PREPARE
Rhode Island

THE RHODE ISLAND FRAMEWORK

FOR COMPREHENSIVE K-12

SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAMS 2.0

June 2021

RIDE Rhode Island
Department
of Education

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The Introduction and Purpose of

The Rhode Island Framework for

K12 School Counseling Programs 2.0

In 2017, the PrepareRI initiative was launched when Rhode Island was awarded a New Skills for Youth grant by JP Morgan Chase and the Council of Chief State School Officers. The initiative is a collaborative partnership amongst Rhode Island's Governor's office, the Governor's Workforce Board (GWB), Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (OPC) and Rhode Island Commerce Corporation. The work of PrepareRI strives to assist all youth in the state of Rhode Island with opportunities to achieve the skills necessary for employment in high demand, high wage jobs.

One of the early projects completed under the PrepareRI umbrella was to improve the delivery and structure of Individual Learning Plans (ILP), which emphasized the need for all students in our state to have access to a comprehensive school counseling program. The Rhode Island Department of Education committed to the value of school counselors, as a component of the PrepareRI work, and in 2018 hired a school counseling fellow to assist with implementation of the ILP redesign. Since that time, several PrepareRI Ambassadors have focused on projects related to enhancing the ILP, increasing career awareness and exploration opportunities associated with the ILP, and supporting the school counseling fellow with training and promotion of this work. The commitment to the value of comprehensive school counseling programs was further strengthened by the PrepareRI School Counseling Corps initiative released in fall, 2020. The funds from this project support the hiring of ten high school counselors for a three year time period and provides for training on the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model for the selected schools and their feeder programs. The premise of this project is to redesign school counseling in Rhode Island.

With the commitment to school counselors across the state solidified, it was determined that a component of the PrepareRI Ambassador work related to school counseling should be some updates to the original Rhode Island Framework for K-12 Comprehensive School Counseling, originally published in 2005. The purpose of this Framework 2.0 is to assist schools and districts with practical suggestions for designing and implementing a comprehensive school counseling program aligned with the ASCA National Model (fourth edition) that includes the required components of the ILP and the Rhode Island School Counseling Competencies for students. This

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document should serve as a guide to enhance and improve on the work school counselors across the state are engaged in on a daily basis.

Comprehensive in scope, developmental in nature and preventive in design, the implementation of curriculum lessons allow school counselors to positively impact the achievement of all students and demonstrate through data, the vital role they play in a school community. For this reason the work outlined in this document should be seen as an integral component of any district's plans to improve student success. The heart of a school counselor's work is to provide direct and indirect student services to support students' academic, career and social/emotional development, impacting many aspects of a school's priorities. This can be accomplished by establishing a set of beliefs that focus on all students having the capacity to achieve, demonstrate certain skills and be successful in addition to creating program goals and expectations that document this progress.

The hope is that with the implementation of a strong comprehensive school counseling curriculum, school counselors will be seen as leaders and advocates within your school building who collaborate with all stakeholders. School counselors should be empowered as change agents who help all students strive for rigorous academic preparation by closing achievement gaps, minimizing barriers and providing access to opportunities. The result is the creation of a positive learning environment, in which all students feel engaged and supported, with data and outcomes available to generate the proposal of new ideas and initiatives as well as supply the justification for those already in place.

To acknowledge how we arrived at this point there are several people to thank for their efforts. Spencer Sherman, who supported the original PrepareRI initiatives, and saw the importance of school counselors in this work and Wendy Wallace, the current PrepareRI Fellow, who continues to trumpet this importance. Lori Lebrun, Jael Lopes and Stacy Haines-Mayne, PrepareRI Ambassadors, who took on projects designed to move the important work of school counselors forward over the last 4 years. Finally Onna Mechanic-Holland, School Counseling Fellow, who despite her love of working directly with students, took on the role, to move the PrepareRI initiatives forward in a way that best showcased and benefited the school counseling profession.

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Benefits to Stakeholders

The "why" behind the importance of this work can be highlighted by a list like the following. Each district should feel free to add to and/or modify the listed benefits in order to compel the interested parties with supporting the move to a comprehensive school counseling curriculum. All districts in Rhode Island are required to have a K-12 comprehensive curriculum, but the key is making it a reality and not just on paper.

Benefits for Students

- Ensures access for all to a school counseling program & curriculum
- Promotes a rigorous academic experience for every student
- Supports development of skills and strategies to increase success
- Facilitates career exploration and planning to support future goals
- Assists with the preparation necessary to meet future challenges and next steps
- Monitors data to facilitate improvement in delivery of services
- Promotes social/ emotional development and fosters self advocacy

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Benefits for Parents/Guardians

- Guarantees equitable access to academic planning and support strategies for all
- Promotes and encourages opportunities to advocate for their children's needs
- Prepares students for future goals through college and career readiness activities
- Provides data for continuous information on student progress
- Increases parent engagement and chances for parent/school collaboration

Benefits for School Counselors

- Facilitates the elimination of non-school counseling program responsibilities while clearly defining the role
- Recognizes and enhances role as leaders, advocates and agents of change
- Provides access to and supports delivery of content to all students
- Allows for program implementation, accountability and evaluation
- Enhances the role's contribution to the school mission
- Maximizes the potential for collaboration to support student success

Benefits for Teachers

- Analyzes data to improve school climate and student achievement
- Promotes an interdisciplinary team approach to address student needs
- Supports academic success of each student
- Assist with the development of classroom management skills
- Fosters consultation and collaboration

Benefits for Administrators

- Provides a proactive approach to address students' needs and promotes student success
- Defines school counselor responsibilities in supporting all students
- Ensures equity and access to a quality school counseling program for every student
- Utilizes data to develop goals for the counseling program
- Monitors data for school improvement and advocates for change as a result

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Benefits for Business, Industry & Community Partners

- Creates community awareness of the required systems of support necessary to promote student success.
- Supports the future workforce through quality preparation of students
- Prepares every student for advanced educational opportunities
- Motivates every student to seek a wide range of postsecondary options
- Provides an increased opportunity for collaboration and participation within the school community

The ASCA National Model (Fourth Edition)

The American School Counselor Association's (ASCA) National Model for school counseling programs was initially published in 2003 and is currently in its fourth edition (released in 2019). This model is the basis of the information contained in this document. To learn more or to order a copy of the ASCA National Model: Framework for School Counseling Programs visit schoolcounselor.org
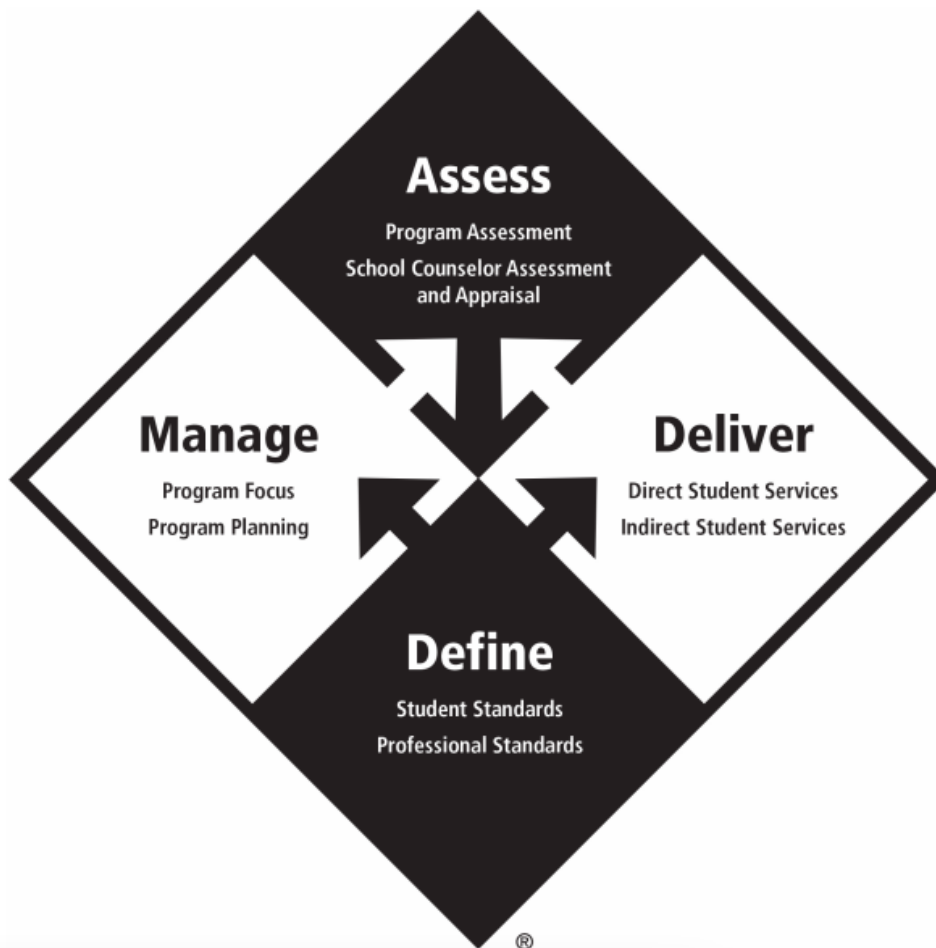
The ASCA National Model diamond is a registered trademark of the American School Counselor Association.

DEFINE

The basis that defines a School Counseling program should be a set standards for both the students and the professionals delivering the content. There is no need to reinvent the wheel as these documents already exist for your use. The documents have been linked below.

Student Standards:

[ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success: K-12 College- and Career-Readiness for Every Student](#)

American School Counselor Association (2014). Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success: K-12 College- and Career-Readiness Standards for Every Student. Alexandria, VA: Author.

All 35 Mindsets and Behaviors should be addressed at some point during a student's K-12 school career. As a guide to your instruction, advising and counseling practices, each school/district should create an action plan that links the Mindsets & Behaviors to specific activities and lessons at each grade level, reviewing the plan to ensure all aspects are covered. Analyze your district's data to help determine which standards should be utilized at each grade level to accomplish your established goals. Your action plan should include activities that touch on the three domains: academic, career and social/emotional development. The Individual Learning Plan components should be embedded activities as part of the action plan that assists students with developing the mindsets and demonstrating the behaviors. Flexibility is allowed in the scope and sequence (as long as all the opportunities are provided) so adapt it as your school or district sees fit. The below document (available as part of the ASCA National Model Templates found [here](#)) can assist your school/district with this process.

AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION
Classroom and Group
Mindsets & Behaviors Action Plan

The ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors guide the planning and delivery of all student activities and interventions. The purpose of the classroom and group Mindsets & Behaviors action plan is to provide an overview of the delivery of direct services in large group (LG), classroom (Class) and small group (SG) settings. This plan presents the topics addressed, and the annual calendar presents schedule of all classroom and groups activities.

Use the classroom and group Mindsets & Behaviors action plan to identify all ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors addressed through classroom and group activities. While some activities address multiple ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors, list the activity with the primary mindset or behavior addressed by the activity. It is not necessary to repeat activities with all ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors addressed through that activity.

School Name:

Mindsets	Activity	Participants	Class/LG	SG
M 1. Belief in development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/emotional and physical well-being				
M 2. Self-confidence in ability to succeed				
M 3. Sense of belonging in the school environment				
M 4. Understanding that postsecondary education and lifelong learning are necessary for long-term career success				

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Rhode Island School Counseling Competencies

The school counseling competencies were established to define and measure the specific grade-level knowledge, attitudes, and skills students should obtain and demonstrate as a result of participating in a standards-based school counseling program. Your district or school can create specific student competencies that align with your mission, goals or relevant school data in addition to those outlined in Rhode Island's document. Additional competencies can also be developed based on a needs assessment or advisory council feedback

Individual Learning Plan Implementation Toolkit (Scope & Sequence starts on page 17)

The Individual Learning Plan (ILP) should be a building block included in your department's planning of a comprehensive K-12 school counseling program. School counselors should support others within the building to guarantee all students in grades 6-12 have access to an Individual Learning Plan that is regularly reviewed and discussed.

Rhode Island Social Emotional Learning Standards:Competencies for School & Life Success

This accompanying guidance, detailing the indicators, shows how the skills identified by the above social emotional learning (SEL) standards evolve at different grade levels to assist you with embedding the competencies at the appropriate level.

The Rhode Island Crosswalk of Skills and Standards chart can be utilized to link both the ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors and the Rhode Island SEL Standards to other skills and standards needed by both educational institutions and industry partners.

Professional Standards:

ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies

American School Counselor Association (2019). ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies. Alexandria, VA: Author.

The ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies, similar to the student standards, outline the mindsets and behaviors (31 total) that school counselors should exhibit in order to adequately support the needs of students through a school counseling program. The

document can also be useful to administrators in hiring, supporting and evaluating school counselors.

ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors

American School Counselor Association (2016). ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies. Alexandria, VA: Author.

The ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors, originally established in 1984, outline the ethical responsibilities required to maintain integrity and professionalism and ensure equitable access for all students. This document should assist in guiding a counselor's decision making.

Rhode Island Model & Evaluation & Support System: Support Professional (Edition IV)

It is also important to adhere to the professional practice and responsibility expectations outlined for support professionals as part of the Rhode Island evaluation model as well as the student learning requirements. If your district has created and been approved to utilize its own version of the evaluation system, then you would substitute those expectations in lieu of the above linked document.

Each individual should self assess their level of competency in regards to each of the   above documents and are encouraged to engage in professional development opportunities appropriate to their needs.

Manage

The "manage" section of the ASCA National Model provides the organizational and assessment tools necessary to assist school counselors with constructing and designing a program that achieves results. The components guide the development and implementation of a curriculum that targets the individual needs of a school's particular population. This section is divided into two areas: program focus and program planning.

Program Focus
Beliefs

Our individual beliefs are shaped by our personal experiences and background. They inform our behaviors and influence the manner in which we interact with students, families and our fellow educators. Before creating a school counseling program, it is imperative that all individuals involved assess their beliefs as part of an open, candid discussion. Through personal reflection comes the ability to identify biases and limitations that may impact how we deliver curriculum

to the students we serve. It is necessary in our role to advocate for equity and access for all as well as promote social justice which can only be accomplished by knowing how our personal beliefs can affect the work we do.

After discussing the personal belief system of all involved, each program should create a non-negotiable list of beliefs that all members should adhere to. That list should include at a minimum the seven mindsets dictated in the ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards and Competencies (document linked above) and noted here.

School counselors believe:

- M1.   Every student can learn, and every student can succeed.
- M2.   Every student should have access to and opportunity for a high-quality education.
- M3.   Every student should graduate from high school prepared for postsecondary opportunities.
- M4.   Every student should have access to a school counseling program.
- M5.   Effective school counseling is a collaborative process involving school counselors, students, families, teachers, administrators and education stakeholders.
- M6.   School counselors are leaders in the school, district, state and nation.
- M7.   Comprehensive school counseling programs promote and enhance student academic, career and social/emotional outcomes.

Vision

A vision statement for the school counseling program should align with any applicable school and district vision statements and should build upon the established set of beliefs. The vision communicates the desired outcomes anticipated for all students five to fifteen years in the future. It should describe a clear achievable expectation of what successful achievement should look like. The hope is that it will portray the reality of what the program can do for all students. Best practice suggests vision statements should be reviewed and updated at regular intervals (every 5 years for instance) to ensure that it continues to reflect the goals of the program.
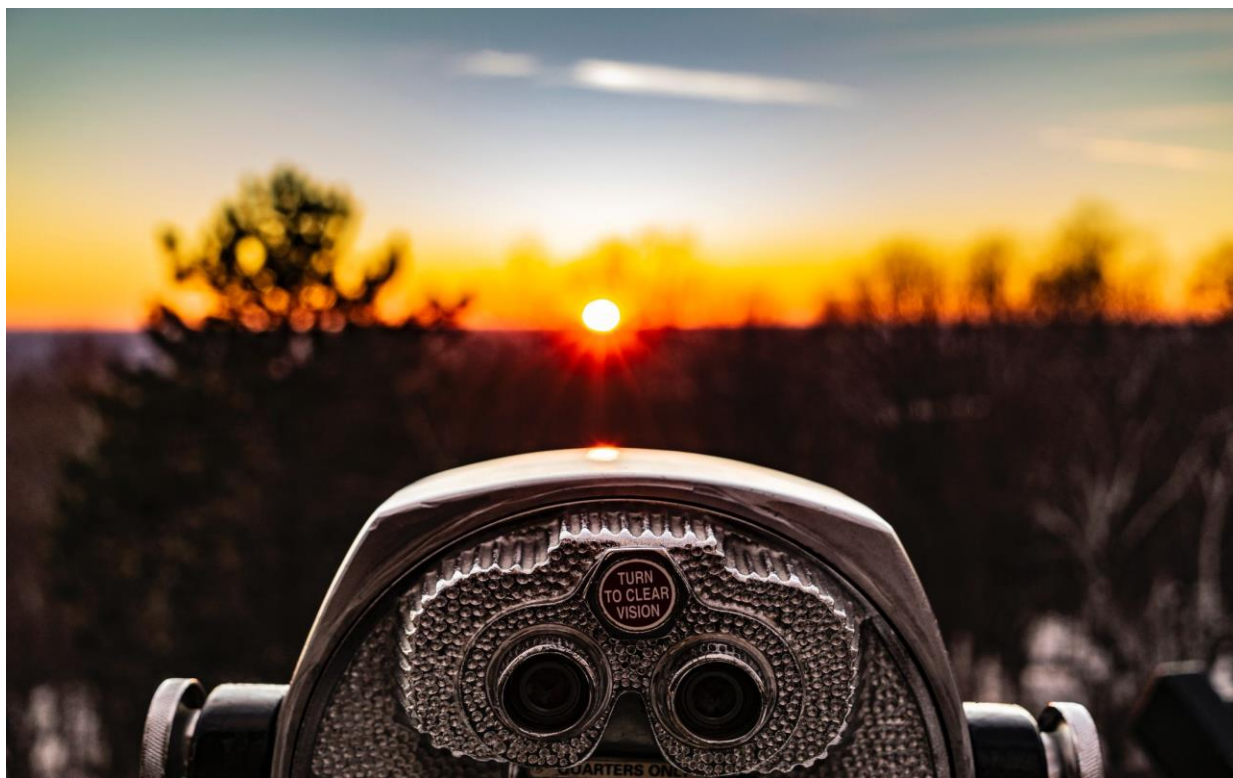
Photo by Matt Noble on Unsplash

Rhode Island has a vision of school counselors as leaders in their respective buildings who utilize data to advocate for and create change that will result in educational equity for all students. School counselors in Rhode Island are integral members of the school team, who implement proactive programs that all students will have access to and benefit from. As a result, all students in Rhode Island will graduate from high school college and career ready, after having been exposed to a wide variety of rigorous opportunities. Our students will be prepared to make a difference in the global society.

Mission

As with the vision statement, the school counseling mission statement should be in line with any applicable school and district mission statements. It describes the purpose of the school counseling program for all involved stakeholders and creates the focus and direction required to meet the established vision. The mission statement should indicate the anticipated results of the program's implementation and emphasize equity, access and success for all students.

During creation of your beliefs, vision and mission statements, which will serve as the foundation for your school counseling program, involve others in your school community as part of the discussion and incorporate any pertinent feedback. It is important to stay focused, while creating these building blocks, on the school counselor's role in advocating for equity, access and the opportunity for all students to achieve and succeed and the results that can be obtained as the result of implementing a comprehensive program. Once these components are created all should be made publicly available through your school and program's website, published documents related to your curriculum and/or posted within your office. In addition, consider including your mission statement as a component of your department's letterhead, email signature or in other forms of communication making everyone aware of what you hope to accomplish.

The mission of Rhode Island Comprehensive School Counseling Programs is to provide a system of supports and interventions that are designed to ensure all students can be productive and contributing members of a global society. School counseling programs, in collaboration with all members of the school community, enhance learning and facilitate the academic, career and social/ emotional development necessary to prepare all students for a successful future.

Program Planning
Data

Data serves many purposes in a comprehensive school counseling curriculum and is an essential component in guaranteeing equitable access for all students. Your program should be efficient in gathering, monitoring, reviewing, analyzing and interpreting data so that counselors can be both data-informed and data-driven. According to the ASCA National Model (4th edition, 2019) the use of data helps school counselors:

• Monitor student progress
• Identify students having difficulties or discipline problems
• Identify barriers to learning
• Understand factors affecting student behavior
• Identify access and equity issues
• Close achievement, opportunity and attainment gaps
• Assess and evaluate the effectiveness of school counseling program activities
• Improve, modify or change services provided to students
• Educate stakeholders about the power of a school counseling program

The first step in determining your school counseling program's priorities (including the beliefs, vision and mission statements) is to identify the data that already exists in your school building. ASCA offers an easy to use school data summary template (linked below) for this purpose. Copies of this template can be downloaded from the ASCA National Model section of the American School Counselor Association website.

School Data Summary

Create your school's data story by reviewing the school improvement plan, school data reports, other data resources (e.g., student behavior surveys, climate surveys, school engagement surveys, etc.).

1.   Identify who in the building can help you. Who is your data expert; who can help you interpret the data?

2.   Identify the school improvement plan goals.
   ●   In which areas can the school counseling program support the work?

   ●   List those goals:

3.   Review available school data reports for previous years to identify trends. For example:
      Is there a subgroup that historically underperforms on standardized achievement? Benchmarks?
Is there a grade level that historically has the most absences?
Is there a subgroup that historically receives the majority of discipline referrals?
      ○   What is working well according to your school data reports?
         ■   Achievement
         ■   Attendance
         ■   Discipline
      ○   Highlight possible areas of need according to your school data reports.
         ■   Achievement
         ■   Attendance
         ■   Discipline

4.   Compare your school's data with district and state data or other comparable data points.

5.   Identify what else you need to know.

6.   Identify and prioritize data points you will address through your school counseling Program.

Data Points	How Addressed Through the School Counseling Program
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

Data that is beneficial to the growth of your school counseling program will come in three types:
Participation data represents who, the number of students involved in your program, how frequently and for how long services are provided.
Mindsets & Behavior data represents what, the attitude, knowledge and skills being delivered to students through your program.
Outcome data represents the why, how is your program impacting students' achievement, attendance and discipline.
Monitoring the three types of data assists school counselors with identifying students in need of interventions and helps to demonstrate for stakeholders the difference the counseling program is making for students.

The key is identifying which data your program should choose to focus on and track based on the needs of your individual school. A data review should take place annually, at a minimum, to assist with determining these needs and ideally should involve other members of your school community beyond the counseling staff. The review should identify where gaps in services exist and what interventions should be targeted to define and outline the program's goals for the year. It is impossible to direct our time and resources in every possible direction, especially if our staffing numbers are below the recommended 250:1 ratio. Data analysis is valuable in outlining our priorities and dictating where our efforts should be focused in any given year.

Annual Student Outcome Goals

Student outcome goals, determined annually based on gaps identified in the previously mentioned data review, outline the measurable impact the school counseling department hopes to have on student achievement, attendance or discipline. As noted in the ASCA National Model these goals:

- Are based on school outcome data
- Promote improved student achievement, attendance or discipline
- Give focus to the school counseling program
- Are written to be implemented over the course of one school year
- Are written using the ASCA SMART goal template

SMART goals are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound

Action Plans

Action plans should be created to help design the specific instruction being utilized in classroom, group and individual settings. An action plan outlines a description of the activity being delivered, the target audience for which it is designed as well as where and when the instruction will take place. An action plan should highlight the chosen ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors being addressed. Action plans should be revised and updated at least on an annual basis based on the data.

Action plans fall into two categories: **classroom and group Mindsets & Behavior action plans** (an example template of which is included on page 8 of this document) and **closing-the-gap action plan/ results report**. The first allows counseling programs to guarantee all students receive access to the chosen activities and provides an opportunity to document that all Mindsets & Behaviors have been tackled and addressed. The effectiveness of any action plan should be assessed allowing you to adjust and modify the plan as necessary.

A closing-the-gap action plan should include a specific goal being addressed as well as the intended impact of said plan and the means by which the success of the plan will be evaluated. It is essential that data be collected and analyzed at regular intervals to determine the effectiveness and progress of the closing- the-gap action plan. The creation of these action plans allows school counselors to advocate for the specific needs of the population they serve and design a curriculum that meets those needs.

Lesson Plans

Lesson plans allow the successful delivery of desired action plans' content, knowledge and skills. Lesson plans dictate what will be presented, how that information will be delivered and to whom as well as outline a method for evaluating what students have attained in regards to the content.

The ASCA National Model (4th edition, 2019) believes all lesson plans should include:
- ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors: Identify from 1-3 that will guide the content
- Learning Objectives: Clearly stated and measurable
- Materials: What is necessary to deliver the lesson
- Evidence Base: How to determine current level of understanding
- Procedure: Lesson introduction, presentation & practice of content, summary
- Evaluation Plan: How will participation and outcome data be measured
- Follow up: Plan for student who did not master content

ASCA offers an easy to use lesson plan template (a portion is linked below) to assist with creation. This is an especially helpful tool to utilize as a starting point for counselors who lack classroom teaching experience. Copies of this template can be downloaded from the ASCA National Model section of the American School Counselor Association website.

AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION **Lesson Plan**

Lesson Plan for		(lesson title)

School Counselor:	
Target Audience:	
Mindsets & Behaviors: (limit of three)	

Lesson		Of		

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Learning Objective(s)/Competency	
Students will:	
Students will:	
Materials:	
Evidence Base:	
- Best Practice - Action Research - Research-Informed - Evidence-Based	
Procedure: Describe how you will:	
Introduce:	
Communicate Lesson Objective:	
Teach Content:	
Practice Content:	
Summarize:	
Close:	

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Annual Administrative Conference

Early each school year the members of the school counseling staff should arrange a formal meeting with any administrators who oversee and evaluate the department. According to the ASCA National Model, that discussion should include:

• School counseling program priorities
• How school counseling goals align with the school's goals
• How school counselors currently use time and how they would like to in the future
• Ratios and caseload
• Direct and indirect services to be delivered
• Advisory council dates and members
• Plans for professional development
• The school counselor's role on committees or other professional work

The meeting should allow all parties to come to agreement about the role of school counselors in the building and their support in helping the school achieve its vision, mission and goals. Ideally the outcomes discussed at the conference are documented, agreed upon and signed by all involved parties.

Use of Time

One of the key components that should be worked out at the annual administrative conference is the counseling staff's use of time. A minimum of 80% of a school counselor's time should be spent in direct and indirect student services (more specifics will follow in the Deliver section). The maximum amount of time spent on program planning and school support should be 20% and ideally 0% of time should be spent on non-counseling duties. There are tools and resources available to assist with tracking a counselor's use of time that should be utilized a minimum of twice a year by each department member to assist with gathering a snapshot for completing the table attached below. In addition the list of appropriate and inappropriate activities for school counselors provided by ASCA is included below to help in your advocating pursuits.

Use of Time from Previous School Year			
Direct Student Services	**Indirect Student Services**	**Program Planning and School Support**	**Non-School-Counseling Duties**
%	%	%	%
Use-of-Time Plan for Current School Year			
Direct Student Services	**Indirect Student Services**	**Program Planning and School Support**	**Non-Counseling Duties**
%	%	%	%

Appropriate and Inappropriate Activities for School Counselors

Appropriate Activities for School Counselors	Inappropriate Activities for School Counselors
advisement and appraisal for academic planning	building the master schedule
orientation, coordination and academic advising for new students	coordinating paperwork and data entry of all new students
interpreting cognitive, aptitude and achievement tests	coordinating cognitive, aptitude and achievement testing programs
providing counseling to students who are tardy or absent	signing excuses for students who are tardy or absent
providing counseling to students who have disciplinary problems	performing disciplinary actions or assigning discipline consequences
providing short-term individual and small-group counseling services to students	providing long-term counseling in schools to address psychological disorders
consulting with teachers to schedule and present school counseling curriculum lessons based on developmental needs and needs identified through data	covering classes when teachers are absent or to create teacher planning time
interpreting student records	maintaining student records
analyzing grade-point averages in relationship to achievement	computing grade-point averages
consulting with teachers about building classroom connections, effective classroom management and the role of noncognitive factors in student success	supervising classrooms or common areas
protecting student records and information per state and federal regulations	keeping clerical records
consulting with the school principal to identify and resolve student issues, needs and problems	assisting with duties in the principal's office
advocating for students at individual education plan meetings, student study teams and school attendance review boards, as necessary	coordinating schoolwide individual education plans, student study teams, response to intervention plans, MTSS and school attendance review boards
analyzing disaggregated schoolwide and school counseling program data	serving as a data entry clerk

Calendars

To assist with establishing a program in which at least 80% of your time is spent providing service to students, it is important for school counseling departments to publish an annual calendar of events that can serve to keep students, parents, other educators and administration aware of what is happening. Publishing the document assists with the ability to advocate for your role providing the need to be accountable for the activities listed on it. The

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annual calendar should be formatted for easy use and be designed to grab the viewer's attention. It might be helpful to break the calendar into a month by month format.

In addition, individual counselors should maintain weekly calendars that outline a detailed plan of what each person will be doing. Due to the nature of the school counseling position, it is important to build flexibility into the weekly calendar to deal with unexpected crises. It is important to document however if unavoidable circumstances begin to take over the majority of your calendar and create a plan to manage how best to approach this problem. A weekly calendar can help to assist in documenting a counselor's use of time as well as provide a record keeping of all students each counselor interacted with.

Advisory Council

An advisory council should be established as part of each school's counseling program to assist with reviewing outcome goals and results. The council can also offer feedback and recommendations on implementation of the anticipated curriculum activities as well as assist in public relations to garner necessary funding and resources. The group (ideally 8-20 members) should include a representative sample of all involved stakeholders and should anticipate meeting at least twice a year (once at the beginning and once at the end). Agendas should be set for each meeting, minutes should be kept as a record of what was discussed and a chairperson should be chosen.

Deliver

The "deliver" component addresses the manner in which school counselors should interact with and provide services to students. Eighty percent of a school counselor's time should be spent in delivery of the program, which includes direct and indirect student services. Broader explanations of the expectations that fall under each type of service are dictated below.

Direct Student Services

Direct student services include *instruction, appraisal and advisement and counseling.* The first two can be delivered in classroom, small group or individual settings while the later is more appropriate for small group and individual sessions only. The teaching of a comprehensive school counseling curriculum delivered to all students by the counseling staff (or designee's under their supervision, using established lesson plans) as well as academic, career and social/emotional activities fall under the instruction umbrella. Appraisal involves analyzing and

assessing students skills, interests, abilities and achievements. Following up on these assessments and inventories (for instance many of those expected as a component of the Individual Learning Plan) by helping students see their potential, establish goals and make decisions based on the results would fall under the category of advisement. Counseling involves supporting individuals through stress, transition, change and other concerns that would impact their ability to be successful. It should be considered short term and assist students with identifying the issue and developing alternate strategies to support desired outcomes. School counselors should collaborate with families to identify appropriate community resources for students who require longer term support or are in immediate danger of harm.

Indirect Student Services

Indirect student services are designed to benefit students and promote their success but generally involve meetings with parents, teachers and other pertinent educators, administration and outside agencies to discuss either the individual needs of a student or systemic change that could benefit a group of students. The purpose of indirect services is to both share and gather necessary information designed to support student success and troubleshoot any potential concerns or problems. There are three strategies that fall under the indirect student services category: *consultation, collaboration and referrals.* Consultation involves both providing and requesting feedback designed to support a specific student(s)' needs. Collaboration occurs anytime a school counselor engages in a teaming meeting including crisis response, participates as a member of a committee, presents a parent workshop or meets with outside community partnerships. Referrals can occur for academic support (ex. tutoring), career resources (ex. employment training) or social/emotional (ex.outside mental health agency) and are necessary whenever a concern or need extends beyond the counselor's training or responsibilities.

Item	Strategies & Activities	Recipient	Method
Direct Student Services	Instruction Appraisal & Advisement Counseling	All Students Data Informed ⇕ Identified Students	Interactions with students in: Large Group Classroom Small Group Individual
Indirect Student Services	Consultation Collaboration Referrals	All Students Data Informed ⇕ Identified Students	Interactions with: Others

Adapted from Gysbers, N.C. & Henderson, P. (2012) Developing and managing your school counseling program (5th ed.), Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Assess

In order to achieve maximum results and to demonstrate how a school counseling program has made a difference on behalf of students, assessing a program's effectiveness regularly is necessary. In order to complete this assessment, counselors gather data as to who received program services, what was learned as part of participation and how the delivery impacted student achievement, attendance and discipline data. The performance of the counselors delivering the curriculum should also be a component of an assessment system. Specifics about each of these strands of assessing a school counseling program are detailed below.

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Program Assessment

The purpose of a program assessment, conducted near the end of each school year, is to determine the progress that was made during the current year's implementation of a comprehensive school counseling program. It should assist in identifying areas in need of improvement as well as highlight the strengths of the program and should guide next steps and necessary changes in order to achieve the best results on behalf of students.

ASCA offers a template to assist you with starting the process, a portion of which is linked below. Copies of this template can be downloaded from the ASCA National Model section of the American School Counselor Association website.

In addition to completing the overall program assessment, programs should review two forms of annual results reports (classroom & group Mindsets & Behaviors results report and closing-the-gap results report) based on created action plans. Analyzing the data generated by these two reports helps determine that plans were carried out and delivered as anticipated in addition to verifying that all students were served. This process also allows for data to be tracked over time in order to show long range impacts as well as to assist in identifying trends that historically exist at your school.

School counselors should publicly report program results through presentations to interested stakeholders, including your administrative team and school committee, make available one page informative handouts and include infographics on your website. Request that school counseling program results be shared in any data reports prepared by the administration. Making your results public helps to solidify the importance and value of the school counseling department as an advocate and change leader within the school community. This will hopefully prevent any future department reductions and provide the necessary funding and resources requested during the budgeting process.

ASCA National Model Components	Yes	Comments
MANAGE		
Vision Statement		
Aligned with ASCA National Model's criteria for exemplary vision statement.		
Mission Statement		
Aligned with ASCA National Model's criteria for exemplary mission statement.		
Data		
School data summary prioritizing data points addressed through the school counseling program completed.		
Annual Student Outcome Goals		
a. School improvement plan reviewed to identify school priorities.		
b. Outcome goals created based on student, school and/or district data to close the achievement, opportunity and/or information gaps.		
c. Goals written in SMART format: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time-bound.		
Use-of-Time Calculator		
Use-of-time calculator completed at least twice a year.		

School Counselor Assessment and Appraisal

As part of the assessment process, individual school counselors should be willing to reflect on the presented data and results reports and self-assess their role in the program as a whole. Growth and improvement can happen only if counselors are willing to seek professional development and guidance in any noted areas of weakness. Counselors should also be willing to capitalize on their strengths to help and support fellow colleagues not only in their schools but across our state. In addition, counselors should welcome a performance evaluation by an administrator who is qualified to understand the unique role counselors play within the school. A program can only be as strong as the members who deliver its content.

Role of School Counselors in MTSS

According to Bridge-RI (the home of MTSS Rhode Island), located at https://mtssri.org/ a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) is designed to ensure all students are supported in achieving successful academic, behavioral and social/emotional outcomes. A school counseling program is designed in the similar three tier model of delivery as found in the implementation of MTSS. Tier one is the guidance curriculum delivered as a comprehensive service to all students. Students who need more instruction and guidance to meet the desired outcomes receive intentional and specific curriculum instruction in smaller groups (tier 2) or on an individual basis (tier 3). Responsive services are available to support struggling students as well in a small group or individual scenario.

Our programs and the standards on which they are based are designed to support students in the academic and social/ emotional domains. Discipline data (behavior) is one of the components we assist to improve through the services we deliver. Counselors should therefore see themselves as a natural fit to create, manage and deliver strategies to a wide array of students as part of an MTSS model. In addition, as part of a counselor's role to advocate on behalf of students, it is important to utilize the data collected and analyzed to recommend supports for those who may be struggling to be successful in a particular area. The MTSS Tier triangle seems to dictate exactly how a comprehensive counseling program should be delivered.

Credit given to: https://www.panoramaed.com/blog/equity-based-mtss
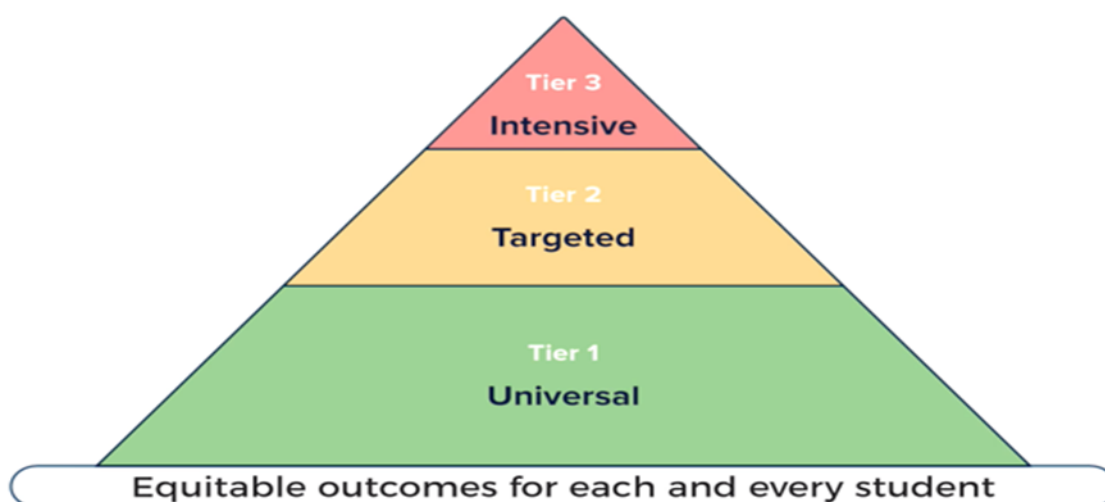
Creating a Plan

If you are not already delivering a data driven comprehensive school counseling program, do not feel like you need to transform your department overnight, especially if you are a department of one. Start with creating a timeline for implementation realizing that it may take 2-3 years to implement all the essential components and establish your program. The first step is voicing a commitment to action and organizing interested parties in supporting your endeavors. Complete an assessment of your current program to understand where you are starting, which will help you identify the smaller steps necessary to get where you need to be. Involve your administration in a formal conference and inform them of the desire to move forward with a comprehensive school counseling program and formally write down your ideas. Enlist support in outlining the benefits if your administration lacks understanding of the purpose and value in doing so. Outline the benefits of implementing a comprehensive program and share with all relevant stakeholders.

Once you have assessed your current program and identified areas of strength as well as those in need of improvement, begin by exploring the easily accessible data available to you, with willing interested parties, and identify any shortcomings. Talk to administrators, data personnel and clerical support to assist in gathering the necessary academic, behavioral and attendance data from your student information system and state assessment reporting documents. You can also conduct a needs assessment (simply searching for a needs assessment template can find you a variety of options and sample questions to support you in this endeavor) to determine additional factors and provide an opportunity for student voice.

Review all standards identified in the Define section of this document. Understand the expectations for students and determine which ones are already part of the curriculum content delivered by the department. Identify any additions to the desired student competencies as part of this process based on your student body's needs. Self-assess your individual weaknesses and strengths and request your counseling colleagues do the same in terms of their professional responsibilities. Agree on an established set of beliefs after assessing individual biases through personal reflection and an open discussion. Consider the professional development that would benefit you personally as well as your colleagues in addition to what level of awareness training would benefit the other educators in your building.

Develop a vision and mission statement which will help drive the implementation of the program planning components and help focus goals and priorities. Utilize the data to identify current areas of need and determine where gaps exist in order to establish student outcome

SMART goals and begin to create action plans. Create lesson plans to deliver your key content based on your action plans and work collectively to determine the roles and responsibilities of each individual. Choose innovative and effective counseling strategies to ensure that your program reaches all students and provides equitable access. Determine what interventions will be necessary to assist in closing gaps and how to guarantee resources are allocated to implement them. Examine your current use of time to establish a baseline for how frequently your department is engaged in direct and indirect student services and create a plan to improve the percentage of time spent involved in non-counseling activities until you are at a minimum of 80%. Review the current list of non-counseling expectations assigned to you and brainstorm other personnel who or strategies that can support in completing those responsibilities thus allowing more time for student services.

Revisit your initially established timeline for program implementation. Format an annual calendar (starting month by month if necessary) to ensure the timeline is being met. Design a strategy for evaluating the work you are already doing and modify the program based on that feedback. Be proud of sharing your accomplishments but at the same time don't be afraid of your failures, instead learning from them. Have a plan for publicizing the results of your program to all interested stakeholders as a means for gathering increased support and funding towards required resources. Establish an advisory council and begin meeting twice a year, to assist with evaluating the program and suggesting strategies for improvement.

Anticipate both enthusiasm and resistance as you move ahead with any changes to your current guidance program. Encourage colleagues to refer to you as a school counselor highlighting the changes in how your program is being implemented and do not hesitate to correct people who misidentify you. Be prepared to step up as a leader, willing to advocate for what is most beneficial to the students you serve and realize your role as a change maker.

Join your professional organizations: American School Counselor Association (ASCA) www.schoolcounselor.org & the Rhode Island School Counselor Association (RISCA) www.rischoolcounselor.org to support you with necessary resources and on-going professional development opportunities. In addition the ASCA bookstore has a multitude of publications to support you in this work. Utilize the support of the school counseling fellow position at the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) who can direct you to additional professional opportunities and support you in making connections with others. Search for and follow school counselors on social media sites and blogs to add to your bank of resources and connections. Don't ever feel alone in your journey to implement a comprehensive program, even as a department of one.

Create a timeline for implementation

Complete an Assessment of your Current program

Identify strengths and areas of improvement.   Enlist Administration and support for this process.

Explore data

Academic, Behavioral and Attendance data from your SIS and State assessment documents.   Consider if you want to conduct a needs assessment

Review standards in the Define section of this document

Evaluate which expectations for students are already being met, and additional competenies you should target based on need.

Self- Assess individual strengths and weaknesses

Consider Professional Development

Develop a vision and Mission statement for your program.

Use Data to identify areas of need and determine where gaps exist.

Create Student Outcome SMART goals

Create Action Plans

Create Lesson Plans

Evaluate interventions needed to close gaps

Track current time use

Review list of current non-counseling expectations

Create an Annual Calendar

Develop an evaluation plan for the program.

Develop a plan to publicize the results of your program.

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Creating a Plan - Checklist

☐   Create a timeline for implementation

☐   Complete an Assessment of your Current program
- o Identify strengths and areas of improvement.
- o Enlist Administration and support for this process.

☐   Explore data
- o Academic, Behavioral and Attendance data from your SIS and State assessment documents.
- o Consider if you want to conduct a needs assessment

☐   Review standards in the Define section of this document

☐   Evaluate which expectations for students are already being met, and additional competencies you should target based on need.

☐   Self- Assess individual strengths and weaknesses
- o Consider Professional Development

☐   Develop a vision and Mission statement for your program.

☐   Use Data to identify areas of need and determine where gaps exist.

☐   Create Student Outcome SMART goals

☐   Create Action Plans

☐   Create Lesson Plans

☐   Evaluate interventions needed to close gaps

☐   Track current time use

☐   Review list of current non-counseling expectations

☐   Create an Annual Calendar

☐   Develop an evaluation plan for the program.

☐   Develop a plan to publicize the results of your program.

Sample School Counselor Job Description

The below should be adapted as necessary by individual districts seeking qualified candidates to serve in school counseling positions. Districts should avoid posting job descriptions using the term school counselor with the intent of hiring a social worker and/or psychologist position. Districts should also be encouraged to utilize the correct terminology in any posting (as well within their schools) associated with the certification (school counselor as opposed to guidance counselor).

Overview of Position:

The role of a School Counselor in Rhode Island is to support all students' academic, career and social/emotional developmental needs by contributing to the design, implementation, and evaluation of a comprehensive school counseling program. Eighty percent of a counselors' time should be spent providing direct and indirect services to students, based on the ASCA National Model, as part of a program that promotes student success. That comprehensive program should be data informed allowing the school counselor to proactively support all students with a focus on equity and expanding access.

Job Functions & Expectations:

- Maintaining a professional identity by keeping current with standards, trends and initiatives, reflecting on one's practice and following the established ethical guidelines
- Support all students with academic, career and social/emotional development by ensuring equitable access to an effective comprehensive school counseling program
- Implement a comprehensive school counseling program that aligns to the school's vision and mission
- Provides data informed targeted support to students with identified achievement gaps

Essential Duties:

- Applies school counseling professional standards and competencies
- Designs and implements instruction aligned to the ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success in large-group, classroom, small-group and individual settings; uses the

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ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors to inform the implementation of a school counseling program

- Participates in the annual development of the school counseling program goals, student outcome goals and related evaluation activities based on student data
- Looks for opportunities to integrate school counseling curriculum with curriculum with other disciplines
- Tracks, analyzes, and presents student and school-related data with the goal of promoting school success and student effectiveness and assessing the effectiveness of the school counseling program
- Applies current research-based instructional best practices and strategies to deliver curriculum
- Promotes equity and access to rigorous educational experiences for all students
- Works with students to develop and revise Individual Learning Plans (ILPs); assists with implementation of Individual Learning Plan program for all students
- Displays deep knowledge of philosophical foundations and content of school counseling curriculum
- Provides services and/or makes referrals to appropriate school and community resources.
- Works collaboratively with teachers and administrators to support student achievement and success
- Provides orientation, coordination and academic advising for new students
- Engages outside stakeholders as applicable to expand opportunities for students academic, career and social/emotional development
- Articulates the distinction between direct and indirect student services and advocates for a school counseling program free of non-school counseling assignments.
- Uses personal reflection and feedback to promote professional growth and development

Qualifications:

- Current Rhode Island Department of Education School Counseling Certification
- Skilled in collaborating with colleagues
- Skilled in facilitating groups and large classes
- Results-oriented, organized, adaptable, and highly motivated to serve all students
- Knowledgeable about the ASCA National Model and the components of a comprehensive school counseling program

Resources

1. [Rhode Island Frameworks for Comprehensive K-12 Counseling programs](#)

2. Access to [ASCA National Model](#) background, templates and publications

3. Access to [other state websites](#) and any applicable counseling framework and curriculum documents. Some states even offer sample lesson plans.

4. [Rhode Island School Counseling Resource Hub](#) containing submitted lesson plans in addition to helpful websites and programs.

5. [ACT Center for Equity in Learning Resources](#) (College & Career Readiness Activities for K-12)