example, counselors in disadvantaged schools are less likely than their peers at advantaged schools to believe they have support from their district to ensure that all students have a program of study that meets requirements for admission to college or creates a pathway to industry and technology licenses and certifications (71% compared with 86%) or to help 12th-grade students request the necessary forms and transcripts as they make the transition from graduation to college (61% compared with 71%).

While commitment, training, and support undoubtedly are all important for counselors' success, resources appear to be the most closely associated with success. Examining the rectangle reveals that the two columns most closely aligned in terms of color are resources available to support the strategies and high school counselors' evaluation of the degree to which each activity happens effectively enough in their school to help all students succeed. In fact, resources proved to have the strongest relationship with success even after controlling for all these other factors.

When asked about the largest barriers to adopting the eight components, along with their specific strategies as one overall approach to counseling students, fully half (51%) of school counselors say that they do not have enough time to do this more. Administrators are right in step with counselors on this, as 48% say that the counselors in their schools are not able to adopt this approach more successfully and effectively because of time. Administrators also agree with school counselors on the degree to which they already are successful in adopting this approach; 3 in 10 (30%) counselors say that they already do it effectively, while 31% of school administrators say the same about the counselors in their schools.

Rectangles by Free or Reduced-Price Lunch and College Attendance Rates

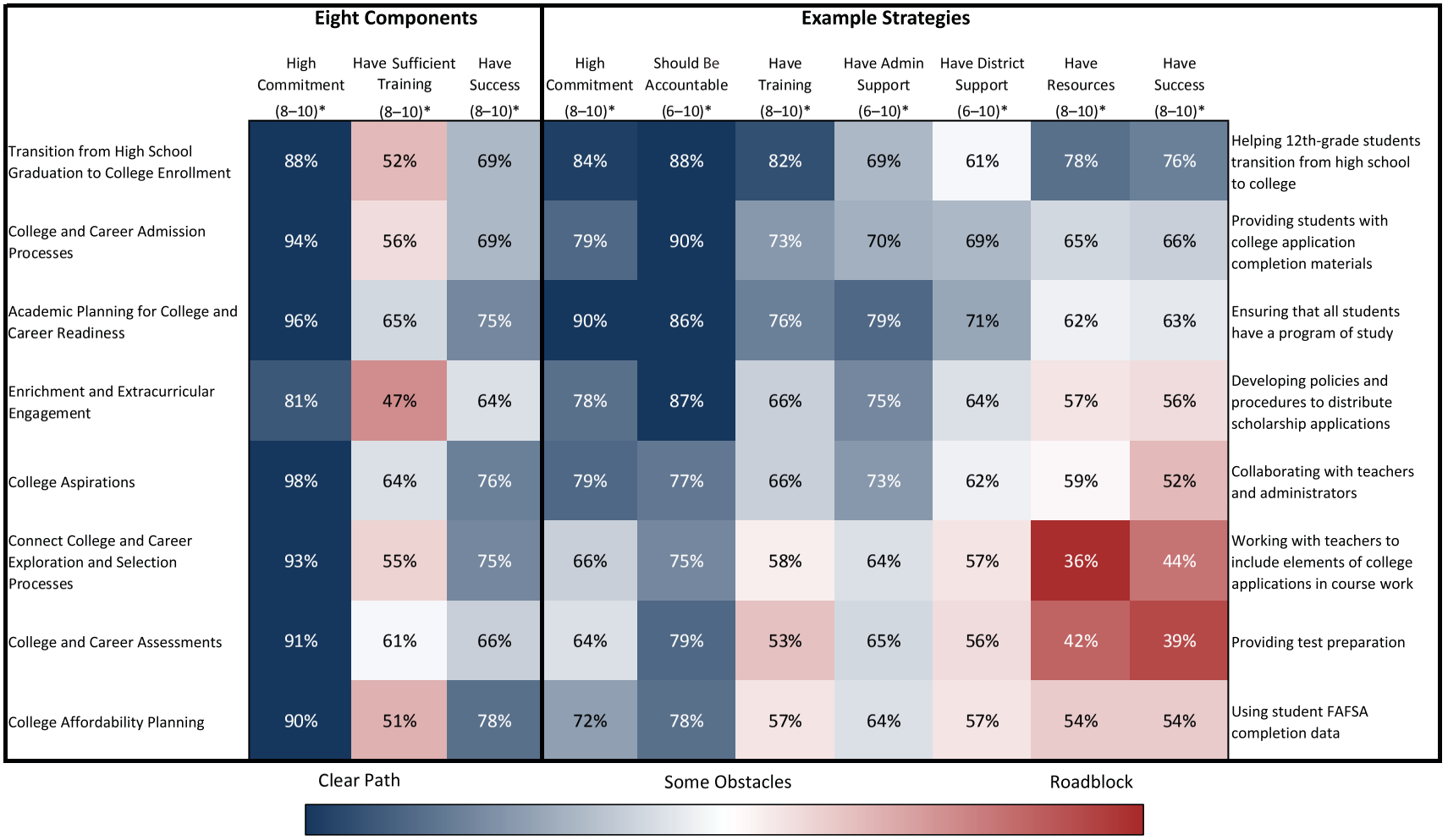
The following charts offer the same high-altitude perspective, but this time we will look at the broader picture from two important metrics: first, the differences between counselors in high schools with a low proportion of students on free or reduced-price lunch and those in high schools with a high proportion of students on free or reduced-price lunch. Second, we will examine the differences between counselors in high schools with a high college attendance rate and a low college attendance rates. This approach allows access to the survey on multiple levels, including a question-by-question comparison, a comparison across the eight components and their specific examples, and a comparison across different schools with different sets of challenges.

Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

In general, counselors at high schools with less than 25% of the student body on free or reduced-price lunch are comfortable across all metrics on three of the specific activities: helping 12th-graders transition from high school to college, providing students with college application completion materials, and ensuring that all students have a good program of study. Activities in which these counselors struggle to be successful include working with teachers to include elements of college applications in course work, test preparation, and using FAFSA completion data; these also are activities to which these counselors are less committed, for which they have fewer resources and less administration support, in which they have less training, and for which they are less likely to feel they should be held accountable. The only exceptions to this trend occur in questions about the eight components overall: Commitment to each of the eight components is high, while training on them fluctuates with no clear connection to success on the eight components or the components' individual activities.

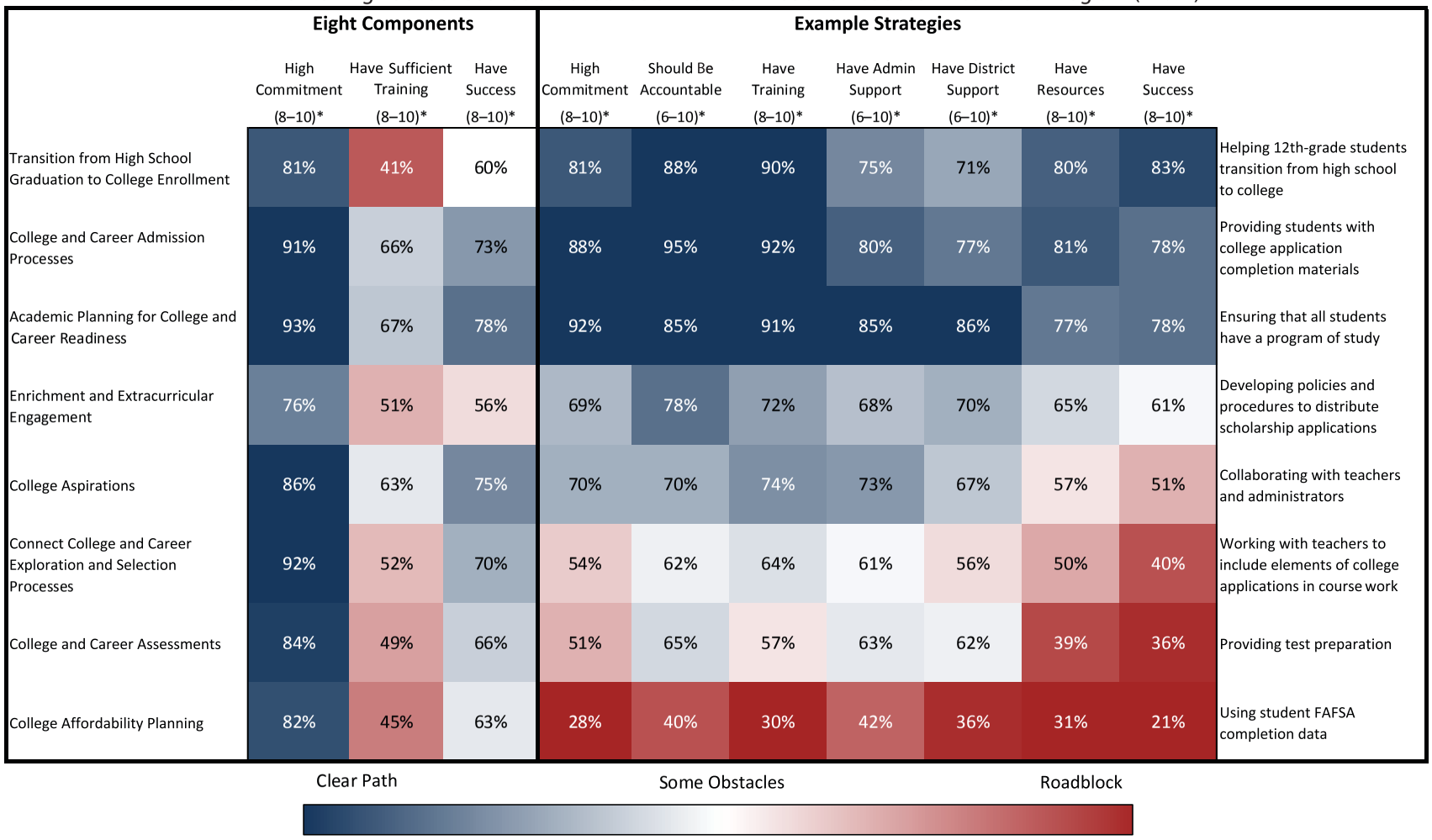
Despite a few more prominent roadblocks, in general, counselors at schools with at least 75% of the student body on free or reduced-price lunch also succeed or fail based on the full complement of commitment, support, training, and resources. FAFSA completion is surprisingly successful (54% eight or higher on a scale of zero-to-10) considering the training and resources counselors at these schools have, while the especially low rating on resources to help counselors work with teachers to include elements of college applications in course work (36% eight or higher on a scale of zero-to-10) and providing test preparation (42%) may play a role in making those activities the least successful (44% and 39%, respectively). Again, counselor commitment and training needs on the eight components appear to bear little relationship to the specific activities.

Overview of High School Counselors at Schools with High Free and Reduced-Price Lunch Program (75%+)



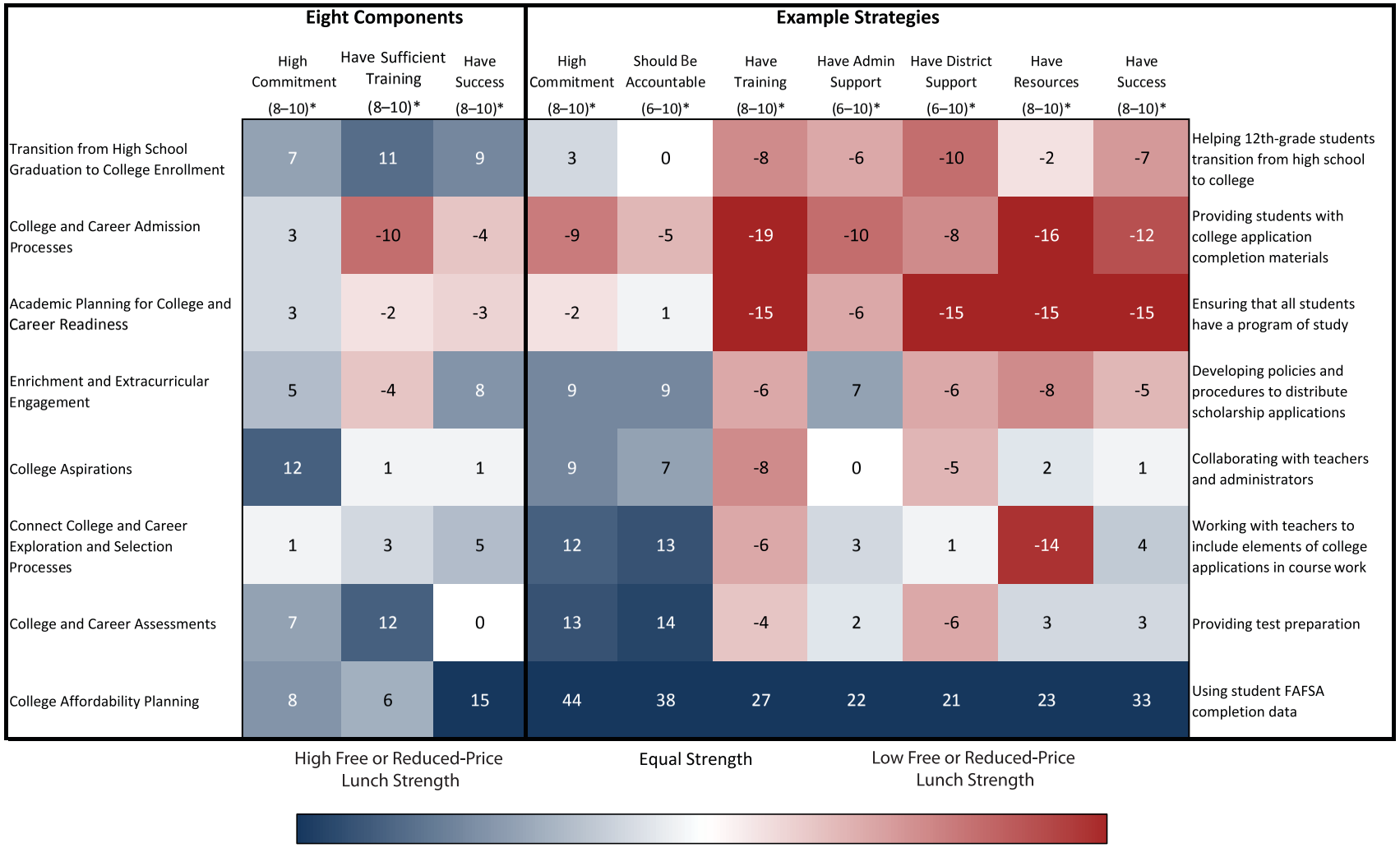
*Ratings on zero-to-10 scales: in each case, 10 = most positive response; full descriptions in Appendix A

Overview of High School Counselors at Schools with Low Free and Reduced-Price Lunch Program (24%+)



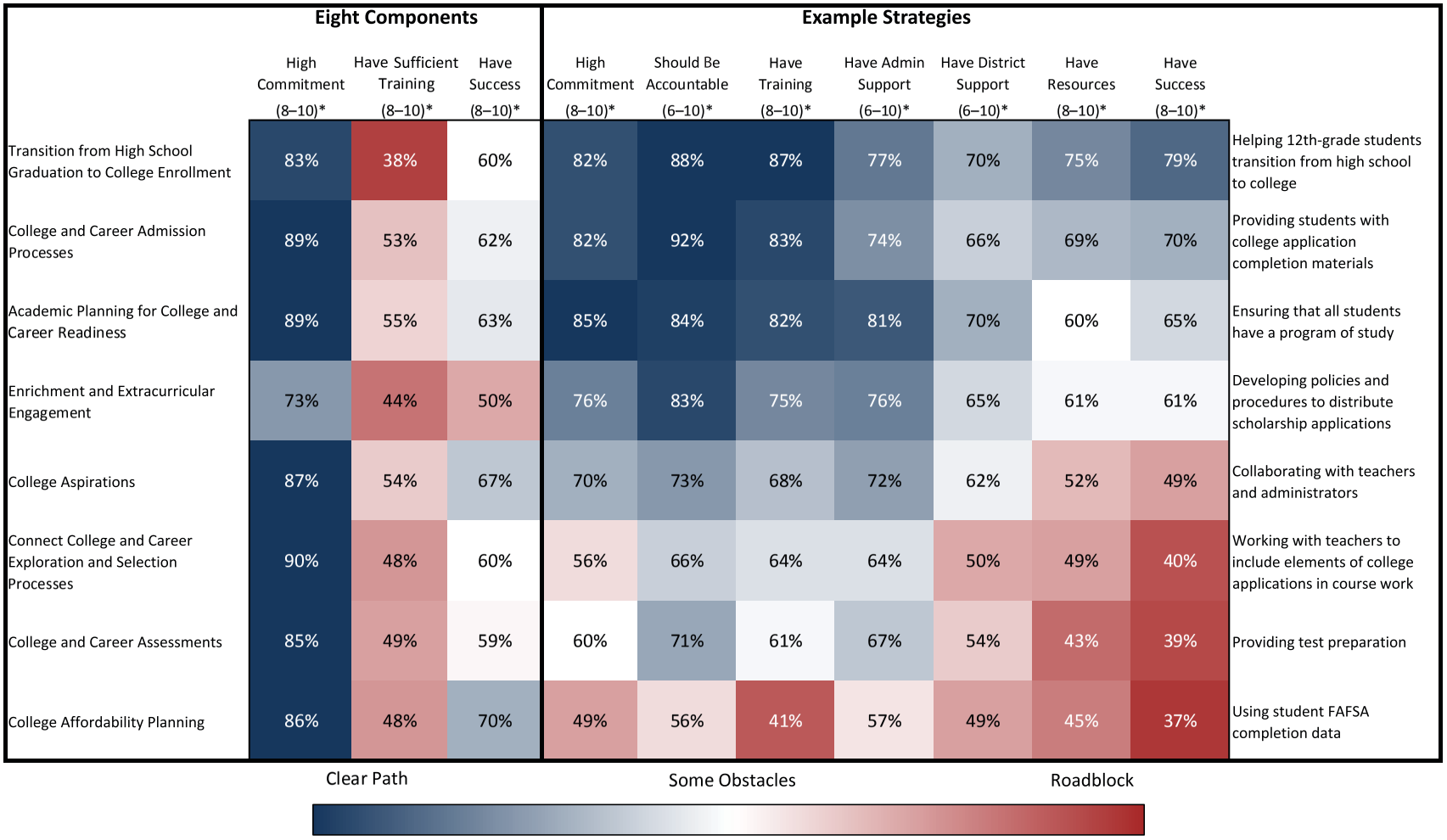
*Ratings on zero-to-10 scales: in each case, 10 = most positive response; full descriptions in Appendix A

Overview of Gap: High School Counselors with High Free or Reduced-Price Lunch Program — Low Free and Reduced-Price Lunch Program



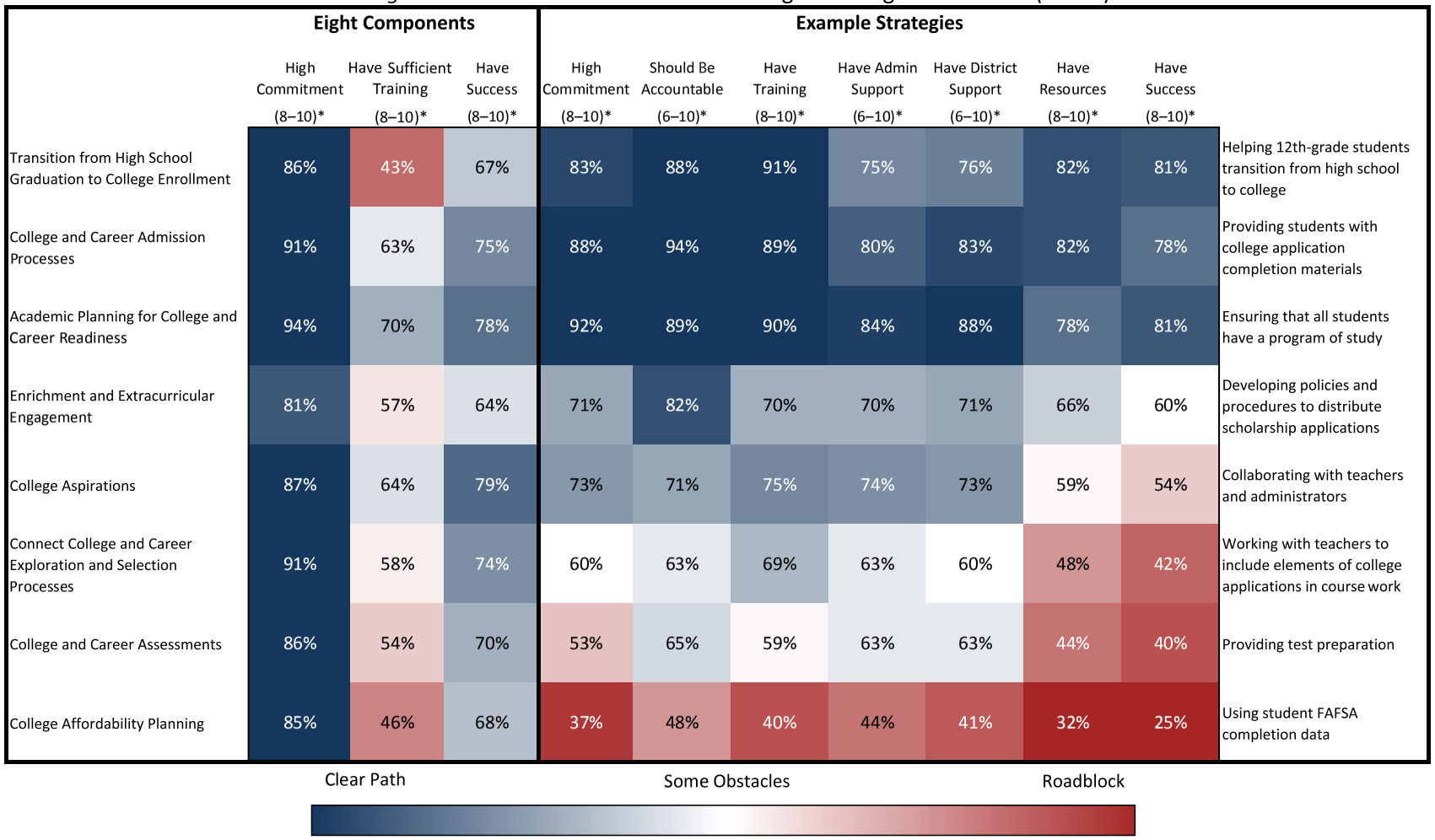
*Ratings on zero-to-10 scales: in each case, 10 = most positive response; full descriptions in Appendix A

Overview of High School Counselors at Schools with Lower College Attendance (Up to 64%)



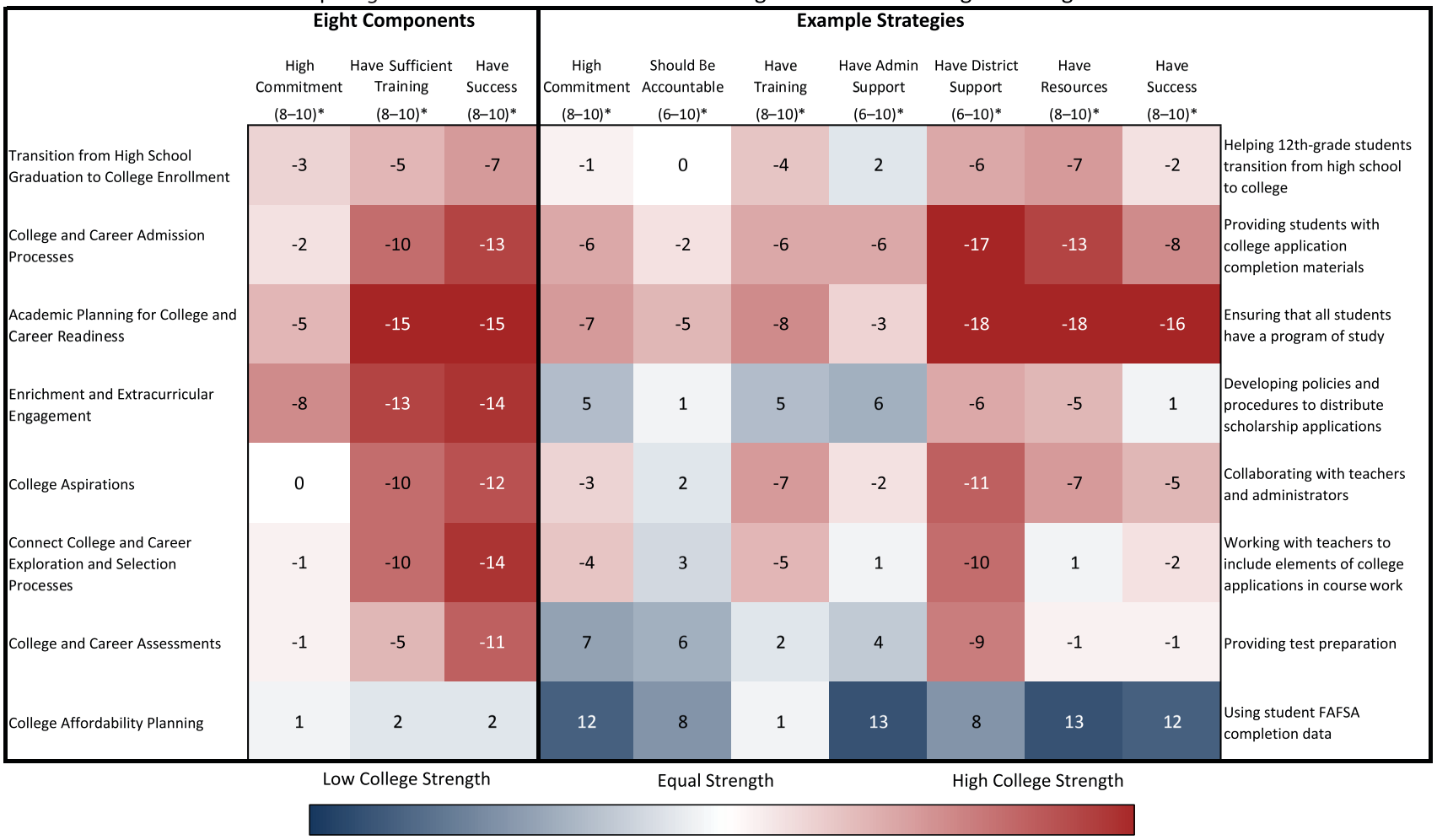
*Ratings on zero-to-10 scales: in each case, 10 = most positive response; full descriptions in Appendix A

Overview of High School Counselors at Schools with Higher College Attendance (86% +)



*Ratings on zero-to-10 scales: in each case, 10 = most positive response; full descriptions in Appendix A

Overview of Gap: High School Counselors with Lower College Attendance — Higher College Attendance



*Ratings on zero-to-10 scales: in each case, 10 = most positive response; full descriptions in Appendix A

Comparing counselors at schools with low levels (less than 25%) of students on free or reduced-price lunch to counselors at schools with high levels (75% or more) reveals a few striking trends (see the third rectangle). The clearest is that counselors at schools with higher proportions of students on free or reduced-price lunch are better trained, have more resources, and have more support, a greater commitment, and greater accountability when it comes to college-affordability planning and using student FAFSA completion data. Counselors at these more challenged schools also are more likely, in general, to be committed and to feel they should be held accountable to the eight components and their specific activities. Counselors at less challenged schools, on the other hand, are more likely to receive training on any specific issue besides FAFSA data use and to receive more district support on specific items.

Looking at the difference between counselors at less challenged schools and those at more challenged schools, a large gap exists on two items: providing students with college application materials and ensuring that all students have a good program of study. Counselors at schools with fewer than 25% of students on free or reduced-price lunch rate themselves higher on nearly every question, especially training and resources. Resources, in particular, track strongly with success, the exception being working with teachers to include elements of college applications. This finding suggests that while a lack of resources poses a challenge to counselors at disadvantaged schools when it comes to implementing most of the interventions, it is not an insurmountable barrier for counselors in these schools when working with teachers.

College Attendance

Counselors at high schools with a high rate of college attendance (at least 86% of students) are successful across all questions on three specific items: helping 12th-graders transition from high school to college, providing students with college application completion materials, and ensuring that all students have a good program of study. Conversely, working with FAFSA completion data is the only activity that receives consistently low ratings from counselors at high-attendance schools. These counselors also struggle to be successful working with teachers to include elements of college applications in course work and to provide test preparation, but their success rate is much lower than their support and training. What is noticeably lower for these two activities is their resource rating (48% eight or higher on a scale of zero-to-10 for working with teachers and 44% for providing test preparation), which is very close to their success rates (42% and 40% eight on a scale of zero-to-10, respectively). These counselors' ratings of their commitment and training on more general descriptions of the eight components appear to be disconnected from their success on specific items, with components about which they feel the least trained (43% reporting sufficient training for transitioning students from high school graduation to college enrollment) being the specific example about which they feel they are most successful (81% eight or higher on a scale of zero-to-10 reporting success for helping 12th-grade students transition from high school to college).

Counselors at schools with a low rate of college attendance (at most 64% of students) identify several clear roadblocks in both the eight components and the specific examples. As with counselors at high college-attendance schools, success ratings for counselors at low college-attendance schools appear to have a close relationship with their resource rating on specific example activities. Counselors at low college-attendance schools also have a lower level of district support when compared with training and administrative support, revealing an important deficiency in schools that already send a lower proportion of their students to college. When asked about the eight components, these counselors also report low training and success rates, although a clear connection does not appear between these ratings and ratings on specific examples.

The roadblocks at low college-attendance schools become even more striking when shown in comparison with the ratings given by counselors at high college-attendance schools. Despite a fairly even commitment rating (with a slightly higher rating on most items in favor of high college-attendance schools) on both the eight components and specific example activities, there is a noticeable training gap on the eight components as well as a clear gap in district support of specific activities. The only exception is college affordability planning, with the example of using FAFSA completion data, which counselors at lower college-attendance schools actually rate higher than their counterparts at high-attendance schools. The worst-performing examples are providing students with college application materials and ensuring that all students have a program of study. The 16-point gap in success (81% eight or higher on a scale of zero-to-10 among high attendance compared with 65% among low attendance) for ensuring that all students have a good program of study is the highest difference of the eight examples — well above the differences in success for any of the other items. This specific example appears to be a major stumbling block for high free or reduced-price lunch schools as well as low college-attendance schools, and one of the many roadblocks these charts reveal.

Section 8: Equity

The Importance of Equity and the Success of Counselors in Achieving It

School counselors are committed to ensuring that students' family backgrounds and circumstances do not affect their students' chances for success. Nearly 9 in 10 (88%) school counselors say that "mak[ing] sure that students from low-income, disadvantaged, and immigrant backgrounds get the extra attention and support they need to achieve success equal to other students" is extremely important to them (as rated on an eight or higher on a zero-to-10 scale on which a 10 corresponds to "extremely important"). As Table 28 shows, overwhelming majorities of counselors across regions and in public and private schools alike say that ensuring equity for disadvantaged students is extremely important to them personally.

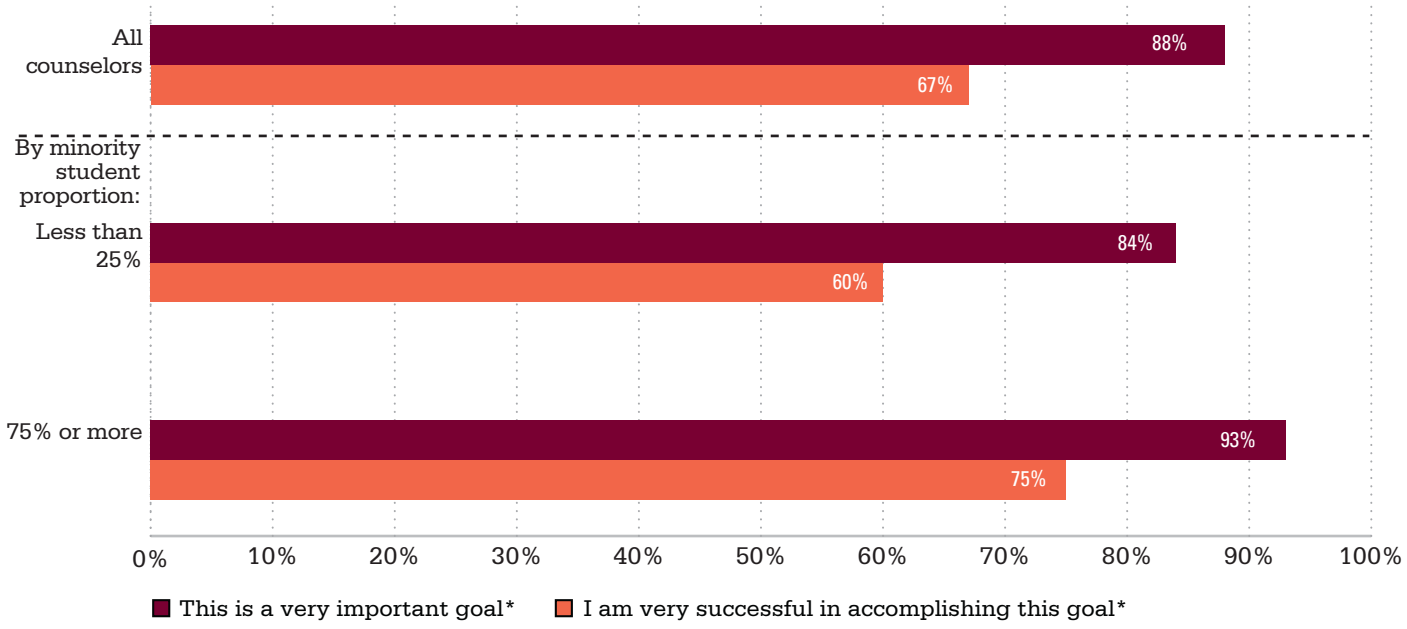
Counselors who are minorities themselves or who work in schools with more disadvantaged students are especially likely to say that equity is personally important to them. African American (96%) and Hispanic (91%) counselors are particularly likely to rate equity as an eight or higher, while a lower proportion (87%) — but still a large majority — of white counselors do the same (see Table 28).

Similarly, counselors who work in schools in which more than 75% of the student population are minorities are more likely to say that ensuring equity for disadvantaged students is important to them (93%) than are counselors who work in schools in which fewer than 25% of the student population are minorities (84%). Counselors who work in schools in which 75% or more of the student body is on free or reduced-price lunch also are more likely to say that equity is extremely important to them (94%, compared with 87% in schools with less than 25% on free or reduced-price lunch).

By 21 points, counselors are more likely to say that equity is important to them personally (88%) than that they are personally successful in achieving equity in their school (67%). Despite variations across counselors in the degree to which they see equity as important, there is generally a 21-point gap (± five points) between the proportion of counselors who say equity is personally important to them and the proportion who believe they personally are successful in accomplishing this goal. This is possible in part because those who place greater importance on ensuring equity tend also to see themselves as more successful in achieving it. For example,

Counselors rate the importance of ensuring equity and the degree to which they feel they are successful at it:

To make sure that students from low-income, disadvantaged, and immigrant backgrounds get the extra attention and support they need to achieve success equal to other students



*In each case, 8–10 ratings on zero–to–10 scale: 10 = extremely important goal/I am extremely successful in accomplishing this

Table 28: Counselors' Ratings of the Importance of and Their Success in Ensuring Equity for Low-Income, Disadvantaged, and Immigrant Students

	This Is Very Important to Me* %	I Am Very Successful in Accomplishing This* %	Gap ±
All counselors	88	67	21
Race of counselor			
White counselors	87	64	23
African American counselors	96	77	19
Hispanic counselors	91	72	19
Region			
Northeast	87	65	22
Midwest	86	63	23
South	87	65	22
West	87	65	22
Type of school			
All public	89	68	21
Urban public	92	75	17
Suburban public	89	67	22
Rural public	87	62	25
All private	84	60	24
Percentage of student population that is minority			
0 to 24%	84	60	24
25 to 49%	92	66	26
50 to 74%	91	75	16
75% or more	93	75	18
Percentage of student population on free or reduced-price lunch			
0 to 24%	87	64	23
25 to 49%	86	63	23
50 to 74%	90	70	20
75% or more	94	76	18
Number of students in caseload			
Less than 250	88	72	16
250–349	88	64	24
350–449	89	66	23
450 or more	88	66	22
College attendance rates (high school counselors only)			
High college attendance (86% or more)	89	68	21
Lower college attendance (64% and below)	84	63	21

*In each case, 8–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = extremely important goal to me/I am extremely successful in accomplishing this

96% of African American counselors (compared with 87% of white counselors) say that ensuring equity is very important to them, while 77% (compared with 64% of whites) say that they are personally successful. This amounts to a 19-point gap between importance and success for African American counselors and a 23-point gap for white counselors.

Ensuring Equity in Adopting the Eight Components and Example Strategies as One Overall Approach to Counseling Students

As noted earlier, many counselors feel relatively strong when it comes to implementing the interventions associated with the eight components in a manner that ensures equity to their students. More than half of school counselors say that they prioritize equity, they know how to identify students who need the most help, and they know how to apply these interventions to suit the diverse needs of their students.

School counselors believe that it is important to identify the most at-risk students. Fifty-seven percent of high school counselors and 52% of middle school counselors say they "intentionally prioritize" their most needy students when implementing these interventions, as indicated by a rating of eight or higher on a zero-to-10 scale. This is a fairly consistent priority for counselors across different types of schools (see Table 29), although it is rated higher among counselors at high schools with higher rates of college attendance (64%, compared with 54% of counselors at high schools with lower rates of college attendance) and African American counselors (65%, compared with 54% of white counselors).

Nearly 3 in 5 (59% of high school, 57% of middle school) counselors say that they know how to use data to determine which students need the most help with these interventions. And school administrators expect them to do so: 77% of high school administrators and 72% of middle school administrators say their counselors should do this. Just as we saw with using student FAFSA data to monitor students' applications, school counselors at disadvantaged schools are more likely to know how to apply data to identify their neediest students. While 57% of counselors at schools with fewer than 25% of students on free or reduced-price lunch rate themselves as an eight or higher, fully 68% of counselors at schools with at least 75% of students on free or reduced-price lunch say the same. This pattern across different questions about data analysis suggests that counselors in the most disadvantaged schools have been uniquely successful in integrating and taking advantage of student data.

Furthermore, many school counselors are aware of how to tailor these interventions to meet their students' various needs. Three in 5 (59%) high school counselors and 51% of middle school counselors say that they "know how to apply these interventions to the diverse academic and cultural needs" of their students. For the most part, school administrators expect this of their counselors at the same rates: 55% of high school administrators and 45% of middle school administrators say that their counselors should know how to do this. Counselors in more challenged schools, where this skill might be an even greater asset, also feel more knowledgeable. Whereas 53% of school counselors in schools with a minority student population of less than 25% say that they know how to apply these interventions to the diverse academic and cultural needs of their students, 63% (10 points higher) of counselors at schools with a minority population of at least 75% say the same. Likewise, counselors in schools with 75% of students on free or reduced-price lunch (63%) are more likely to know how to apply these interventions to suit their students' academic and cultural needs than counselors in schools with fewer than 25% of students on free or reduced-price lunch (55%).

Table 29: Equity in Applying the Eight Components and Example Activity Interventions

	I Know How to/ My Counselors Should Use Data to Identify Needy Students* %	I Do/My Counselors Should Intentionally Prioritize the Most Needy Students* %	I/My Counselors Know How to Apply Interventions to Academic and Cultural Needs of Students* %
All counselors	59	56	57
Middle school counselors	57	52	51
High school counselors	59	57	59
Race of counselor			
White counselors	56	54	54
African American counselors	64	65	67
Hispanic counselors	63	59	63
Type of school			
All public	59	56	57
Urban public	60	57	59
Suburban public	59	56	57
Rural public	57	54	55
All private	54	54	57
Percentage of student population that is minority			
0 to 24%	55	53	53
25 to 49%	60	55	55
50 to 74%	62	59	60
75% or more	63	59	63
Number of students in caseload			
Less than 250	57	59	61
250–349	59	55	55
350–449	58	56	56
450 or more	61	53	56
Percentage of student population on free or reduced-price lunch			
0 to 24%	57	56	55
25 to 49%	58	52	52
50 to 74%	57	57	61
75% or more	68	60	63
College attendance rates (high school counselors only)			
High college attendance (86% or more)	62	64	63
Lower college attendance (64% or less)	58	54	61
Administrators			
All administrators	76	63	52
Middle school administrators	72	60	45
High school administrators	77	65	55

*For each statement, 8–10 ratings on zero-to-ten scale: 10 = This is completely true.

Section 9: Accountability

Focusing on Student Outcomes or Counseling Activities

When asked directly, more than half (53%) of counselors agree that the system of accountability in their schools is more focused on "data related to student outcomes such as graduation rates," while only 5% say the system of accountability in their schools is "more focused on counseling activities such as time spent on different tasks." This large gap is somewhat lessened by the additional 23% of counselors who say their schools focus on both equally, with 19% of counselors saying that their schools have no system of accountability.

Private schools fall well behind public schools when it comes to focusing primarily on measuring student outcomes (31% private to 55% public), a difference that mostly can be attributed to the fact that 29% of private schools lack a system of accountability. For comparison, 18% of public schools lack a system of accountability.

Schools with high minority populations are more likely to focus on student outcomes, with 62% of schools that have a minority population greater than 75% of their student body reporting that they focus on student outcomes, and only 12% of those schools reporting that they do not have a system of accountability. Schools with the lowest minority population (fewer than 1 in 4) focus on student outcomes less (49%) and lack a system of accountability more (23%). Notably, schools with low college attendance rates are just as likely to focus on student outcomes as schools with high attendance rates (55% for both the lowest and highest quartile of college attendance), although schools with low attendance have a five-point gap with schools that have high attendance when it comes to lacking a system of accountability (20% lowest quartile, compared with 15% highest quartile).

Specific Student Outcomes

When asked directly, most counselors say their program focuses on student outcomes over counseling activities, but when asked about specific tasks to which they are held accountable, counselors are actually more likely to identify activities unrelated to student outcomes as their performance measures. While counselors claim that they generally have programs that focus on student outcomes, in reality they are held to program standards that focus on activities which are not directly related to student outcomes.

Looking at Table 30, the three likeliest measurements for which a high school counselor will be held accountable are also not student-outcome-centric: school counseling program development (74% of counselors), administrative and clerical tasks (69%), and coordinating tests (60%). The highest

Table 30: Proportion of High School Counselors Who Say They Are Held Accountable for Student Outcome Measures and Nonstudent Outcome Measures

	Student Outcome Measurements %		Nonstudent Outcome Measurements %
High school graduation rates	52	School counseling program development	74
Dropout rates	39	Administrative and clerical tasks	69
College acceptance rates	39	Coordinating tests	60
College application rates	39	Scheduling IEP and 504 meetings	35
Students gaining access to advanced classes/tests: AP®, IB, honors, dual enrollment courses	38	Creating the master schedule	33
Completion of college-prep sequence of courses	38	Attendance checking and verification	23
Transcript audits of graduation readiness	36	Disciplinary actions	13
State test scores	29	Substitute teaching	8
FAFSA completion rates	16	Writing IEPs	3
Graduate employment rates	11	Other	26
		None of these	5

Table 31: Proportion of Middle School Counselors Who Say They Are Held Accountable for Student Outcome Measures and Nonstudent Outcome Measures

	Student Outcome Measurements %		Nonstudent Outcome Measurements %
Middle school completion rates	33	School counseling program development	85
State test scores	31	Administrative and clerical tasks	66
Promotion from grade to grade	31	Coordinating tests	55
Access to Algebra I in grade 8	20	Scheduling IEP and 504 meetings	51
Dropout rates	20	Creating the master schedule	40
Completion of Algebra I	17	Attendance checking and verification	34
High school graduation rates	16	Disciplinary actions	28
Student high school grades	12	Substitute teaching	12
College acceptance rates	10	Writing IEPs	7
		Other	32
		None of these	2

student-outcome-related measurement for high school counselors is high school graduation rate (52%), which is 22 points lower than the top nonstudent-outcome activity.

Despite reporting that they focus on student outcomes at the same rate as high school counselors, middle school counselors are even more likely to be held accountable by nonstudent-outcome measurements. Amazingly, the top six measurements for which middle school counselors are likely to be held accountable are not related to student outcomes, including 85% being responsible for their school counseling program development, 66% administrative and clerical tasks, and 55% coordinating tests. Only one-third of middle school counselors are held accountable to middle school completion rates, 31% to state test scores, and 31% to promotion from grade to grade. Very few counselors are held accountable for their students' performance beyond middle school, with 16% held to high school graduation rates and only 10% to college acceptance rates.

Current Accountability Systems

Among high school counselors, there is little consistency about what specific student-outcome-related activities their "school uses … to assess counselor effectiveness." The only item for which a majority of high school counselors report being held accountable is their high school graduation rate, as shown in Table 32, and even then only by a bare majority of 52% of high school counselors. Dropout rates (39%), college acceptance rates (39%), college application rates (39%), students having access to advanced classes (38%), completion of college-prep sequence of courses (38%), and transcript audits of graduation readiness (36%) all come in more than one-third, but fewer than half of all counselors, with state tests scores (29%), FAFSA completion (16%), and graduate employment rates (11%) rounding out the list.

These numbers are hardly consistent throughout subgroups; for example, only 12% of high school private school counselors are held accountable to dropout rates, compared with 43% of public schools. Conversely, private school counselors are more than twice as likely (69% private to 34% public) to say they are held accountable for college acceptance rates. Counselors working at schools with at least 75% of their students on free or reduced-price lunch are more likely to say they are held accountable than all high school counselors on nearly every metric, excepting the completion of a college-prep sequence of courses (34% free or reduced-price lunch compared with 38% high school counselors). Notably, schools in the lowest quartile of college attendance are less likely to say they are held accountable than are all high school counselors on nearly every metric, although usually the difference is minimal.

High school counselors who say they are focused more on "data related to student outcomes" than on "counseling activities" are more likely than all high school counselors to be held accountable to nearly every metric asked. That said, counselors who answer that they focus on both equally are actually more likely to say they are held accountable than

Table 32: Proportion of High School Counselors Who Say They Are Held Accountable to These Measures

	High School %	Public School %	Private School %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (75% +) %	Lower College Attendance (up to 64%) %	Accountability System Focused on Student Outcomes %	Accountability System Focused on Student Outcomes and Counselor Activities %
High school graduation rates	52	54	39	68	49	60	57
Dropout rates	39	43	12	53	39	47	44
College acceptance rates	39	34	69	42	28	40	51
College application rates	39	34	67	41	29	39	53
Students gaining access to advanced classes/tests	38	38	37	42	32	43	46
Completion of college-prep sequence of courses	38	36	44	34	28	41	47
Transcript audits of graduation readiness	36	37	29	43	34	40	45
State test scores	29	31	16	37	28	35	33
FAFSA completion	16	17	8	35	20	17	25
Graduate employment rates	11	11	8	14	10	11	17

Table 33: Proportion of Middle School Counselors Who Say They Are Held Accountable to These Measures

	Middle School %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (75% +) %	Accountable to Student Outcomes %	Accountable to Outcomes and Activities %
Middle school completion rates	33	35	33	49
State test scores	31	32	32	46
Promotion from grade to grade	31	34	31	50
Dropout rates	20	19	18	35
Access to Algebra I in grade 8	20	20	17	38
Completion of Algebra I	17	17	14	31
High school graduation rates	16	11	14	24
Student high school grades	12	9	11	22
College acceptance rates	10	6	8	17

those that focus on student outcomes on several key metrics, including college acceptance rates (51% both to 40% student outcomes) and college application rates (53% both to 39% student outcomes).[5]

Middle school counselors struggle even more than their high school counterparts when it comes to identifying student-outcome-related activities for which they are held accountable by their school (see Table 33). The highest-rated item, middle school completion rates, is only common among one-third of all counselors. State test scores and promotion from grade to grade (31% for each) are the next closest items, with all the rest occurring among 20% or less of the middle school counseling population.

Unlike high school counselors, the system of accountability for middle school counselors demonstrates little change in schools with more free reduced-price lunches. Much like high school counselors, however, counselors who focus on student outcomes and counseling activities are more likely to say they are held accountable to nearly every metric when compared with counselors who focus more on student outcomes. In fact, the gap is nine points or more in every category, with the largest gaps in middle school completion rates (49% both

5. Only 88 high school counselors and 51 middle school counselors reported valuing counselor activities more — a number below the threshold for statistical significance.

to 33% student outcomes), state test scores (46% both to 32% outcomes), and an amazing 19-point gap in promotion from grade to grade (50% both to 31% student outcomes).

Administrators and Systems of Accountability

When asked what measures they use to assess counselor effectiveness, administrators reveal important gaps between themselves and counselors. As Table 34 shows, high school counselors are more likely to identify test coordination (60%) than administrators as an important measure of their job, but for nearly all other items, high school administrators believe their counselors are being held accountable at a higher rate than the counselors themselves believe. The biggest gap is in "students gaining access to advanced classes/tests: AP®, IB, honors, dual enrollment courses," where there is a 19-point separation between counselors (38%) and administrators (57%). Similar gaps exist on "high school graduation rates" (17-point gap from 52% counselors to 69% administrators), "transcript audits of graduation readiness" (17-point gap from 36% counselors to 53% administrators), and "FAFSA completion rates" (16-point gap from 16% counselors to 32% administrators).

It should be noted that on IEPs, while a large distance exists between counselors (3% writing IEPs) and administrators (21%

Table 34: Proportion of High School Counselors and Administrators Who Say Measures Are Used to Assess Counselor Effectiveness

	Counselors %	Administrators %
Coordinating tests	60	48
High school graduation rates	52	69
College acceptance rates	39	45
College application rates	39	45
Completion of college-prep sequence of courses	38	48
Students gaining access to advanced classes/tests: AP, IB, honors, dual enrollment courses	38	57
Transcript audits of graduation readiness	36	53
Creating the master schedule	33	38
Attendance checking and verification	23	24
FAFSA completion rates	16	32
Disciplinary actions	13	10
Writing IEPs	3	21*
Scheduling IEP and 504 meetings	35	N/A*

*Administrators' survey item reads "Writing IEPs and 504 plans"

Table 35: Proportion of Middle School Counselors and Administrators Who Say Measures Are Used to Assess Counselor Effectiveness

	Counselors %	Administrators %
Coordinating tests	55	58
Creating the master schedule	40	40
Attendance checking and verification	34	37
Middle school completion rates	33	55
Disciplinary actions	28	22
High school graduation rates	16	13
College acceptance rates	10	5
Writing IEPs	7	41*
Scheduling IEP and 504 meetings	51	N/A*

*Administrators' survey item reads "Writing IEPs and 504 plans"

writing IEPs and 504 plans), 35% of counselors also say they are held accountable to their scheduling of IEP and 504 meetings.

Unlike their high school counterparts, middle school counselors (55%) do not view their accountability for coordinating tests very differently from middle school administrators (58%). In fact, as Table 35 demonstrates, on most issues, middle school counselors and middle school administrators are on the same page when it comes to accountability standards. The big exception is middle school completion rates, with only one-third (33%) of counselors believing they are held accountable to the standard, while more than half (55%) of administrators believe the same.

Improving Student Outcomes

While counselors are hesitant to choose student-outcome-related measures to which they should be held accountable, large majorities are able to identify which measures that, "If [they] were committed to making this a priority, and had administrative support and resources," they "believe counseling staff at [their] school could be effective at improving." Taking the counselors who answer an eight or higher on a scale of zero-to-10, with 10 meaning "counseling staff at your school could be extremely effective," there is a clear pattern of optimism and potential growth on several important student-outcome-related measures.

As Table 36 shows, more than three-quarters of high school counselors agree on five items that they could improve: the completion of a college-prep sequence of courses (83%), college application rates (82%), students gaining access to advanced classes and tests (81%), transcript audits of graduation readiness (78%), and high school graduation rates (77%). Only graduate employment rates fail to marshal a majority, although this item comes close with 48% of high school counselors agreeing that they could improve the measure.

In general, public and private high school counselors agree about what they can improve. Public school counselors are slightly more optimistic (79%) than private school counselors (68%) about improving transcript audits of graduation readiness, while private school counselors are more likely to see room for improvement of college acceptance rates (81% private to 71% public).

Counselors with a high proportion of students on free or reduced-price lunch are more likely to identify transcript audits (89%), FAFSA completion (71%), state test scores (58%), and graduate employment rates (57%) as activities that have room for improvement. Counselors with students in the lowest quartile of college attendance are not noticeably more optimistic than the average counselor on any measure except FAFSA completion, of which 70% of low college-attendance counselors gave an eight or higher, compared with 63% of all high school counselors.

Table 36: Proportion of High School Counselors Who Believe They Could Be Very Effective* in Improving Selected Measures

	High School %	Public School %	Private School %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (75% +) %	Lower College Attendance (up to 64%) %	Accountable to Student Outcomes %	Accountable to Outcomes and Activities %
Completion of college-prep sequence of courses	83	83	80	85	86	84	86
College application rates	82	82	80	84	80	84	84
Students gaining access to advanced classes/tests:	81	82	76	75	81	83	85
Transcript audits of graduation readiness	78	79	68	89	79	79	78
High school graduation rates	77	78	75	80	76	79	84
College acceptance rates	72	71	81	70	69	72	80
Dropout rates	66	66	63	67	67	65	74
FAFSA completion	63	64	52	71	70	64	68
State test scores	55	56	47	58	52	56	66
Graduate employment rates	48	48	41	57	50	49	59

*8–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = Counseling staff at my school could be extremely effective on this if we were committed to it and had administrative support and resources for it.

Table 37: Proportion of Middle School Counselors Who Believe They Could Be Very Effective* in Improving Measures

	Middle School %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (75% +) %	Accountable to Student Outcomes %	Accountable to Outcomes and Activities %
Middle school completion rates	82	86	84	82
Promotion from grade to grade	75	73	75	79
Access to Algebra I in grade 8	74	72	75	83
State test scores	64	73	63	72
Completion of Algebra I	63	65	62	76
Dropout rates	62	66	56	67
High school graduation rates	61	67	60	64
Student high school grades	55	60	56	60
College acceptance rates	48	44	47	53

*8–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = Counseling staff at my school could be extremely effective on this if we were committed to it and had administrative support and resources for it.

High school counselors who report focusing more on student-related outcomes are striking in their similarity to the average high school counselor, and they are more pessimistic than counselors who report focusing on student outcomes and counseling activities equally. In fact, a majority of counselors who focus on both student outcomes and counseling activities see room for improvement on every metric, with two-thirds or more ready to improve on all the metrics but one (graduate employment rates at 59%).

Although middle school counselors demonstrate that they are less likely to be held accountable than their high school counterparts, they are comparably able to see room for improvement in their schools. Looking at Table 37, only one metric fails to garner the support of a majority of middle school counselors and only by a slim margin (48% see room for improvement on college acceptance rates). Middle school completion rates (82%) and promotion from grade to grade (75%) are seen by at least three-quarters of middle school counselors as metrics that can be improved, with access to Algebra I coming in just below the mark (74%).

A few notable differences exist between middle school counselors in disadvantaged schools and all middle school counselors in their perceptions of areas that they could be effective in improving. The only exception is on state test scores, which counselors in disadvantaged middle schools are more likely to believe they can improve (73%) than middle school counselors overall (64%).

Counselors who focus more on student outcomes demonstrate the recurring pattern of being more pessimistic than counselors who focus on both student outcomes and counseling activities. State test scores (72% both to 63% student outcomes), completion of Algebra I (76% both to 62% student outcomes), and dropout rates (67% both to 56% student outcomes) are the largest gaps, although nearly every metric shows a gap.

Fairness of Using Different Accountability Measures to Assess Counselor Effectiveness

High school counselors show a greater cohesion on choosing "it is fair to use this measure, or changes in this measure, to assess the effectiveness of school counselors," with more than half supporting five of the specific student-outcome-related activities. Table 38 shows the three highest items garnering 58% to 60% of counselors who rate the item as a six or higher on a zero-to-10 scale, with 10 being completely fair: transcript audits of graduation readiness, completion of a college-prep sequence of courses, and students gaining access to advanced classes and tests. At the bottom of the scale, only 23% of counselors agree that it is fair to be held to graduate employment rates and 22% think they should be held accountable for state test scores.

High school public and private schools are similarly minded for many of these metrics, including student access to advanced classes, transcript audits, high school graduation rates, dropout rates, graduate employment rates, and test scores. When it comes to college application and acceptance rates, though, private school counselors are more likely to think it fair to be held accountable, with a 17-point gap in college

Table 38: Proportion of High School Counselors Who Believe It Is Fair* to Use This Measure or Changes in This Measure to Assess Effectiveness of School Counselors

	High School %	Public School %	Private School %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (75% +) %	Lower College Attendance (up to 64%) %	Accountable to Student Outcomes %	Accountable to Outcomes and Activities %
Transcript audits of graduation readiness	60	60	56	69	57	59	64
Completion of college-prep sequence of courses	59	58	67	68	58	58	67
Students gaining access to advanced classes/tests	58	59	56	70	58	60	66
College application rates	57	55	72	75	48	54	64
High school graduation rates	52	52	51	66	50	53	61
College acceptance rates	43	40	61	56	37	40	51
Dropout rates	37	37	33	51	35	37	44
FAFSA completion	36	37	29	62	39	34	41
Graduate employment rates	23	24	19	42	23	21	34
State test scores	22	22	22	38	23	21	32

*6–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = completely fair to use this measure or changes in this measure to assess counselors' effectiveness

Table 39: Proportion of Middle School Counselors Who Believe It Is Fair* to Use This Measure or Changes in This Measure to Assess Effectiveness of School Counselors

	Middle School %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (75% +) %	Accountable to Student Outcomes %	Accountable to Outcomes and Activities %
Middle school completion rates	46	42	46	51
Promotion from grade to grade	38	37	37	48
Dropout rates	37	32	35	44
High school graduation rates	36	29	36	40
Access to Algebra I in grade 8	31	32	29	45
College acceptance rates	29	29	28	36
Student high school grades	26	22	25	34
Completion of Algebra I	25	26	22	36
State test scores	24	23	23	34

*6–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = completely fair to use this measure or changes in this measure to assess counselors' effectiveness

application rates (72% private to 55% public) and a 21-point gap in college acceptance rates (61% private to 40% public).

Counselors with at least three-quarters of their students on free or reduced-price lunch find being held accountable on every metric fairer than do average high school counselors, with the lowest gap being nine points. Amazingly, three-quarters of counselors with a high proportion of students on free or reduced-price lunch believe that college application rates could be fairly included in their accountability system — 18 points higher than the average high school counselor (57%). Counselors with students in the lowest quartile of college attendance are more similar to the average high school counselor, with the only noticeable difference being in college application rates (48% lowest quartile college acceptance to 57% high school).

On every metric, counselors who focus on both student outcomes and counselor activities are more likely to think the metric fair than counselors who focus only on student outcomes. This gap is especially pronounced when it comes to college, with a 10-point gap in application rates (64% both to 54% student outcomes) and an 11-point gap in acceptance rates (51% both to 40% student outcomes).

Again, middle school counselors struggle to show the agreement that their high school counterparts achieve (see Table 39). Only the 46% who agree that middle school completion rates are a fair metric come close to a majority of middle school counselors. Promotion from grade to grade (38%), dropout rates (37%), and high school graduation rates (36%) also receive support of more than one-third of middle school counselors as a fair measure of their effectiveness. One in four counselors cites the lowest scoring items: student high school grades (26%), the completion of Algebra I (25%), and state test scores (24%).

Middle school counselors in schools with a high proportion of students on free or reduced-price lunch or in the lowest quartile of college attendance are not markedly different from the average middle school counselor; the greatest difference being a seven-point gap in the fairness of high school graduation rates between the average counselor (36%) and a counselor at a high free or reduced-price lunch school (29%).

Much like high school counselors, middle school counselors who value both student outcomes and counselor activities are more likely to think that every metric is fair. Middle school counselors who value both put especially strong importance on math, with a 16-point gap between themselves and counselors who value student outcomes more when it comes to access to Algebra I (45% both to 29% student outcomes) and a 14-gap when it comes to the completion of Algebra I (36% both to 22% student outcomes).

Accountability by the Eight Components Example Action Items

When asked to rate specific measures that follow the eight component guide on a zero-to-10 scale of accountability, with zero meaning "it is not at all fair" for a counselor to be held accountable to the item, and a 10 meaning "it is completely fair," a large majority of high school counselors give the items a six or higher. With the exception of using FAFSA completion data to monitor student effectiveness, which only received 54% of counselors' support, every other item received the support of more than two-thirds of respondents.

Few variations occur among subgroups, although several patterns emerge. Private high school counselors are more likely than public high school counselors to find every item but one fair, albeit usually by a narrow margin. The exceptions are working with teachers collaboratively to help students with college application materials, which private school counselors (78%) are more likely to see as fair than public school counselors (65%), and using FAFSA completion data, which public school counselors (56%) see as more fair than do private school counselors (44%).

Counselors at schools with three-quarters or more of their students on free or reduced-price lunch also are more likely to support being held accountable by using FAFSA data (78%) than the average high school counselor (54%), as well as providing test preparation (79% high free or reduced-price lunch compared with 71% overall). Counselors at low college-attendance schools are strikingly similar to high school counselors on every item.

Again, counselors who focus on both student outcomes and counselor activities are more likely to view each item as fair when compared with counselors who focus more on student outcomes.

As Table 41 shows, a majority of middle school counselors agree that the component-influenced items they discuss were fair accountability measures. Like high school counselors, most of the items receive the support of more than two-thirds of the counselors, with teacher collaboration in course content being just shy of the mark at 64%.

Middle school counselors in schools with at least three-quarters of their students on free or reduced-price lunches are more likely to view all the items as fairer than the average middle school counselors.

Middle school counselors who focus more on student outcomes are, as with other accountability measures, less likely to find each item fair than counselors who focus on student outcomes and counseling activities equally. This gap is especially pronounced when it comes to collaborating with teachers to connect course content to colleges and careers, where 78% of counselors who focus on student outcomes and counseling activities equally are 15 points higher than counselors who focus more on student outcomes (63%).

A Strong Relationship Between Perceived Efficacy and Assessments of the Fairness of Accountability Measures

Counselors who say their counseling staff can be effective in improving their school's performance (an eight or higher on a scale of zero-to-10) on certain measures are much more likely to say it is fair to be held accountable (a six or higher on a scale of zero to 10) to that measure than counselors who are more pessimistic about improving their school's performance on that measure (a seven or lower on a scale of zero to 10).

Table 40: Proportion of High School Counselors Who Believe It Is Fair* to Hold School Counselors Accountable for the Example Activities

	High School %	Public School %	Private School %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (75% +) %	Lower College Attendance (up to 64%) %	Accountable to Student Outcomes %	Accountable to Outcomes and Activities %
College and career admission processes: Providing students with college application completion materials	93	93	96	90	92	93	96
Transition from high school to college enrollment: Helping 12th-grade students obtain the materials they need to transition from high school to college	87	87	91	88	88	86	91
Academic planning for college and career: Ensuring that all students have a program of study	86	85	92	86	84	86	89
Enrichment and extracurricular engagement: Developing policies and procedures to distribute scholarship applications	84	83	87	87	83	82	89
College aspirations: Collaborating with teachers and administrators to review policies for equity	72	72	74	77	73	72	80
College and career assessments: Providing test preparation	71	70	71	79	71	71	75
Connect college and career exploration and selection processes: Working with teachers to include elements of college applications in course work	68	65	78	75	66	65	73
College affordability planning: Using student FAFSA completion data to monitor application progress	54	56	44	78	56	52	63

*6–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = completely fair to hold counselors accountable

See Appendix C for full text

Table 41: Proportion of Middle School Counselors Who Believe It Is Fair* to Hold School Counselors Accountable for the Example Activities

	Middle School %	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (75% +) %	Accountable to Student Outcomes %	Accountable to Outcomes and Activities %
Connect college and career exploration and selection processes: Providing students with information about different types of colleges and institutions	81	85	81	90
Enrichment and Extracurricular Engagement: Teaching students how to identify and research colleges, careers, and technical schools that match their interests and abilities	78	84	78	89
College and career assessments: Creating opportunities for all students to link assessments to college and career goals	77	80	76	86
College affordability planning: Providing early information to parents and students about ways to plan and pay for college	73	81	74	81
Academic planning for college and career: Examining enrollment, performance, and completion data for advanced courses to ensure equity	67	72	68	79
College aspirations: Collaborating with teachers to connect their course content to colleges and careers	64	72	63	78

*6–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = completely fair to hold counselors accountable

See Appendix C for full text.

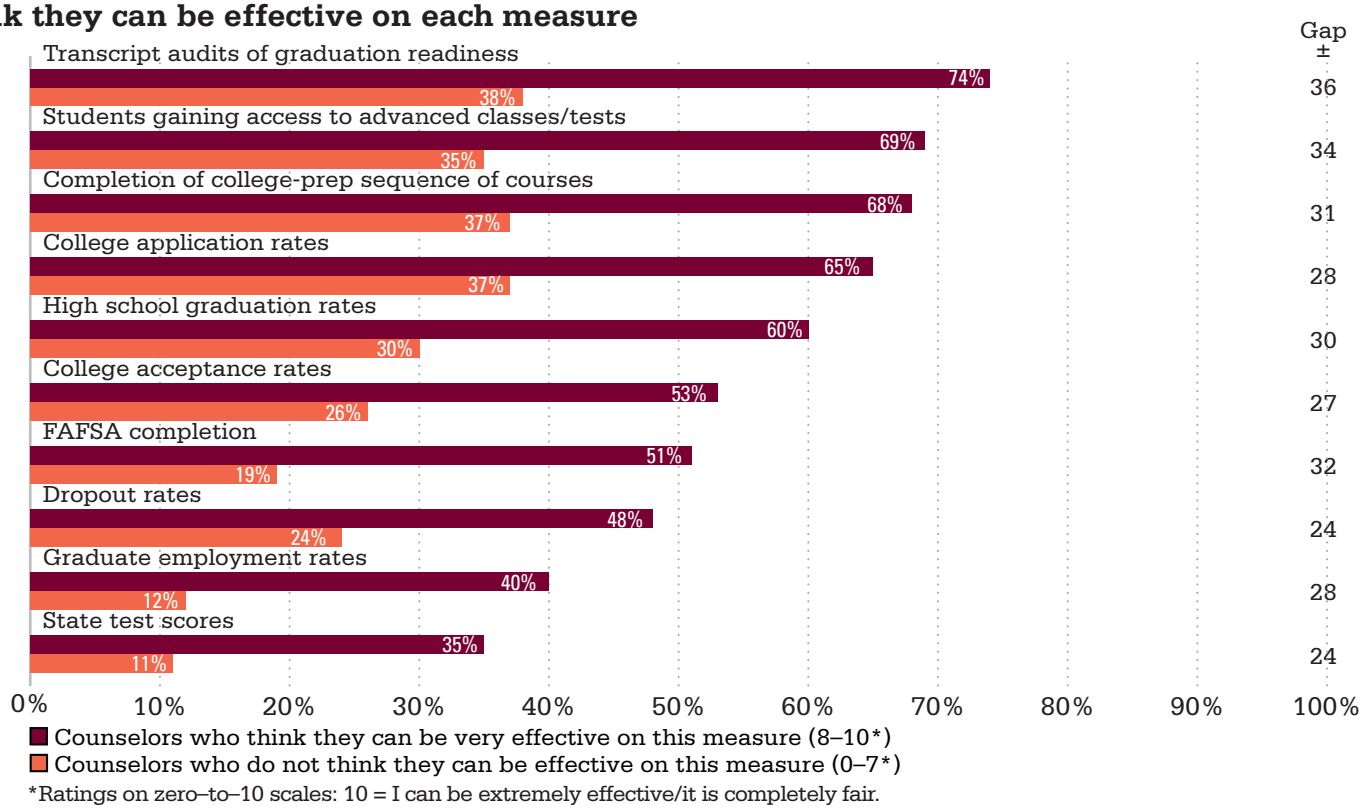
These results are shown in the figure below, where the gap between those who see little room for improvement and those who see a great amount of space for improvement is, at its lowest, 24 points (dropout rates and state test scores).

Among counselors who see little or a moderate amount of room for improvement, there is a striking lack of agreement about which measures fairly could be included as a measurement of their effectiveness. The most popular item, transcript audits of graduation readiness, only gains the support of 38% of low- to moderate-improvement counselors. In comparison, only the item, state tests scores, is rated lower by counselors (35%) at schools where there is a lot of room for improvement. Clearly, counselors who see room for improvement are more prepared to be held accountable than are those who hesitate to identify measures on which they could be more effective.

Administrators' Views of the Fairness of Different Accountability Measures

Although middle school and high school administrators have a noticeably different opinion from counselors about what is a fair measure of counselor effectiveness, the differences are not pronounced or dramatic. Among those who rate a measure a six or higher on a scale of zero-to-10, with 10 meaning it is completely fair to use the measure to assess counselor effectiveness, the most surprising difference may be between high school and middle school administrators.

High school counselors who say it is fair to be held accountable (6–10*) by whether they think they can be effective on each measure



*Ratings on zero–to–10 scales: 10 = I can be extremely effective/it is completely fair.

Middle school administrators are less willing than high school administrators to describe most of the measures as fair. The only measures that a majority of administrators rate as a six or higher are middle school completion rates (62%) and promotion from grade to grade (59%). Middle school completion rates (46%) and promotion from grade to grade (38%) also are the same measures that middle school counselors rate the highest, although neither measure receives a rating of six or higher from a majority. Middle school counselors and administrators are less likely to say that counselors should be held accountable for students' progress after they leave middle school. For example, only 29% of middle school counselors and 42% of middle school administrators say it is fair to hold middle school counselors accountable for college acceptance rates or high school grades (26% counselors, 35% administrators).

High school administrators are more willing to identify measures in which they can assess counselors fairly than high school counselors, creating a stark contrast with middle school administrators. As shown in Table 43, high school administrators are especially more likely to identify noncollege measures, such as transcripts of graduation readiness (82% administrators, compared with 60% counselors), high school graduation rates (75% administrators, compared with 52% counselors), and dropout rates (63% administrators, compared with 37% counselors). The only measures that fail to receive majority endorsement from administrators are graduate employment rates (49% administrators, compared with 23% counselors) and state test scores (45% administrators, 22% counselors).

Common Core State Standards

Few counselors can be considered experts on the Common Core State Standards, as only 37% would rate themselves as an eight, nine, or 10 in terms of knowledge about Common Core State Standards. Even fewer have received training (30% rate themselves as an eight or higher). In general, counselors are aware of their lack of knowledge, with fully 59% of counselors rating themselves as needing more training.

Private school counselors generally are a little less knowledgeable about Common Core State Standards (32% private, compared with 38% public), and also have less training (21% private, compared with 31% public) and feel less need to receive more training (44% private, compared with 61% public) than their public school counterparts.

Table 42: Proportion of Middle School Counselors and Administrators Who Believe It Is Fair* to Use This Measure or Changes in This Measure to Assess Effectiveness of School Counselors

	Middle School Counselors %	Middle School Administrators %
Middle school completion rates	46	62
Promotion from grade to grade	38	59
Dropout rates	37	49
High school graduation rates	36	47
Access to Algebra I in grade 8	31	44
College acceptance rates	29	42
Student high school grades	26	35
Completion of Algebra I	25	35
State test scores	24	30

*6–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = completely fair to use this measure or changes in this measure to assess counselors' effectiveness

Table 43: Proportion of High School Administrators and Counselors Who Believe It Is Fair* to Use This Measure or Changes in This Measure to Assess Effectiveness of School Counselors

	High School Counselors %	High School Administrators %
Transcript audits of graduation readiness	60	82
Completion of college-prep sequence of courses	59	78
Students gaining access to advanced classes/tests	58	75
College application rates	57	74
High school graduation rates	52	75
College acceptance rates	43	63
Dropout rates	37	63
FAFSA completion	36	67
Graduate employment rates	23	49
State test scores	22	45

*6–10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = completely fair to use this measure or changes in this measure to assess counselors' effectiveness

Even though 35% of middle school counselors rate themselves as eight, nine, or 10 in terms of training received, besting the 28% of high school counselors who rate themselves the same, they still identify training as a bigger need (64%) than their high school counterparts (58%).

Looking at Table 45, administrators believe themselves to be far more knowledgeable about the Common Core State Standards, with three-quarters giving themselves an eight or higher on a zero-to-10 scale. Further, only 9% of administrators give themselves a rating of five or lower, with essentially no variation between middle and high school administrators.

Administrators are in even stronger agreement that counselors should receive training in the Common Core State Standards, with 88% agreeing with an eight or higher.

Table 44: Counselors' Assessment* of Their Knowledge/Training on Common Core State Standards

	All Counselors %	Middle School %	High School %	Public School %	Private School %
I am knowledgeable about standards					
8–10	37	38	36	38	32
6–7	20	19	21	20	20
0–5	42	42	42	41	45
Mean	5.7	5.7	5.8	5.8	5.3
I have received training on standards					
8–10	30	35	28	31	21
6–7	14	14	14	15	13
0–5	55	49	57	53	65
Mean	4.6	5.0	4.5	4.7	3.6
I would like more training on standards					
8–10	59	64	58	61	44
6–8	14	11	15	14	14
0–5	25	23	25	23	38
Mean	7.2	7.4	7.1	7.3	6.2

*Based on ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = statement is completely true

Table 45: Administrators' Assessment* of Their Knowledge and Counselors' Need for Training on Common Core State Standards

	All Administrators %	Middle School %	High School %
I am knowledgeable about standards			
8–10	75	76	75
6–7	15	14	15
0–5	9	10	9
Mean	8.2	8.1	8.2
Counselors should be trained in standards			
8–10	88	89	87
6–8	6	7	6
0–5	4	4	4
Mean	9.0	9.0	9.0

*Based on ratings on zero-to-10 scale: 10 = statement is completely true

Appendix A: Profile of America's Counselors

The 2nd Annual National Survey of School Counselors reveals a school counselor population that is unchanged from the 2011 survey. America's school counselors are primarily female and highly educated but represent the wide range of schools, backgrounds, and challenges that characterize the American education system.

Gender

Women continue to dominate the school counselor population, with three women for every man in the profession. The overall proportion of women (78%) holds throughout middle schools (79%), high schools (77%), public schools (78%), and private schools (76%). Counselors are slightly more likely to be female in Title I schools (82%), but this proportion regresses to 74% at schools that do not have a Title I Schoolwide program.

Age

Counselors represent a wide, fairly evenly distributed range of ages from 25 to 65 (see Table 46). This age range

Table 46: Counselor Age by Grade Level and School Type

	All Counselors %	Middle School %	High School %	Public %	Private %
18–24	-	-	-	-	-
25–29	6	5	6	6	8
30–34	10	11	10	11	7
35–39	13	15	13	13	11
40–44	14	13	14	14	10
45–49	13	12	13	13	12
50–54	13	12	13	13	12
55–59	15	14	15	15	16
60–64	12	12	12	11	18
65–69	3	4	3	3	5
70–74	1	1	1	1	1
75 and over	0	1	-	-	-
Proportion of all counselors	100	27	73	89	10

Table 47: Counselor Race

	All Counselors %	Middle School %	High School %	Public %	Private %
White (including Portuguese, Brazilian, Persian, and Middle Eastern)	77	73	78	76	83
Hispanic or Latino	13	13	13	13	13
Yes, Mexican	5	4	5	5	5
Yes, Puerto Rican	1	1	2	1	1
Yes, other	7	8	6	7	7
No, not Hispanic or Latino	79	76	80	79	81
I do not wish to respond	8	11	7	8	6
Black or African American (including African and Afro-Caribbean)	10	11	10	10	3
American Indian or Alaska Native	2	2	2	2	3
Asian or Asian American (including Indian subcontinent)	2	2	2	2	5
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	1	1	1	1	1
I do not wish to respond	11	14	10	11	9

is similar to last year's survey and does not change much between middle school and high school counselors. Private counselors, however, tend to be older than their public school counterparts, with 52% of private school counselors being over the age of 50, while only 43% of public school counselors are in the same age range.

Race and Ethnicity

School counselors come from a diverse set of racial and ethnic backgrounds (see Table 47). Ten percent identify themselves as black or African American, along with 13% who identify themselves as Hispanic or Latino. Among those who are Hispanic or Latino, 5% are Mexican, 1% are Puerto Rican, and 7% are from other Hispanic origins.

Private school counselors are more likely to be white (83%), while African Americans and Hispanics are more likely to work in schools serving those populations, where each ethnicity makes up one-quarter of the counselor population. Hispanic and African American counselors also are more likely to work at Title I schools and urban high schools and in cities.

Education and Degrees Earned

America's counselors are well educated, with most focusing their education on counselor-specific degrees — probably because most counseling positions require a master's degree. While only 1 in 4 has a bachelor's degree in education, well over three-quarters (83%) have a Master of Education or Master of Arts that specializes in school counseling. Of note, very few counselors have any education beyond the master's level, with only 1% reporting a Ph.D. or Ed.D. in counselor education.

High school counselors actually are less likely to have a bachelor's degree in education than are middle school counselors (24% high school, compared with 26% middle school). The same pattern occurs in public and private schools, as private school counselors are less likely to have a bachelor's degree in education (23% private, compared with 25% public) than public school counselors.

Only 15% of America's counselors have not received any type of graduate training that relates to student counseling, including 16% of high school counselors and 12% of middle school counselors. While barely 1 in 10 public school

Table 48: Degrees Earned by Grade Level and School Type

	All Counselors %	Middle School %	High School %	Public School %	Private School %
BA (teaching/education)	25	26	24	25	23
BA/BS (major OTHER than education)	42	35	44	41	52
Master of Education with specialty in school counseling	56	56	56	58	37
Master of Arts with specialty in school counseling	27	30	26	28	18
Master's degree in social work (MSW)	2	3	1	2	2
Master's degree in educational psychology	3	3	2	3	1
Ed.S. with specialty in school counseling	4	4	4	4	2
Ed.S. with specialty in pupil services administration	1	1	1	1	1
Ph.D./Ed.D. in counselor education	1	2	1	1	1
Ph.D./Ed.D. in education leadership	1	2	1	1	1
Ph.D. in counseling psychology	-	1	-	-	-
Other	27	24	27	25	39

Table 49: Educational Attainment by Grade Level and School Type

	All Counselors %	Middle School %	High School %	Public School %	Private School %
Have graduate degree training with specialty in school counseling	85	88	84	89	55
Do not have graduate degree training with specialty in school counseling	15	12	16	11	45

Table 50: Additional Training Among Counselors Who Did Not Attend a Graduate Program for School Counseling

	All Counselors %	Middle School %	High School %	Public School %	Private School %
On the job	49	28	54	34	83
Workshops, conferences, in-service training	43	26	47	30	73
Specialized certificate programs, including online certificates	12	9	13	13	8
Graduate course(s) not part of my degree program	32	37	31	37	20
Other	39	47	37	49	18
No training	2	-	2	-	5

counselors lacks a counseling degree from a graduate program (11%), nearly half of private school counselors lack the same education (45%).

Of those who did not receive training for student counseling from a graduate program, one-half received training for their career on the job. Among private school counselors, this proportion jumps to 83%, with another 73% receiving training from workshops, conferences, or in-service training. Counselors over the age of 50 are more likely to have received training while taking other graduate programs (37% over 50, compared with 28% under 50), but counselors under the age of 50 are more likely to have received a specialized certificate, such as an online degree (9% over 50, compared with 15% under 50).

Certification

In addition to educational training, most counselors achieve additional certification at some point in their careers. Nearly all counselors (89%) have received certification from their state's department of education, including 93% of public school counselors (only 49% of private school counselors have received state certification) and 96% of counselors with a graduate degree in school counseling. In addition, 59% of counselors have graduated from a CACREP program, including 40% of private school counselors.

Table 51: Certification ✓

	All Counselors %	Middle School %	High School %	Public School %	Private School %	Grad Degree in School Counseling %	Grad Degree Other %	BA/BS Only %
Certified by state's department of education	89	93	87	93	49	96	59	42
National Certified School Counselor	7	10	6	8	3	8	6	2
NBPTS certification	4	7	3	5	3	5	3	1
National Certified Counselor	12	13	11	12	6	12	8	6
CACREP graduate	59	65	57	61	40	65	29	23

Prior Work Experience

Half of current counselors have prior work experience as teachers, including middle school (53%), high school (51%), public school (52%), and private school (54%) counselors. An additional 29% of counselors have no prior work experience, with only private school counselors distinctly less likely to not have any prior work experience (19%). Private school counselors are instead much more likely to have been an administrator (36% private, compared with 12% overall) or have worked in the private sector (35% private, compared with 18% overall).

Younger counselors are less likely to have prior experience as teachers, as only 1 in 3 counselors under the age of 40 has worked as a teacher before becoming a counselor. On the opposite side, 73% of counselors age 60 or older were teachers at one point. Schools that are at least 75% minority or at least 75% free or reduced-price lunch are slightly more likely to have counselors who used to be teachers (57% for each) than the national average.

Table 52: Prior Work Experience

	All Counselors %	Middle School %	High School %	Public School %	Private School %	Grad Degree in School Counseling %	Grad Degree Other %	BA/BS Only %
Teacher	52	53	51	52	54	53	41	50
Administrator	12	8	13	9	36	9	19	30
Private sector for at least 3 years	18	16	19	17	35	17	22	26
Nonprofit sector for at least 3 years	13	14	13	12	22	12	23	24
Government sector for at least 3 years	8	9	7	8	7	8	11	7
No prior work experience	29	28	29	30	19	29	31	23

Appendix B: U.S. Census Regions

Northeast
Connecticut
Maine
Massachusetts
New Hampshire
New Jersey
New York
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
Vermont

South
Alabama
Arkansas
Delaware
District of Columbia
Florida
Georgia
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maryland
Mississippi
North Carolina
Oklahoma
South Carolina
Tennessee
Texas
Virginia
West Virginia

Midwest
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kansas
Michigan
Minnesota
Missouri
Nebraska
North Dakota
Ohio
South Dakota
Wisconsin

West
Alaska
Arizona
California
Colorado
Hawaii
Idaho
Montana
Nevada
New Mexico
Oregon
Utah
Washington
Wyoming

Appendix C: Eight Components/Specific Example Action Items

Full Text of the Eight Components and Specific Example Action Items[6]

Component	Description of Broad Component	High School Example Activity	Middle School Example Activity
College aspirations	Build a college-going culture by nurturing in students the confidence to aspire to college. Maintain high expectations by providing adequate support and conveying the conviction that all students can succeed in college.	Collaborating with teachers and administrators to review attendance, discipline, promotion/retention, and GPA policies to ensure equity for all student groups.	Collaborating with teachers to connect their course content to college and careers so students understand how their interests, talents, and abilities link to postsecondary goals.
Academic planning for college and career readiness	Advance students' planning, preparation, participation, and performance in a rigorous academic program that connects to their college and career aspirations and goals.	Ensuring that all students have a program of study that meets the requirements for admission to in-state universities or creates a pathway to industry and technology licenses and certifications.	Examining enrollment, performance, and completion data for rigorous, honors, and accelerated courses, reviewing policies to ensure equity for all students.
Enrichment and extracurricular engagement	Ensure equitable exposure to a wide range of extracurricular opportunities that build leadership, nurture talents and interests, and increase engagement with school.	Developing policies and procedures to distribute scholarship applications so all students receive materials that match their interests, talents, and educational and career goals.	Teaching students how to identify and research colleges, careers, and technical schools that offer majors and extracurricular activities that appeal to students' interests and abilities.
Connect college and career exploration and selection processes	Provide early and ongoing exposure to experiences and information necessary to make informed decisions when selecting a college or career that connects to academic preparation and future aspirations.	Working with teachers to include elements of college applications such as personal statements into their courses and helping them to write recommendations that highlight student assets.	Providing students with information about different types of institutions (e.g., two- and four-year, public and private, in-state and out-of-state).
College and career assessments	Promote preparation and participation in college and career assessments by all students.	Providing test preparation that includes overcoming test anxiety, types of test questions and directions, how to make an educated guess, registration, scoring, and fee waivers.	Creating opportunities for all students, especially underserved groups, to learn how to use assessments to link their academic planning and career and college exploration to future career options.
College affordability planning	Provide information about college costs, financing, and the financial aid and scholarship processes, so students are able to plan for and afford a college education.	Using student FAFSA completion data to monitor application completion, to make application updates and corrections, and to ensure students receive and review aid reports.	Providing early information to parents and students about ways to plan and pay for college, including information about grants, scholarships, loans, work-study, and saving plans.
College and career admission processes	Ensure that students and families have an early and ongoing understanding of the application and admission processes so they can find the postsecondary options that are the best fit with their aspirations and interests.	Providing students with college application completion procedures and checklists, calendars, and school comparison tools to assist them with completing applications and making their final decisions.	N/A
Transition from high school graduation to college enrollment	Connect students to school and community resources to help ensure a successful transition from high school to college.	Helping 12th-grade students request final transcripts, fill out forms, take placement tests, and gather health records and IEP information as needed as they make the transition from graduation to college.	N/A

6. The College Board (2011). *High School Counselor Guide: NOSCA's Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling.*

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