DATA, DATA, DATA

Steps and Tools for Planning and Using Your Data

It is no longer enough for Professional School Counselors to answer the question, “What do school counselors do?” Professional School Counselors must now respond to the question, “How are students different as a result of what we do?”

~ASCA National Model

The only way to show how students are different is through data. It is therefore imperative that school counselors start changing the way they serve students. No longer can we know in our hearts that we made a difference to every child we came into contact throughout the day. We now have to demonstrate to stakeholders that students are different as a result of our contact with them.

To accomplish this task, professional school counselors must become proficient in:

- Accessing data
- Analyzing data
- Interpreting data
- Presenting data

Professional school counselors must be able to use the data to:

- Recognize barriers to learning
- Point out the system inequities
- Advocate for systems change
- Show the urgency for change
- Improve your comprehensive school counseling program to meet the needs of your students
- Show student progress

In order to access, analyze, interpret and present the data to stakeholders, professional school counselors must become computer literate. Some computer programs that professional school counselors must become literate in are programs such as:

- Word Perfect
- Excel
- PowerPoint
- Any other program that is necessary for showing your accountability

Albuquerque Public Schools offers these courses every year. Be on the lookout for the e-mails announcing the classes.

*Educators are the role models for lifelong learning. We must practice what we preach.*
The Multiple Uses of Data:
- Data DRIVES decisions and funding
- Data ensures that you are reaching EVERY student, so EVERY student benefits from your school counseling program
- Creates an urgency for change
- Creates the energy for change
- Serves as a catalyst for focused attention
- Challenges existing policies
- Engages decision makers, district leaders, school teams in data driven decision making
- Surfaces evidence of access or equity issues
- Focuses resources where they are most needed
- Supports grant writing efforts
- Data has multiple, intentional and diagnostic uses and can be categorized differently

The Multiple Types of Data Which Assist Professional School Counselors to Monitor Students’ Progress and Program Progress:

**Student Achievement Data**
- Standardized test data
- Grade Point Averages
- SAT and ACT scores
- Changes in achievement levels (Math, reading)
- Drop-out rate
- Completion of college prep requirements

**Achievement Related Data**
- Course enrollment patterns
- Discipline referrals
- Suspension rates
- Alcohol, tobacco and other drug violations
- Attendance rates
- Parent involvement
- Extracurricular activities

**Standards and Competency Related Data**
- Percentage of students who:
  - Have 4-year plans
  - Participate in job shadowing
  - Have set and achieved their goals
  - Apply conflict resolution skills

**Disaggregate Data**
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Socio-economic status
- Language
Comprehensive School Counseling Program Evaluation Data

- Process data
- Perception data
- Results data

Data Over Time
To get a true picture of the impact of the school counseling program, professional school counselors need to look at their process, perception and results data over time. Data should be collected and evaluated in three time frames:
- Immediately
- Intermediately
- Long range

COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM EVALUATION DATA
(Inclusive of Delivery System, Management System and Accountability Tools)

PROGRAM EVALUATION DATA IS CRITICAL TO SHOWING “HOW STUDENTS ARE DIFFERENT AS A RESULT OF WHAT PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELORS DO!”

Program evaluation data shows how the school counseling program has impacted students’ academic achievement, their personal social skills, and/or their career readiness skills. Together, process data, perception data and results data (program evaluation data) tell a story and paint a picture about whether or not, as well as how the professional school counselor and their program is impacting students.

When interpreting the data it is important to look at its implications. For example:

⇒ What pictures, pattern or gaps does the data indicate?
⇒ What problems or needs surfaced?
⇒ What achievement gaps exist?
⇒ What opportunity gaps does the data suggest?

While professional school counselors are likely to find that their program does impact student success, they may also find that the data implicates that components of their program does not impact student success. This would indicate that the school counselor may need to re-evaluate one or more components of their program. Are all the components of your program meeting the needs of the students? If not, eliminate or replace those components not working. If it is a need, then consider how to improve that component so that it does benefit students. This may mean a change in curriculum, or the time spent in that component needs to be increased or decreased, the curriculum needs to be reinforced in the classroom over time, or that the students need to be
addressed in smaller groups, etc. Only evaluating your data can tell you the important factors that will improve your program.

*We must always remember that the goal is for us to learn from the data, not to be evaluated on the data.*

~Trish Hatch

**PROCESS DATA**

- “What you did for whom”
- Where do you spend your time?
- How many students did you impact?
- Are these duties directly related to services to students?
- Can only a professional school counselor perform these functions?
- Evidence that the event occurred
- How the activity was conducted
- Did the program follow the prescribed practice?

**Examples of Process Data (general and specific)**

- Percentage of time spent in Response Services
- Percentage of time spent in Non-Counseling duties
- Number of Individual Counseling sessions per month
- Number of Group Counseling sessions per month
- Number of Health/Mental Health team consultations
- Six counseling groups with 8 students each were held in the 05/05 SY
- 1,350 6-8th grade students received the “Time to Tell” guidance lesson
- All incoming high school students were seen individually to prepare 4 year plan.

**CAUTION:** Process Data alone will not show how students are different as a result of what Professional School Counselors do. Process data should be used in addition to Results/Outcome Data and/or Perception Data to show how students are different...

*“Results are not about what counselors do. Results are about what students do.”*

~C.D. Johnson, Ph.D.

**Examples of a Process Data Tools**

- Calendars
- Counseling Activity Logs
- Monthly Reports
- Portfolios

**RESULTS/OUTCOME DATA**

- “So WHAT” data
- Hard data
- Application data
- What are the outcomes?
- How did the students change as a result of the lesson or intervention?
Proof your program has (or has not) positively impacted students ability to **utilize** the knowledge, attitudes and skills to effect behavior in:

- Attendance
- Behavior
- Academic achievement

**Examples of Results/Outcome Data:**
- 42 students on the retention list avoided retention
- Graduation rates improved 14% over three years
- Attendance improved among 9th grade males by 49%

**Examples of Results/Outcome Data Tools**
- Results Reports
- Results Report: Impact over time
- Action Plans
- Closing the Gap Action Plans
- EZAnalyze
- Logic Model

**Examples of Results/Outcome Data related to student achievement that professional school counselors should be looking at (first as a baseline (immediate) and for results over time (intermediate long range) in your comprehensive school counseling program evaluation)**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Scores</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
<th>Graduation Rates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>Honors/AP Classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>College Track</td>
<td>By Ethnicity</td>
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<td>National</td>
<td>Special Education</td>
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<th>GPA/Rank</th>
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<td>Absences</td>
<td>By Classroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tardies</td>
<td>Types of Problems</td>
<td>By Ethnicity</td>
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<tr>
<td>By Grade Level</td>
<td>Gender</td>
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<tr>
<th>Retention Rates</th>
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<th>Dropout Rate</th>
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<tr>
<td>By Subject Area</td>
<td>By Gender</td>
<td>By Gender, Ethnicity</td>
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<tr>
<td>By Grade Level</td>
<td>By Ethnicity</td>
<td>By SES</td>
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<tr>
<td>By Gender, Ethnicity</td>
<td>By SES</td>
<td>Reasons Why</td>
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<th>Demographic Data</th>
<th>Suspensions</th>
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PERCEPTION DATA

- What do people think they know? (Knowledge gained)
- What do they believe? (Attitudes and Beliefs)
- What can they do? (Competency Achievement)
- Measures competency achieved, knowledge gained or attitudes/beliefs of students

Examples of Perception Data:

- **Knowledge Gained**
  - 89% of students demonstrate knowledge of promotion/retention criteria
  - 92% can identify Early Warning Signs of violence
  - 91% of students reported acquiring knowledge from the curriculum about how to handle bullying

- **Attitudes or Beliefs**
  - 74% of students believe fighting is wrong
  - 29% of students feel safe at school
  - 78% know the name of their school counselor
  - 94% of 5th grade students felt their school was safe

- **Competency Achievement**
  - Every student in grades 9-12 completed a 4 year plan
  - Every 10th grade student completed an interest inventory

Examples of Perception Data Tools

- Pre-Post Tests
- Surveys/Rating Scales (students, teachers, parents)
- Completion of an Activity
- Competency achievement
- Evaluations
TOOLS FOR COLLECTING AND DISPLAYING YOUR DATA

PROCESS DATA TOOLS:
- Process Data Sheets
- Calendars
- Counseling Activity Logs
- APS Monthly Report
- Portfolios

RESULTS/OUTCOME DATA TOOLS:
- Results Reports
- Results Report: Impact over time
- Action Plans
- Closing the Gap Action Plans
- EZAnalyze
- Logic Model

PERCEPTION DATA TOOLS:
- Needs Assessments
- Pre-Post Tests
- Surveys/Rating Scales (students, teachers, parents)
- Testimonials
- Completion of an Activity
- Program Audit

*Please Note: Many of the tools will generate all three types of data (process, results/outcome and perception data), but have been categorized here according to their dominant source of data.

PROCESS DATA TOOLS:
Calendars

School counselors develop and publish a master calendar of school counseling events to ensure students, parents or guardians, teachers and administrators are informed of counseling activities. As the school counseling program grows, a calendar validates the important support the school counseling program provides the community.

A school counseling program is balanced in two ways:

- In the delivery system (school guidance curriculum, individual student planning, responsive services and system support)
- In the use of time spent delivering the components.

Calendars can:

- Identify grade levels, dates and activities
- Be published and distributed to appropriate persons
- Be posted on a weekly or monthly basis
- Be compared to locally established goals for time spent in the delivery of system components
- Be utilized to allocate time for data analysis and program evaluation
- Be used when designing and determining system priorities
- Be shared with the principal as an indicator of leadership, advocacy and foresight in the school counselor’s professional approach

School counselors create annual, monthly and weekly calendars.

**Annual calendars** provide a way for school counselors to identify the school counseling program priorities and their commitment to them. The school counseling program calendar:

- Increases visibility of the student support program and other related educational activities.
- Provides focus on events or activities of value for the students, parents or guardians and staff
- Increases communication within the school and home about schedules and program activities
- Encourages the student, family, department and school to plan ahead for important student support functions
- Establishes an organizational pattern of highlighting and valuing student support opportunities
- Reserves the use of the facility hosting the events or activities
- Reinforces the importance of student participation in student support-related activities.

**Monthly calendars** highlight the specific activities and events for each month throughout the year and into the summer. Schedule classroom guidance lessons on a monthly basis.
Weekly calendars are somewhat flexible due to crisis or immediate student needs. In addition to classroom lessons, group counseling and individual planning; build in data analysis, collaboration and advocacy into the schedule to allow for some flexibility.

Effective Use of Calendars
Each spring, school counselors spend one entire day designing the next years’ calendar. This ensures that the necessary arrangements are made of facilities use, that conflicts are avoided, and that administrators, staff, parents and students know the school counseling programs’ plans before the beginning of the year.

DIRECTIONS:
1. Establish teams.
2. Find a place to work.
3. Appoint a leader/facilitator for each activity.
4. Ensure everyone has read the ASCA Model.

ACTIVITY:
As a team, decide what form your calendar will take. Some school counseling department use a Beauty Salon style appointment book to schedule daily events. Others use Microsoft Outlook. Decide how your department will create yearly, monthly weekly and daily calendars.

Discuss the following considerations before creating your calendar:
1. First list all of the non-negotiable events and dates must be included in planning your School Counseling Program calendar. Consider yearly events that are scheduled by the district, local colleges, community events, etc. (student registration, college application deadlines, student course selection, SAT/ACT/AP testing, Open House, events such as Red Ribbon week, etc.)

2. Now add your negotiable but necessary timelines. When are your Action plans and Results reports due? Visitations to feeder schools? Guidance evening events for parents, career fairs, etc. All activities that are carried out each year, but may vary should be included now.

3. Next, looking at the calendar, when is the best time to deliver your classroom guidance lessons? Are certain topics done at the same time each year (violence prevention in the October; test taking in the spring etc.)? When are your weekly group counseling sessions? Planning these in advance ensured they will occur even if you get busy. Add these to your calendars.

4. Refer back to your annual management agreement with your principal. When is the office open for students and parents? How will you rotate arrival and departure time, lunches etc to ensure full student access? Will you use Counselor of the Day?

5. Schedule your school counseling department Professional Learning Community meeting time. One school meets every Friday morning from 8-11:00 am. Another meets after school each Wednesday from 2:30 – 3:30 p.m. This time is vital for team building and consistency, especially when you are developing your program. Don’t forget the school leadership meetings, school site council meetings, grade level leaders or department chair meetings. Counselors are assets to these teams.
6. When it is completed, determine to whom will the calendar be distributed (in the Principal’s newsletter, outside the school counseling office, main office, district office)

**Reports to Demonstrate Time/Activity/Task Analysis**
- Counseling Activity Logs (aka) Time and Task Analysis
- Monthly Report to Principal

**Portfolios**

- Portfolios can be added to or edited for use in future years.
- Portfolios serve as a great reminder of past accomplishments and creativity
- Counseling materials are centrally organized
- Attrition does not mean loss of programmatic information

Presenting your portfolio

- At the end of the year present your portfolio chronicling the annual accomplishments of the school counseling department to your administration
- Think of this packet as the ‘Counseling Department Productivity Report’
  - Within the report make projections for the following year
  - This is the time to negotiate the responsibilities that will be assigned to the guidance department in the next year
RESULTS/OUTCOME
DATA TOOLS:

- Results Reports
- Results Report: Impact over time
- Action Plans
- Closing the Gap Action Plans
- EZAnalyze

Results Reports

Results Report
How are students different as a RESULT of what you do?

- What does the data tell you?
- Was the program successful?
- What worked?
- What did NOT work?
- What needs to be changed?

Results Report: A tool that helps you:
- Ensuring program was carried out
- Evidence that every student was served
- NC Essential Standards and National Standards are addressed
- Developmentally appropriate
- Documenting process, perception, results data; immediate, intermediate, and long range impact of program
- Analyze effects
- Share successes
- Advocate for systemic change

Results Report Examples
- Planned Guidance Curriculum
- Intentional Guidance (Closing the Gap)
Results Report: Impact over time

Data over Time:
- Immediate
- Intermediate
- Long range (Impact Over Time)

- Show several years of growth
- Connect to standards
- Doesn’t measure EVERYTHING
- Make decisions based on needs of district, site and access to data
- Goal is to learn from data, not be evaluated on data

Data Over Time

In order to get a picture of the impact of the school counseling program, it’s important to look at data over time. Data can be collected over three different time frames: immediate, intermediate, long range.

Immediate data measure the immediate impact of knowledge, skills and attitude changes as a result of counselor activity or intervention; such as, pre-post tests of competencies addressed in the classroom or the completion of four-year plans.

Intermediate data measure application of knowledge, skills and attitudes over a short period of time (improved grades after study skills lessons; improved classroom behavior after small group counseling).

Long range data are longitudinal impact data collected year to year.