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ABSTRACT

The availability and quality of counseling was assessed in an effort to define a professional identity for the school counselor that better addresses student needs. Policy implications were also reviewed. Study components are: (1) counselor profile; (2) statewide counselor survey on the role of the counselor; (3) case study of 21 schools relating the role of the counselor to the broader educational context. The shift to comprehensive, developmental, and preventive guidance programs is discussed. Contents of the study include: (1) "Executive Summary"; (2) "Introduction", which provides an overview of Texas guidance policy and the study components; (3) "Counseling and Guidance Programs and Practices", which discusses "Planned, Designed, and Prevention-Oriented Programs," "Program Resources and Organization" that includes a profile of the counselor, supply and demand issues, program implementation and human resources issues, and "Services to Students"; (4) "Summary of Findings"; (5) "Potential Strategies and Policy Initiatives." Appendixes are: (1) "Survey Instrument"; (2) ASCA (American School Counselor Association) (3) "Characteristics of High and Low Performing Counseling Programs." (Contains 20 tables and 5 figures and 50 references.) (EMK)

Texas School Counseling and Guidance Programs

Final Study Report

Texas Education Agency
August 1996

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TEXAS SCHOOL COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE PROGRAMS

FINAL STUDY REPORT

Texas Education Agency
Austin, Texas

August 1996

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Texas School Counseling and Guidance Programs: Final Study Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1994, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) began a study of public school counseling and guidance programs in Texas. The primary purpose of the study was to assess the availability and quality of counseling in an effort to define a professional identity for the school counselor that better addresses student needs. The study also looked at the policy implications of enhancing counseling and guidance programs in terms of the organization of their delivery and coordination with other agencies. A combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies was used to examine counseling and guidance programs.

The following components were included in the study: (1) a profile of the counselor compiled from demographic and employment data available at the state level, including an analysis of counselor supply and demand; (2) a statewide survey of counselors focussing on the role of the counselor; and (3) a case study of 21 schools to provide in-depth analysis of the role of the counselor within the broader context of the entire educational program and schoolwide staffing configurations. National and state models of guidance programs and issues related to those models were examined, along with Texas policy related to counseling and guidance programs. A review of the literature traces development of counseling and guidance program models and counselor role statements and summarizes current research on comprehensive counseling and guidance programs.

Texas state laws and State Board of Education (SBOE) rules related to guidance programs and counselors in public schools changed very little in the decades preceding the 1990's. In 1990, the Texas Legislature directed the SBOE to conduct a sunset review of all existing TEA rules. That review process set in motion a series of changes that affect guidance policy to date. Consistent with a refocus of state education policy toward student academic performance within a policy climate emphasizing downsizing and deregulation, guidance policy has been distilled to assessing and ensuring quality regarding programs that certify counselors and to creating a form that districts can use in evaluating counselors. Statute describing counseling programs and the role of school counselors applies only to programs funded through competitive state grants. Within an atmosphere of fiscal constraint and an overall movement toward student performance-based systems, decision making with regard to counseling and guidance programs will fall more and more under local control. As the student population grows more diverse and the challenges students face more complex, the need to develop comprehensive local guidance policies is now more critical than ever.

INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Context of the Study

In 1994, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) began a study of public school counseling and guidance programs in Texas. Findings from an earlier five-year study of the effects of educational reform on students identified as being at risk of school failure (TEA, 1994b) revealed discrepancies between the role of the school counselor as envisioned in state and national models of counseling and guidance programs and the counselor's actual duties in the field. In that study, both students and school staff expressed frustration over the lack of time available for counseling and guidance services. Counselors confirmed that extraneous duties, especially those related to paperwork and testing, prevented them from adequately satisfying the demand for counseling and guidance services.

Because of the findings from the study of students at risk and the perceived need for increased counseling and guidance services due to a more diverse student population and the increased complexities of today's society, this study was undertaken. The primary purpose of the study was to assess the availability and quality of counseling in an effort to define a professional identity for the school counselor that better addresses student needs. The study also looked at the policy implications of enhancing counseling and guidance programs in terms of the organization of their delivery and coordination with other agencies. A combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies was used to examine counseling and guidance programs. By using multiple methods, a more complete and in-depth picture could be obtained than through use of any one method.

The following components were included in the study:

1. a profile of the counselor compiled from demographic and employment data available at the state level, including an analysis of counselor supply and demand;
2. a statewide survey of counselors focussing on the role of the counselor; and
3. a case study of 21 schools to provide in-depth analysis of the role of the counselor within the broader context of the entire educational program and schoolwide staffing configurations.

Each of these three components is discussed in more detail in the Study Components and Reports section.

Impetus and Rationale for Developmental, Comprehensive Programs

Development of Program Models and Role Statements

As outlined by Gysbers and Henderson (1994), a brief history of the role of public school counselors will aid in understanding the evolution to the current focus on establishing developmental, comprehensive, and preventive counseling and guidance programs. The first documented reference to school guidance is an early 1900's recommendation that every public school system should have a vocational guidance service conducted by trained experts to help students scientifically choose an occupation. The vocational guidance movement continued into the 1920's, emphasizing guidance focused on training and occupa-

tional demands. In the 1920's, the perceived purpose of education changed from college preparation only to education for a student's total life. This philosophic shift decreased the focus on vocational guidance and increased the focus on guidance as education, with more emphasis on the personal and educational needs of students. Also in the 1920's and into the 1930's, advances in the mental health and measurement fields led to guidance theory and practice accentuating a more diagnostic and clinical focus on students and the use of psychological measurement. Developments in the field of psychotherapy from the 1930's into the 1940's led to an emphasis on counseling psychology.

The George-Barden Act, passed in 1946, for the first time provided federal funding for guidance activities such as counselor training and research. This financial support rapidly expanded the number of counselors, as well as focussed attention on the need to define what should be included in a counselor training program. The 1958 National Defense Education Act (Public Law 85-864) reflected the view held at the time of guidance as a collection of services related to other psychological services in schools. With ever increasing numbers of counselors being hired, there was more focus on the functions of counselors than guidance, per se. "In fact, to many individuals, what school counselors did became the guidance program" (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994, p. 19).

In the 1960's, a strong elementary counseling and guidance program appeared. For these counselors, their focus was to be developmental, not crisis-oriented, centering on working with both students and teachers and creating an effective learning climate. This was the beginning of a strong movement toward guidance for youth development, oriented as a comprehensive program rather than a crisis-oriented service. The clinical services model came under fire for overemphasis on individual counseling and the focus of counselors on crises and problems. Borow (1966) stated: "The counselor of the future will likely serve as a social catalyst, interacting in a two-person relationship with the counselee part of the time, but also serving as a facilitator of the environment and human conditions which are known to promote the counselee's total psychological development, including vocational development" (p.88). The accountability movement in education was also occurring during this time period. This strengthened the notion of developmental guidance as a program with measurable outcomes, rather than a subset of services.

In 1971, the U.S. Office of Education awarded a grant to the University of Missouri at Columbia to assist all states in developing guides or models for career guidance, counseling, and placement. The development of comprehensive, developmental models of counseling and guidance expanded through the 1980's and into the 1990's. During this time a large number of states, including Texas (TEA, 1990), developed state guides for school counseling and guidance programs. These guides emphasized counseling and guidance as a comprehensive, developmental program with the involvement of all school staff. Table 1 delineates the key differences between a comprehensive, developmental program and the older, more traditional approach to services.

The shift from traditional models to a comprehensive model requires change in the areas of program design, program resources (including human and material) and organization (including use of evaluation), and program access/results. Change in program design includes a shift from crisis and remedial priorities to a program designed around developmental and preventive priorities and based on ongoing evaluation of student needs. Changes in program resources and organization follow, with implementation of developmental programs oriented toward student goal attainment that are part of the school's entire education program. Inherent in this shift is a move from individual guidance and counseling only to group guidance and counseling, with consistent services to all students.

State and National Counselor Role Statements

Several key state and national guides or role statements help define counselors' roles and responsibilities and a comprehensive counseling and guidance program. Table 2 on page 6 shows program components and role statements for Texas counselors. Components and goals of the TEA Comprehensive Model are defined in *The Comprehensive Guidance Program for Texas Public Schools* (TEA, 1990). The four components are guidance curriculum, responsive services, individual planning, and system support.

The purpose of the *guidance curriculum* component is to help all students develop basic life skills. The seven recommended areas to be addressed by the guidance curriculum are (a) self-esteem development; (b) motivation to achieve; (c) decision-making, goal-setting, planning, and problem-solving skills; (d) interpersonal effectiveness; (e) communication skills; (f) cross-cultural effectiveness; and (g) responsible behavior. These guidance areas are taught through objectives-based classroom lessons, which extend from prekindergarten through Grade 12, with the levels of mastery expanding each year, as is developmentally appropriate.

TABLE 1
Key Dimensions of the TEA Comprehensive Model vs. Traditional Models of Counseling and Guidance Organized by Relevant Program Areas

Program Area	Traditional *(Reactive)*	Comprehensive *(Proactive)*
Program Design (Input)	• Intervention/crisis oriented only • Unstructured program	• Planned, based on needs asssessment and priorities, prevention oriented • Designed program
Program Resources and Organization (Process)	• Emphasis on services • Information dissemination • Clerical administrative task oriented • Counselors only • Unmeasured results	• Emphasis on program • Developmental curriculum • Student goal attainment oriented • All school staff and the community • Evaluated, improvement based on evaluation results
Program Access/Results (Output)	• Individual guidance and counseling only • Uneven service to students	• Group guidance and counseling • Consistent service to all students

Source: Major portion of table from *The Comprehensive Guidance Program for Texas Public Schools* (TEA, 1990), p. 7.

TABLE 2
Components of a Comprehensive School Guidance Program and Roles of the Counselor

Components	Role of the Counselor
Guidance Curriculum: Provides guidance content in a systematic way to all students.	***Guidance:*** Teach the school developmental guidance curriculum. Assist teachers in the teaching of guidance related curriculum.
Responsive Services: Addresses immediate concerns of students.	***Counseling:*** Counsel with students individually about their concerns. Counsel with small groups of students about their concerns. Use accepted theories and techniques appropriate to school counseling. ***Consultation:*** Consult with parents, teachers, administrators, and other relevant individuals to enhance their work with students. ***Coordination:*** Coordinate with school and community personnel to bring together resources for students. Use an effective referral process to help students and others use special programs and services. ***Assessment:*** Use student data other than test and appraisal results appropriately for assessment purposes.
Individual Planning: Helps students monitor and understand their own development.	***Guidance:*** Guide individuals and groups of students through the development of educational, career, and personal plans. ***Consultation:*** Consult with parents, teachers, administrators, and other relevant individuals to enhance their work with students. ***Assessment:*** Interpret test and other appraisal results appropriately.
System Support: Includes program and staff support activities and services.	***Program Management:*** Plan, implement, and evaluate a comprehensive program of guidance, including counseling services. Supervise activities of clerical, paraprofessional, and volunteer personnel. ***Assessment:*** Help plan and evaluate the district/ campus group standardized testing program.

Source: TEA (1990)

Responsive services are interventions with students whose immediate concerns or problems put their continued personal, social, career, and/or educational development at risk. Commonly identified concerns include improving academic success, peer relationships, and school attitudes and behaviors; dropout prevention; and helping students deal with abuse, death, family divorce, and sexuality issues. Addressing these areas can include one-to-one counseling; group counseling or referral to outside agencies; consultation with teachers, parents, and administrators; monitoring students' progress; possible referral of students to special programs; and pairing students with adult mentors.

In *individual planning* each student is guided to plan, monitor, and manage his or her own educational, career, personal, and social development through channeling resources to students to help them develop and implement their own plans. Students are assisted through provision of relevant, accurate, and unbiased information; using age-appropriate, objectives-based guidance activities; and advising appropriate academic placement.

The *system support* component describes services and management activities that indirectly benefit students. Services include consultation with teachers and administrators, support for parent education and community relations, implementation of standardized testing programs, participation in campus-based school improvement planning and goal setting, and communicating students' perspectives to policy makers and instructional planners. Management activities include developing and managing the counseling and guidance program; attending counselor-specific staff development; reaching out to the community; and developing appropriate policies, procedures, and guidelines.

The model is designed to benefit students, parents, teachers, administrators, and counselors. Students increase their knowledge and skills in areas covered by the guidance curriculum, and all students have access to counselors for assistance with personal-social concerns as well as academic and career planning. Parents, teachers, and administrators have a better understanding of the program. As a result, parents are better able to participate in their children's education and career planning, teachers are better able to collaborate with counselors to enhance the cognitive and affective development of students, and administrators are better able to define the rationale for including guidance in the education system. Counselors benefit from having more clearly defined roles and responsibilities.

Although both TEA and the Texas Counseling Association (TCA) recommend this guide for use by Texas public schools, the model is required only for those elementary counselors funded by a competitive state grant. The role of the counselor is defined in the TEA Counselor Evaluation Form and Job Description, developed by TEA in cooperation with TCA and the Texas School Counselors Association (TSCA) in 1996. The role statements are based on the 1992 Texas Evaluation Model for Professional School Counselors (TEMPSC). This evaluation form is congruent with the TEA Comprehensive Model. Districts are required to evaluate counselors' performance; use of the state form is recommended.

Responsibilities subsumed under the four TEA Comprehensive Model components are met through performance of six basic counseling roles: (a) guidance, (b) counseling, (c) consultation, (d) coordination, (e) assessment, and (f) program management. With readoption of the Texas Education Code (TEC) in 1995, the description of program components and role of the counselor in law were updated to more closely reflect the TEA Comprehensive Model and evaluation form.

During the 1980's and 1990's, the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) also issued national role statements. In 1981, ASCA defined major functions to be performed by school counselors. These guidelines focus on working in an organized way to help the school, teachers, and curriculum be sensitive to students' personal development, especially as it pertains to success in life. These functions are organized around counselors' commitment to students, parents, and teachers; professional commitment to those served; and responsibilities to the counseling and guidance profession. Basic goals to make career guidance a high priority were presented, as well as a common core of experiences to be provided to all students. The guidelines also address issues related to use of technology in career guidance. In 1985, ASCA's expectations and responsibilities for school counselors in relation to career guidance were spelled out. In 1992, ASCA prepared a role statement about counselors' roles in preparing students for the workforce. This document illustrates how the four components of a comprehensive school counseling program (guidance curriculum, responsive services, individual planning, and system support) should mesh with the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) elements and the National Career Development Guidelines Competencies (NCDGC). The role statements cover resources, interpersonal skills, information, systems, technology, and foundation skills. A summary of major points of the ASCA role statements (ASCA, 1981, 1985, 1992) can be found in Appendix 2.

In 1990, ASCA issued position statements on a wide variety of issues that currently affect school counselors. These include statements on students' rights and censorship; the importance of group counseling, developmental guidance, and adequate student-to-counselor ratios; the responsibility of counselors to report child abuse; and the need to provide multicultural counseling. All three role statements (ASCA, 1981, 1985, 1992) and the position statements (ASCA, 1990) are congruent with the concepts of a comprehensive, developmental program designed to meet the diverse needs of all students, rather than just the needs of a select few. The ideal student/counselor ratio recommended by ASCA is 100 students per counselor; a 300-to-1 ratio is considered the maximum (these are not based on data, but on feasibility reports).

Current Research on Comprehensive Programs

In the 1980's and increasing into the 1990's, calls from a variety of sources highlighted the increased importance of strong comprehensive, developmental counseling and guidance programs to the successful education of today's students. Rotter, Cobbs, Band, Robinson, and Larrabee (1994) noted that comprehensive career and developmental guidance and counseling programs today are being perceived as crucial to the future of our nation. The complexity of the world today requires individuals to develop complex coping mechanisms to respond to ever- changing contexts, and developmental guidance is seen as essential to this process (Richardson & Baron, 1975). Perry (1995) stressed that a strong comprehensive, systematic, and developmental counseling program is essential to reach all students, teach effective interpersonal skills, provide career information, and teach self-responsibility. In her view, this will result in better learners, more highly skilled workers, and people who are more successful in life. If new demands require students to become self-directed learners, apply problem-solving skills to new situations, be highly communicative, adapt to and create change, and respect others, they need support systems that will enhance and sustain their self-esteem (Fitzpatrick, 1991).

As of the 1995-96 school year, 38.9 percent of Texas students were identified as being at risk of school failure or dropping out of school. For students, being at risk can be the result of behavioral expressions

— students engaging in behaviors that obstruct constructive learning strategies. Academic success is not separate from positive behaviors and attitudes towards learning. The quest for academic excellence must include meeting the motivational needs of students (Walz, 1984). Comprehensive counseling and guidance programs are a key part of student support systems that enhance students' engagement to school (Mahrer, 1985) and lead to educational success (Burke & Cavaliere, 1988; Gerler & Anderson, 1986). Chickering and Reisser (1993) reported seven human development areas that must be integrated into the curriculum as early as possible in school before behaviors appear that identify the student as at risk. These seven areas include developing competence, managing emotions, developing autonomy, establishing identity, freeing interpersonal relationships, developing purpose, and developing integrity. They believe a strong developmental guidance curriculum is essential for this process. The function of the counselor should be seen as essential in optimizing the learning climate and promoting a vision of learning as a life-long process integral to personal intelligence (Grubaugh & Houston, 1990). For example, research suggests that it would be beneficial for counselors to be involved in the diagnostic processes that underline the accommodation to learning styles, to administer learning styles identification instruments, to interpret the results of these instruments, and to advise teachers on how to better match instruction to students' individual styles (Stewart, 1990).

Challenges to the Implementation of Comprehensive, Developmental Programs

Recent studies suggest that, in practice, local programs and counselor roles remain at odds with state and national models and research on the importance of comprehensive, developmental counseling and guidance programs to student success both inside and outside school. Because of the high importance given to the link between assessment and educational accountability, Texas school counselors also report that increasing amounts of their time are being spent on test administration duties, decreasing their time with students.

In the Texas study of students at risk (TEA, 1991), high school counselors often stated they felt they did not have clearly defined roles and responsibilities that protected them from being assigned non-counseling/non-guidance duties. In these rapidly changing times, counselors are being given more responsibilities, often not related to direct student services. In addition to these increased responsibilities, counselors reported being overwhelmed with the increasing needs of students, the increasingly higher and more demanding expectations from the community to solve all problems such as violence or substance abuse, and the feeling that the community is holding them accountable (TEA, 1991). Those counselors were very aware of the developmental roles they should ideally be performing, but the additional responsibilities and emphasis on testing, coupled with dealing with frequent problems and crises, greatly hindered the performance of these roles.

In a 1992 study of Arkansas school counselors (Arkansas Bureau of Legislative Research, 1992), most counselors agreed that many of the serious problems faced by students were problems that had originated in their families. These counselors reported that, on average, they spent only 56 percent of their time working directly with students. Hart and Jacobi (1992-1993) reported that on a national level, the number of counselors is declining while their responsibilities are increasing. In a study of Canadian counselors (Simpson & Heibert, 1996), including school counselors, counselors indicated that the definitions of their roles and responsibilities are unclear. This study also noted that counselors are more often treating pathology and providing remediation, rather than providing a developmental and preventive program.

Tennyson, Miller, Skovholt, and Williams (1989) surveyed secondary school counselors on the roles they perform. As defined by the 1981 ASCA role statements, developmentally-related tasks were infrequently performed. In this study, the majority of counselors indicated seldom engaging in small group activities to facilitate student self-awareness, develop interpersonal skills, teach decision making and values development, or promote social development, nor did they use any formal measures to assess students' developmental needs and maturity. Two studies (Remy & Albright, 1988; Wilgus & Shelly, 1988) reported that teachers', students', parents', and administrators' perceptions of school counselors are often those of an assistant principal — someone who performs administrative duties and handles the clerical duties associated with areas such as testing and scheduling. Esters, Cooker, & Ittenbach (1996) conducted a study of rural adolescents' views of seeking professional help for emotional problems because rural adolescents tend to associate seeking help with the negative stigma of mental illness. After a unit on mental illness concepts and seeking professional help was taught in their health classes, these rural students' attitudes toward seeking professional help changed in a positive direction. These results were seen to have implications for school counselors in educating students about seeking professional help for emotional problems and how the school counselor fits into this process. Hart and Jacobi (1992-1993) noted the frequent gatekeeper and therapist roles of counselors. They argued that with the increasing changes in society and increasing needs of students the current roles of counselors must change, including more stringent professional preparation, more and better in-service training, and moving away from performing as a therapist to more of a student advocate who works with school staff and parents to facilitate students' achieving maximum potential.

Stanciak (1995) called for reform of high school counselors' roles by decreasing time spent handling crises and clerical and administrative tasks to conducting a comprehensive, developmental guidance program (as is suggested by ASCA). She reported that as a result of current tasks, counselors spend little time with students, especially those students who are average performers. In a national study of college-bound seniors (Freedman-Doan & Libsch, 1994; Libsch & Freedman-Doan, 1995), college-bound seniors were satisfied with the counseling and guidance services they received, while noncollege-bound students felt they did not receive adequate services. This study of college-bound seniors has been ongoing since 1975. From 1975 to 1992, the percentage of seniors reporting contact with a counselor decreased by 11 percent, the percentage of seniors who reported never seeing their counselor on an individual basis increased from 11 percent to nearly 26 percent, and the percentage of seniors who never saw their counselor in their senior year in a group setting increased from 52 percent to 61 percent. In the Lapan, Gysbers, and Sun (1996) statewide study of Missouri high school students, it was noted that on campuses with more developed counseling and guidance programs, students indicated they had more access to college and career information, the school climate was more positive, and students reported higher grades and that their education was preparing them for the future. Lapan et al. (1996) also indicated that females, minorities, and students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds reported lower grades and less positive attitudes toward school than did males, non-minorities, and middle class students. As a result of these findings, it was suggested that school counselors need to redouble their efforts to develop and implement systematic guidance programs that reduce these differences among students.

Napierkowski and Parsons (1995) indicated a need to train counselors about how to implement comprehensive, developmental programs in the face of the obstacles their schools and districts may present. These obstacles often involve insufficient time or resources to implement an ideal program. The

authors suggest that counselors must confront these obstacles in order to break out of their limiting roles and be able to perform the counseling and guidance duties for which they were trained so students will receive a more effective program. One key factor related to program success and counselor self-efficacy is support from school staff, especially administrators, as reported by Sutton and Fall (1995). They conducted a survey of school counselors in Maine to measure counselor self-efficacy in connection with a number of factors. Survey results indicated that there was a significant relationship between a counselor's self-efficacy and school staff and administrative support. Sutton and Fall (1995) suggest that "school counselors need to develop effective methods for working with administrators, parents, and school boards to obtain support and encouragement for school counseling services and programs" (p. 335). Similarly, Cummings and Nall (1982) reported that counselor burnout was associated with an autocratic leadership style.

The design of this research study centered on using the TEA Comprehensive Model as a tool for participants to describe both their current programs and practices and the programs that they ideally prefer, so that all respondents could have a common set of descriptors to use. Both the survey and the case study interview protocols were designed around the issues just discussed.

Texas Guidance Policy Directives: A Historical Overview

Texas state laws and SBOE rules related to guidance programs and counselors in public schools changed very little in the decades preceding the 1990's. In 1990, the Texas Legislature directed the SBOE to conduct a sunset review of all existing TEA rules. That review process set in motion a series of changes that affect guidance policy to date.

Guidance Policy

In 1976, the SBOE adopted rules that described a comprehensive guidance program as part of the educational program in public schools under their general rule-making authority. These SBOE rules were amended in 1979, then remained unchanged until 1991. In 1990, *The Comprehensive Guidance Program for Texas Public Schools* was published by TEA as a *guide* for program development. In 1991, the first year of the sunset review process, SBOE rules related to guidance programs (19 TAC §85.2, 1988) were repealed because the SBOE did not have specific statutory authority to adopt rules in this area. (The SBOE's general rule-making authority was repealed as part of the bill that included the sunset legislation.)

Guidance Policy and the School Accountability Movement

In 1992, accreditation rules were repealed and revised accreditation rules adopted as part of the sunset process. The SBOE added the presence and quality of comprehensive and developmental guidance and counseling programs on campuses to the accreditation rules as criteria for accreditation. Before 1989, powers and duties of the SBOE laid out in statute prevented the SBOE from adopting any policy that would require a district, as a prerequisite for accreditation, to hire a guidance counselor. This restriction was repealed in 1989. Legislation passed in 1993 redirected the focus of Texas laws related to public school system accountability. In response, the SBOE amended the planning and accreditation rules to

move the state from the process-driven accreditation system to a performance accountability system. The accreditation criteria related to a comprehensive guidance program did not survive this change.

Guidance Programs

In 1991, the Texas Legislature added language to the school finance provisions earmarking $5 million of the state compensatory education allotment each year for elementary school counseling programs. In 1993, the amount allocated increased to $7.5 million. These funds must be used to supplement the existing guidance program in the district. In distributing the funds, preference is given to elementary schools in districts with high percentages of students at risk of school failure.

The law (TEC §§33.001-33.006) specifies the duties of counselors employed with these funds, outlines components of the guidance program, and specifies a student/counselor ratio of 500 students or less per counselor. In 1993, the Texas Legislature passed sunset legislation for the TEC directing the commissioner of education to submit proposed revisions before the next legislative session. At the time, state professional counseling associations advocated expanding the law describing the role of counselors employed with earmarked state funds to cover all counselors. They reported that counselors employed under this legislation were not burdened with administrative and clerical duties unrelated to guidance or counseling. Although the language describing developmental guidance and counseling programs and the role of the counselor were updated when the new code was adopted in 1995, the law was not expanded to cover additional counselors.

Counselor Appraisal

Previous statute governing state-funded counselors included a provision that the SBOE adopt a job description and evaluation form for school counselors (TEC §21.796,1994). Professional counselor associations in the state worked with TEA staff to develop the TEMPSC. Under provision of the revised TEC adopted in 1995, the counselor evaluation form became part of the law governing educator appraisal, and rule-making authority for educator appraisals transferred to the commissioner of education (TEC §21.356). TSCA and TCA worked with TEA staff to update the evaluation form. Although not mandated by state law or commissioner rule, use of the form has been adopted as part of the *Policy Reference Manual for Texas School Districts* (Texas Association of School Boards, 1995), which many districts adopt as local policy.

Counselor Certification Requirements

Requirements for certification as a school counselor, established by the SBOE in 1955, remain in effect to date (19 TAC §137.307). The requirements, shown in Table 3, are a bachelor's degree, a Texas teaching certificate, three years of teaching experience, and at least 30 hours of graduate course work in counseling. Although a master's degree is not required by SBOE rule, all counselor preparation programs at Texas colleges and universities require completion of a master's degree for certification as a counselor. Ninety-one percent of the counselors in Texas schools in 1995-96 have a master's degree or higher. In 1994, almost 20 percent of those without a master's degree were on emergency permits (TEA, 1994a).

TABLE 3
Requirements for Counselor Certification in Texas

Professional Counselor Certificate

- Bachelor's degree
- Texas teacher certificate, special education certificate, or vocational certificate that requires a bachelor's degree
- Three years of teaching experience
- 30 semester hour graduate program in counseling that includes
  - (1) three semester hours in the guidance program;
  - (2) six semester hours related to the pupil served: intensive study that develops an understanding of the physical, intellectual, social, and emotional development of children and youth, and influences of the school program on development; and
  - (3) 21 semester hours related to the resource area: courses in educational and occupational information, testing, guidance techniques, and supervised practicum
- ExCET requirement: Counselor

Professional Special Education Counselor Certificate

- Professional counselor certificate
- Six semester hours in special education

Professional Vocational Counselor Certificate

- Professional counselor certificate
- 12 semester hours of specified vocational guidance courses
- Three years of experience in an occupation for which vocational education is being conducted in the Texas public secondary schools (may also include up to two years teaching experience)

Source: Summarized from SBOE rules in the *Texas Administrative Code.*

Counseling Proficiencies

In 1993, the SBOE conducted the sunset review of rules related to professional educator preparation programs. Besides readopting existing program requirements for certification, the SBOE set in motion significant policy changes for educator preparation and certification by moving toward a performance-centered accountability system. Rules specifying the types of courses prospective teachers and

professional support staff must complete were replaced with proficiencies. In February 1994, the Commission on Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP) brought forward educator proficiencies for teachers and administrators for SBOE adoption. The teacher and administrator proficiencies helped form the basis for all educator preparation programs, as well as the proposed new accountability system for these programs, the Accountability System for Educator Preparation Programs (ASEPP).

Counselor proficiencies have been developed by the CSTP in conjunction with TCA and TEA. These counselor proficiencies describe what counselors are expected to know and be able to do. Like the teacher and administrator proficiencies, the counselor proficiencies are founded on a learner-centered environment. In adopting the revised TEC in 1995, the 74th Texas Legislature transferred responsibility for educator certification to a newly created State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC) (TEC §§21.031-21.055). Educator preparation programs are scheduled to be governed by the SBEC beginning on September 1, 1997, with initial accreditation of programs tentatively set for September 1, 1998.

Examination for the Certification of Educators in Texas (ExCET)

In 1986, the Examination for the Certification of Educators in Texas (ExCET) was added as a requirement for certification as a counselor. Test objectives for the counseling examination covered guidance programs, human development and learning theory, measurement and appraisal, individual and group counseling, and career development. These objectives were replaced in 1995 with test competencies from which a new ExCET for professional counselors was developed. The test competencies are based on the counselor proficiencies and reflect the same shift in focus to what counselors should know and be able to do in a learner-centered environment. There are 12 competencies under 3 domains: (a) understanding learners, (b) promoting learners' growth and achievement, and (c) counseling in the learner-centered environment. Understanding learners includes human development, environmental influences, and diversity. Promoting learners' growth and achievement covers program management, the developmental guidance program, responsive services, individual planning, and assessment. Counseling in a learner-centered environment includes consultation and collaboration with school personnel, school-home relationships, school-community relationships, and ethical, legal, and professional standards. As a learner-centered professional, the counselor is expected to focus on the diverse needs of students. Based on the counseling proficiencies, the ExCET counseling competencies were developed to enhance the professional identity of the counselor within a comprehensive developmental guidance format.

Counselor Credentials and Assignments

SBOE rules related to credentials and assignments were reviewed in 1993, along with the rules related to educator preparation. In response to concerns about a shortage of certified counselors, the SBOE initially proposed adding a student services specialist position to the list of assignments to be readopted. The student services specialist would have been assigned to special counseling programs such as drug education, programs for students at risk of dropping out of school, and family crisis intervention.

A TEA counselor certificate is required for assignment as a school counselor. As proposed in 1993, psychologists, social workers, and counselors certified by the Texas Department of Human Services (TDHS) would have been eligible for assignment as a student services specialist, in addition to TEA

certified counselors. The position was deleted before the list of assignments was readopted due to concerns about having individuals who did not have the credentials required for certification as a counselor by TEA counseling students.

Parental Rights and Responsibilities

The sections of state statute (TEC §§33.001-33.006) describing guidance and counseling programs funded through competitive state grants (TEC §42.1521) include a provision requiring schools, before implementing the program, to conduct a preview of the program for parents (TEC §33.004). No curriculum or materials can be used in the program that are not available for preview by parents. The law also allows but does not require schools to obtain written parental consent for students to participate in the guidance and counseling program.

There are a number of new provisions in the TEC granting greater rights and responsibilities to parents. New provisions regarding rights and responsibilities of all parents (TEC §§26.001-26.012) allow them access to written records about their child, including counseling records and counselor evaluations of the child. Parents are also entitled to review all teaching materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids used in their child's classroom. School districts must obtain parental consent before conducting a psychological examination, test, or treatment on a child except under certain circumstances. New health and safety laws also require parental permission to refer a student to an outside counselor for care and treatment of a chemical dependency or an emotional or psychological condition (TEC §38.010).

Parent and counselor roles within programs funded under the state compensatory education allotment (TEC §42.152) remain in law. Districts providing life skills programs for students who are parents must include individual counseling, peer counseling, and career counseling as components of those programs (TEC §29.085). Parents with children who have attended optional extended year programs wanting their children retained in the current grade must meet with the child's principal, teacher, and counselor (TEC §29.082). During the meeting school officials are expected to explain the longitudinal statistics on the academic performance of students who are not promoted to the next grade level and provide information on the effect of retention on a student's self-esteem and on the likelihood of the student dropping out of school.

Future Guidance Policy Directions

SBOE and Texas Legislature actions within the last decade reflect a shared concern about the availability and competency of counselors in the public school system. These concerns resurfaced in 1994 and 1995 as counselor proficiencies and ExCET competencies were developed and as the Texas 74th Legislature reexamined funding priorities. Consistent with a refocus of state education policy toward student academic performance within a policy climate emphasizing downsizing and deregulation, guidance policy has been distilled to assessing and ensuring quality regarding programs that certify counselors and to creating a form that districts can use in evaluating counselors. Although statute describing counseling programs and the role of the school counselors applies only to programs funded through competitive state grants (TEC §42.152), it is consistent with the TEA Comprehensive Model, which is considered to be the guide for all counselors and for all comprehensive guidance program development from prekindergarten through 12th grade. The TEA Comprehensive Model is consistent with the learner-centered environment

upon which the new counselor competencies developed for the ExCET are based, as well as the recent evaluation form developed by TEA, TSCA, and TCA in consultation with the commissioner of education.

Within an atmosphere of fiscal constraint and an overall movement towards student performance-based systems, decision making with regard to counseling and guidance programs will fall more and more under local control. As the student population grows more diverse and the challenges students face more complex, the need to develop comprehensive local guidance policies is now more critical than ever.

Study Components and Reports

Counselor Profile

A profile of Texas public school counselors provides a cross-section of information currently available about counselors statewide. The profile includes a summary of demographic information such as gender, ethnicity, age, and education, as well as employment information such as years of professional experience and salary. Variation and trends in numbers of counselors and students per counselor is also discussed in relation to counselor workload and student access to counselors. Further analysis provides answers to questions related to counselor supply and demand. The primary data used is the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), through which districts annually submit administrative data to the state. PEIMS data include organization, finance, student, and staff data. These data were supplemented with information from data files submitted to TEA from Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) contractors, to TEA and SBEC from ExCET contractors, and data files obtained from the state Teacher Retirement System. Additional supply and demand information was developed through a cooperative research project with the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). SREB integrated public education and higher education data to develop an educator supply and demand model.

Statewide Survey of Public School Counselors

A statewide survey of 2,516 public school counselors selected from districts that agreed to participate in the study was administered in the fall of 1994. The survey included questions about counselors' years of teaching and counseling experience and their areas of specialization. Counselors were asked about the frequency of their participation in a variety of campuswide activities such as scheduling, campus planning, and test administration. The majority of questions focused on counselors examining the 13 duties listed for counselors in the TEA Comprehensive Model and any other counseling or non-counseling duties they performed. The duties listed on the survey provided a common descriptive tool for counselors to indicate their own practices. Counselors were asked to estimate the actual percentage of time they spent on each duty and what percentage of time they would ideally spend on each duty. Times indicated are for individual counselors and do not represent programwide percentages on each duty for the campus. For each duty, counselors were also asked if they needed additional staff support or more staff development, how high a priority the duty was, and how stressful the duty was due to time pressure. The last section of the survey asked counselors about their perceptions of a number of issues including resources, staff support, coordination and consultation, and students served. A copy of the survey instrument is included in Appendix 1.

The sample in this study is based on 7,764 counselors (head counts) in Texas public schools in 1993-94. To assure geographical representation, a proportionate stratification sampling procedure was used. Within each of 20 Education Service Center (ESC) regions, 1 of 3 counselors was randomly selected, with random replacement of counselors selected from districts that had declined to participate in the study. The final sample included 2,516 counselors.

Of the original sample, 1,541 counselors returned surveys, 1,278 of which had valid responses to the questions asking for estimates of current and ideal time devoted to different duties. This represents a survey response rate of 61.2 percent. The 1,278 surveys with complete responses on all items represents 16.5 percent of counselors in the state.

As Table 4 shows, survey respondents were representative of all public school counselors statewide in gender, ethnicity, education, and age. Campuses at which these counselors were employed were also representative of campuses statewide by campus type (elementary, middle, high school), demographic makeup of the student body, TAAS performance, and ethnicity and experience of the teaching force. In addition, the districts in which these campuses were located were representative of districts statewide by geographic region, community type (urban, suburban, rural), district size, property wealth, and tax effort, as well as student demographics and performance and teacher characteristics.

TABLE 4
Characteristics of Texas Public School Counselors and Survey Respondents, 1993-94

	Counselors in State*	Percent of All Counselors	Survey Respondents*	Percent of All Respondents
Gender				
Female	6,344	81.7%	1,241	81.4%
Male	1,420	18.3%	284	18.6%
Ethnicity				
White	5,491	70.7%	1,124	73.7%
Hispanic	1,343	17.3%	241	15.8%
African American	906	11.7%	155	10.2%
Other Minority	24	0.3%	5	0.3%
Education				
BA or Less	595	7.7%	126	8.3%
MA	7,062	91.0%	1,382	90.6%
PhD	107	1.4%	17	1.1%
Age				
Under 30	106	1.4%	17	1.1%
30 – 39	1,172	15.1%	223	14.7%
40 – 49	3,527	45.4%	709	46.7%
50 and Over	2,944	38.0%	569	37.5%
Total	7,764	100%	1,541	100%

Source: TEA, PEIMS 1993-94; and TEA (1994), Research and Evaluation Division, Texas Counseling and Guidance Study Survey
Note: All categories may not add to total due to missing data.
* Counselor numbers are based on head counts rather than full-time equivalents.

Counseling and Guidance Case Studies

The final component of the study consisted of qualitative case studies of school counseling and guidance programs across Texas. In the spring of 1995 at each case study site, structured questions were asked of counselors and principals individually; an adult focus group comprised of a counselor, the principal, teachers, parents, and community members; and a student focus group. The main purpose for conducting the 21 case studies was to gather data from a diverse set of campuses to help describe commonalties and variations in current counseling and guidance practices and what counselors, principals, teachers, school staff, students, parents, and community members prefer those practices to be. Second, case study interview data were used to understand program goals and objectives in relationship to student needs such as academic, career, and personal/social needs, and to program needs such as resources, budget, staffing, and staff development needs. Third, case study interviewees were asked to gauge the sufficiency of counseling and guidance in an effort to better define a professional identity for the school counselor in relationship to teachers, school staff, and others that better addresses student needs. In addition, case study interviewees were asked to examine the policy implications of enhancing the organization of counseling and guidance service delivery. A complete description of the sampling plan, interview protocols, data collection, and data systems can be found in *Texas School Counseling and Guidance Programs: Case Studies Report* (TEA, 1996).

Study Reports

Four reports of findings have been published as part of this study.

Counselors in Texas Public Schools (GE4 170 13) introduced the study and provided a cross-section of the information available at that time (1994) about Texas counselors. National and state models of guidance programs, issues related to those models, and an overview of Texas policy were presented. This report is superseded by the final study report, described below.

Texas School Counseling and Guidance Programs: Case Studies Report (GE6 601 06), published in July 1996, summarizes overall trends and patterns in current counseling and guidance programs and practices described by interviewees across the 21 case study schools, including their perceptions of ideal counseling and guidance programs. The report also provides a brief synthesis of interviewees' policy concerns and suggestions. This publication includes detailed case study reports for 12 of the sites visited.

Texas School Counseling and Guidance Programs: Final Study Report (GE6 601 09), the current report, is the comprehensive report of study findings and recommendations. Counselor profile data presented in the first report (1994) are updated. This report also includes an expanded presentation of state and national models of guidance programs and counselor roles, and a more comprehensive literature review. Findings from the survey are discussed in detail. Policy recommendations incorporate findings from all three components of the study.

Texas School Counseling and Guidance Programs: Final Study Report Summary (GE6 601 10) is a summary of the 1996 final report findings and recommendations.

COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES

Planned, Designed, and Prevention-Oriented Programs

As reported by practitioners in the literature, the transition to a comprehensive guidance program should be considered a gradual process. Gysbers and Henderson (1994) underscore the importance of the planning and design phases in making the transition from a traditional to a comprehensive developmental guidance and counseling approach. They recommend allowing four or five years to establish a comprehensive guidance program, with the first three years devoted to planning and design.

Gysbers' and Henderson's (1994) design for implementation of a comprehensive program model is also consistent with findings from a 1986 College Board study (cited in College Entrance Examination Board, 1996). In this study, high and low performing counseling program characteristics were used to develop recommendations for program planning and design that clarify the role of the counselor and all individuals involved in the program, increase parent and community involvement, provide guidance and support to all children and adolescents, and enhance community collaboration. Appendix 3 presents the characteristics of high- and low-performing counseling programs that can be assessed in the planning and design stages of implementation of a comprehensive model.

Program Design: Case Study Findings

Counseling and Guidance Program Missions and Goals

Interviewees at about half the case study campuses reported having written counseling and guidance program missions; verbal or written missions were often developed districtwide by counselors with input from parents, teachers, and administrators. For one campus providing special education services to students with disabilities, the program mission, goals, and objectives were based on those for the district but tailored to meet the needs of students served on that campus. At some campuses, counseling and guidance program missions were implemented following the TEA Comprehensive Model. At one campus, no formal written or defined program mission existed, but the counselor was in the process of meeting with teachers to define the counselor's role and function. At other campuses, written mission statements for the campus were in place, but no written counseling and guidance mission had been delineated. Even at the only campus in the study without a program (and no counselor), staff interviewed thought counseling and guidance just needed to be done.

Generally, counseling and guidance program missions were student-centered, focusing on preparing students to be successful adults, helping them achieve full potential, encouraging them to stay in school and prepare for the future. When asked about program missions, interviewees often discussed expectations for counselors. Most mission and goals statements called for successfully involving parents; providing counseling and guidance services that meet students' emotional, social, academic, career, and personal needs; and teaching good coping and communications skills, problem-solving, personal responsibility, character education, and respect for others. At the elementary level, mission statements also called for provision of developmental guidance to students at an early age to help reduce the need for crisis intervention services as students become older.

Expectations for Counselors and Guidance Programs

Most interviewees noted expectations for counselors, not for programs. The range of expectations included

- primarily, those set forth formally in districtwide counseling and guidance programs, where these were established, and in the TEA Comprehensive Model, where it was the primary program guide;
- the counselor directing the counseling and guidance program with school staff and parents making the program happen;
- the counselor serving as a guide, mentor, and advocate for students; and
- the counselor focussing on direct student services rather than paperwork, testing administration,or student class scheduling.

Interviewees at all schools mentioned that some parents and community members had no knowledge of what counselors and programs do, while others expected counselors to solve problems for everyone and serve as "surrogate parents."

Interviewees at all 21 campuses reported that problems students face are becoming increasingly more serious and complex, reflecting changes in society. Counselors are expected to help students handle more serious social problems than in the past, usually without increases in counseling and guidance resources. These problems include poverty, violence, gang involvement, dysfunctional families, child abuse, substance abuse, increasing numbers of students who are at risk of dropping out, and students who lack needed personal and social skills usually taught in the homes of most students.

Needs Assessment

All counselors interviewed reported using a variety of informal needs assessments, while about half also used more formal needs assessments at either the campus or district level, usually through written surveys. They also were monitoring consistently the types of referrals for counseling and guidance services made by teachers, administrators, parents, and student self-referrals as a basis for planning service delivery. Also common was the use of frequent, informal contacts with teachers about students' needs. For students receiving special education services, counseling and guidance needs were determined and updated through the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) process and documented in the Individual Education Plan (IEP). Less frequent across campuses was the use of formal (often written) needs assessments, surveys, and other approaches in support of program improvement and better definition of counseling roles, including: a district counseling director survey of principals about program needs and of parents about parenting needs; an advisory committee used as a platform to seek advice about students' needs, set program goals, and evaluate program success; counselors using information gained from campus site-based improvement committees for program planning; a counselor-conducted written needs assessment at the beginning of the year to plan program services; and a needs assessment taking place at the district level through the strategic planning process.

Counselors were generally positive about the potential usefulness of the TEA Comprehensive Model in providing clearer definition for counselors' roles and responsibilities, as long as adequate funding is available for the counselors and support staff needed to fully implement a developmentally comprehensive program. Counselors noted two instances of districtwide programs being based on or having

incorporated the TEA Comprehensive Model in which the result had been deletion or reduction of non-counseling duties, such as paperwork and student class scheduling responsibilities, thereby increasing the time available to provide direct services to students. Other counselors saw use of the model as a means to justify elimination of extraneous, non-counseling duties from their job responsibilities.

Preventive Programs

A key characteristic of a preventive program is to serve each student's special needs before the manifestation of a crisis. A preventive program uses developmental processes and builds students' skills to reach the most students and to increase the potential for success. The most frequently reported preventive activity was classroom guidance. Interviewees at elementary schools noted relatively more time spent on guidance curriculum than those interviewed at middle/junior and high schools, where more time was spent on responsive services.

Interviewees at the 20 campuses with counselors felt that programs ideally needed to be prevention-oriented to be effective. Even at the campus with no counselor, interviewees thought programs should include both prevention and intervention. Programs at all six elementary schools and the special education campus were viewed to be spending the majority of time on preventive activities. At the high school and the multilevel secondary campus, a crisis or intervention orientation prevailed. Interviewees at high schools also talked about counselors having little time to spend on preventive activities, with students speaking about the need for counselors to be more visible and available to students, educating students about types of services available, and spending more time seeking out students with needs. Of middle/junior high campuses, one program was considered to have a prevention focus, another program emphasized prevention and intervention equally, and the other four were focused primarily on intervention.

Program Design: Survey Findings

Program design relates primarily to duties under the system support component of the TEA Comprehensive Model. The system support component ensures that the school's counseling and guidance program has a systemic vision and allocates counselor and staff time to plan program management duties such as program development, counselor staff development, community outreach, and development of appropriate written policies, procedures, and guidelines. As Table 5 on page 22 shows, counselors at all grade levels reported time allocations for system support that are at the low end of or below the ranges recommended by the TEA Comprehensive Model. Although counselors did not want to increase the time spent on system support overall, as Table 6 on page 22 shows, they favored increasing the time allocated to planning the guidance program. One possible explanation for counselors wanting to spend less time on system support overall is that it does not involve direct services to students. When asked to prioritize their duties, counselors overall rated planning the guidance program as high priority; duties that involved direct services to students were more often rated as very high priority.

TABLE 5
Average Percentages of Counselors' Time* Allocated by the TEA Comprehensive Model Components

	Elementary School Counselors			Middle/Junior High School Counselors			High School Counselors		
Model Component	*Current*	*Ideal*	*Recommended*	*Current*	*Ideal*	*Recommended*	*Current*	*Ideal*	*Recommended*
Guidance Curricula	22%	26%	35% – 45%	8%	14%	35% – 40%	5%	10%	15% – 25%
Responsive Services	51%	53%	30% – 40%	52%	56%	30% – 40%	42%	51%	25% – 35%
Individual Planning	8%	8%	5% – 10%	12%	14%	15% – 25%	20%	23%	25% – 35%
System Support	9%	9%	10% – 15%	11%	10%	10% – 15%	12%	10%	15% – 20%
Other Counseling	4%	3%	0%	6%	4%	0%	10%	5%	0%
Non-Counseling	5%	1%	0%	11%	2%	0%	11%	2%	0%

Source: TEA (1994), Research and Evaluation Division, Texas Counseling and Guidance Study Survey
Note: Columns may not add to 100% because of rounding.
* Respondents with total time below 90 percent or above 150 percent were excluded from summaries reported; for those remaining, time spent percentages were adjusted proportionately to sum to 100 percent.

TABLE 6
Current vs. Ideal Time Spent* on Counselor Duties

	Mean Percent								
	Elementary Level			**Middle School Level**			**High School Level**		
Counselor Duties by Model Component	Current	Ideal	Difference From Ideal	Current	Ideal	Difference From Ideal	Current	Ideal	Difference From Ideal
Guidance Curriculum									
Teach Guidance	19.3	21.9	2.6	5.4	9.3	3.9	3.1	5.7	2.6
Assist Teaching Guidance	3.1	4.5	1.4	2.7	5.0	2.3	2.1	4.1	2.0
Individual Planning									
Guide Students	4.6	5.6	1.0	8.2	10.8	2.6	15.8	19.2	3.4
Interpret Test Results	2.9	2.3	–0.6	3.8	3.3	–0.5	4.5	3.8	–0.7
Responsive Services									
Counsel Individuals	18.3	19.9	1.6	20.6	22.1	1.5	17.1	21.1	4.0
Counsel Small Groups	11.8	14.6	2.8	9.4	14.0	4.6	5.6	10.3	4.7
Consult with Relevant Individuals	9.3	9.1	–0.2	11.1	10.4	–0.7	8.4	8.6	0.2
Coordinate Resources	3.5	3.9	0.4	2.9	3.6	0.7	3.3	4.1	0.8
Use Referral Process	6.6	4.0	–2.6	5.2	4.0	–1.2	4.7	4.0	–0.7
Assess Using Other Sources	1.9	1.6	–0.3	2.4	2.1	–0.3	2.6	2.5	–0.1
System Support									
Plan Guidance Program	5.5	6.4	0.9	3.9	5.7	1.8	3.5	5.1	1.6
Supervise Personnel	1.4	0.9	–0.5	3.1	1.9	–1.2	3.2	2.0	–1.2
Plan Standardized Testing	2.5	1.9	–0.6	4.3	2.8	–1.5	5.3	3.2	–2.1
Other									
Other Counseling Duty	4.0	2.8	–1.2	6.3	3.5	–2.8	9.6	4.5	–5.1
Non-Counseling Duty	5.4	0.8	–4.6	10.9	1.6	–9.3	11.3	1.7	–9.6

Source: TEA (1994), Research and Evaluation Division, Texas Counseling and Guidance Study Survey
Note: Columns may not add to 100% because of rounding.
* Respondents with total times below 90 percent or above 150 percent were excluded from summaries reported; for those remaining, time spent percentages were adjusted proportionately to sum to 100 percent.

As shown in Table 7, large numbers of counselors (38.2%) felt they need the support of another counselor to plan the guidance program; however, almost as many (31.7%) responded that no staff is needed. Elementary school counselors were the group that rated highest (42.2%) the need for another counselor to plan the guidance program. More than half of all counselors surveyed (55.4%) responded that staff development is needed or greatly needed to plan the guidance program, as shown in Table 8 on page 24. Middle/junior high school counselors were the group that rated highest (40.7%) the need for staff development to plan the guidance program. As shown in Table 9 on page 25, more than two-thirds of counselors indicated planning the guidance and counseling program to be low or moderately stressful.

Program Resources and Organization

Program resources and organization encompass the processes of the counseling and guidance program. This section includes a profile of Texas school counselors covering demographics, experience, salaries, student/counselor ratios, and counselor supply and demand. It further describes, through survey and case study data, implementation of counseling and guidance programs and practices in Texas public schools and what stakeholders — counselors, students, teachers, administrators, parents, and community members — think an ideal program should be. Counselor duties, program priorities, and involvement of counselors in campuswide activities are discussed. The elements of the TEA Comprehensive Model are used to guide the description of the current program implementation and the ideal program.

TABLE 7
Counseling Duties by Staff Needed

Counselor Duties	Percent Indicating Type of Staff Needed					
	Counselor	Clerical Support	Administrative Support	Other Professionals	No Staff Needed	Para-professionals
Counsel individuals	**66.1%**	2.3%	1.7%	6.8%	21.9%	0.5%
Counsel small groups	**64.6%**	2.4%	2.1%	8.6%	20.8%	0.7%
Guide students	**55.6%**	4.0%	2.1%	9.5%	25.3%	2.2%
Teach guidance	**48.5%**	3.6%	7.2%	11.6%	26.7%	1.3%
Consult with parents, teachers, etc.	**46.2%**	3.0%	10.0%	13.6%	24.4%	1.3%
Assist teaching guidance	**43.8%**	3.1%	9.0%	8.8%	30.9%	3.6%
Plan guidance program	**38.2%**	7.0%	14.9%	6.1%	31.7%	1.1%
Interpret test results	**34.3%**	3.9%	12.9%	11.7%	33.9%	2.4%
Non-counseling duty	4.0%	**28.7%**	17.5%	9.9%	21.7%	16.4%
Plan standardized testing	18.6%	8.3%	**32.9%**	9.5%	25.9%	3.3%
Coordinate resources	17.6%	8.2%	17.3%	**34.4%**	15.6%	5.5%
Use referral process	22.8%	12.1%	7.9%	**30.2%**	20.0%	5.4%
Supervise personnel	5.9%	20.2%	25.7%	3.5%	**39.5%**	4.9%
Assess with other sources	24.8%	7.4%	9.4%	18.5%	**34.8%**	4.0%
Other counseling duty	25.3%	18.5%	9.1%	11.9%	**27.5%**	6.3%

Source: TEA (1994), Research and Evaluation Division, Texas Counseling and Guidance Study Survey
Note: Bold numbers represent highest percentage for each duty. Rows may not add to 100 percent because of rounding and/or exclusion of responses in more than one category.

TABLE 8
Counseling Duties by Staff Development Needs

Counselor Duties	Percent Indicating Level of Need			
	Greatly Needed	Needed	Neutral	Not Needed
Coordinate resources	12.9%	**48.7%**	25.2%	13.2%
Assist teaching guidance	15.3%	**45.2%**	22.4%	16.9%
Teach guidance	17.6%	**42.0%**	23.7%	16.7%
Use referral process	10.5%	**41.6%**	28.1%	19.8%
Consult with parents, teachers, etc.	16.1%	**41.5%**	22.9%	19.5%
Guide students	20.9%	**40.6%**	21.1%	17.4%
Counsel small groups	23.8%	**39.4%**	19.2%	17.5%
Plan guidance program	18.2%	**37.2%**	26.2%	18.5%
Interpret test results	7.8%	**35.2%**	30.3%	26.5%
Counsel individuals	24.3%	**34.8%**	21.0%	19.9%
Assess with other sources	6.1%	32.1%	**35.5%**	26.3%
Plan standardized testing	8.2%	28.6%	**33.0%**	30.0%
Non-counseling duty	11.7%	13.7%	17.4%	**57.2%**
Supervise personnel	6.5%	15.2%	23.1%	**55.1%**
Other counseling duty	14.2%	23.8%	21.8%	**40.3%**

Source: TEA (1994), Research and Evaluation Division, Texas Counseling and Guidance Study Survey
Note: Bold numbers represent highest percentage for each duty. Rows may not add to 100 percent because of rounding and/or exclusion of responses in more than one category.

A key issue explored in the study was the impact of resources and budgets on a counseling and guidance program, especially adequacy of the number of counselors and support staff. Findings related to staff support and the role of others in the counseling and guidance program are discussed. Issues examined in this context include job stress due to time pressure, professional identity of the counselor, and staff development needs of counselors.

Profile of the Texas Counselor

Analyses throughout this report are based on full-time equivalent (FTE) counselors assigned to Texas public schools during the 1995-96 school year. In 1995-96, there were 8,291 full-time equivalent counselors. An additional 238 counselors were employed by districts and cooperatives of districts but not assigned to campuses.

The 1995-96 Texas public school counseling staff was predominantly female (82.6%). Texas counselors ranged in age from 26 to 74 with an average age of 47. Of counselors, 1.6 percent were under 30 and 16.6 percent were under 40. Forty-five percent of all counselors were between the ages of 40-49. Hispanic counselors as a group were slightly younger; their average age was 44. White counselors' average age was 48 and African American counselors' average age was 50.

TABLE 9
Counseling Duties by Time Pressure Stress

Counselor Duties	Percent Indicating Stress Level			
	Very High	High	Moderate	Low
Non-counseling duty	**41.2%**	16.6%	15.6%	26.6%
Counsel individuals	**37.4%**	27.7%	24.1%	10.6%
Counsel small groups	**29.7%**	29.0%	27.7%	13.4%
Coordinate resources	9.7%	20.1%	**42.7%**	27.2%
Use referral process	15.0%	20.3%	**37.0%**	27.6%
Consult with parents, teachers, etc.	22.9%	28.0%	**35.3%**	13.8%
Plan guidance program	13.6%	17.3%	**35.0%**	34.1%
Guide students	20.1%	22.0%	**33.6%**	24.2%
Teach guidance	17.5%	21.5%	**30.9%**	30.1%
Supervise personnel	6.8%	8.4%	21.0%	**63.8%**
Assess with other sources	6.0%	10.4%	35.6%	**48.0%**
Interpret test results	8.6%	14.8%	36.4%	**40.2%**
Plan standardized testing	20.5%	15.4%	25.0%	**39.0%**
Assist teaching guidance	8.9%	16.0%	37.3%	**37.8%**
Other counseling duty	28.0%	19.5%	23.9%	**28.6%**

Source: TEA (1994), Research and Evaluation Division, Texas Counseling and Guidance Study Survey
Note: Bold numbers represent highest percentage for each duty. Rows may not add to 100 percent because of rounding and/or exclusion of responses in more than one category.

Ethnicity of counselors remained more diverse than Texas teachers but still did not reflect the diversity found within the student body. As shown in Table 10 on page 26, the Texas counselor work force in 1995-96 was 67.3 percent White, 21.0 percent Hispanic, 11.2 percent African American, and less than 1 percent other minorities. The number of Hispanic counselors more than doubled from 1988-89 to 1995-96. The total number of counselors increased by 50.8 percent over that time. As Table 11 on page 26 shows, African American counselors have increased as a percentage of all *first-year* counselors over the past 3 years, from 15.7 percent of first-year counselors in 1993-94 to 22.1 percent of first-year counselors in 1995-96. However, they declined as a percentage of total counselors. In 1988-89, 13.1 percent of all counselors were African American, compared to 11.2 percent in 1995-96. In the 1995-96 school year, African American and Hispanic minorities made up 38.2 percent of grant counselors compared to only 32.2 percent of all counselors. Grant counselors have been hired in the past four years with state funds distributed through a competitive grant process to work in elementary schools; in distributing the funds, preference has been given to districts with high percentages of students identified as at risk of school failure. In 1995-96, 212 counselors were hired under this program.

Education levels for all counselors in the 1995-96 school year remained very similar to those reported in 1993-94. Although a master's degree is not required for certification as a counselor in Texas, counselor preparation programs at Texas colleges and universities are offered as master's programs. Consequently,

TABLE 10
Change in Number of Counselors by Ethnicity
1988-89 to 1995-96

Counselors	1988 – 89	1995 – 96
White	3,958 (72.0%)	5,577 (67.3%)
Hispanic	806 (14.7%)	1,742 (21.0%)
African American	718 (13.1%)	928 (11.2%)
Other Minority	14 (0.3%)	43 (0.5%)
TOTAL	**5,497 (100%)**	**8,291 (100%)**

Source: TEA, PEIMS 1988-89, 1995-96
Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. Statistics above are based on full-time equivalent counselors who were assigned to campuses.

TABLE 11
Trend Profile for First-Year, Grant-Funded, and All Texas School Counselors

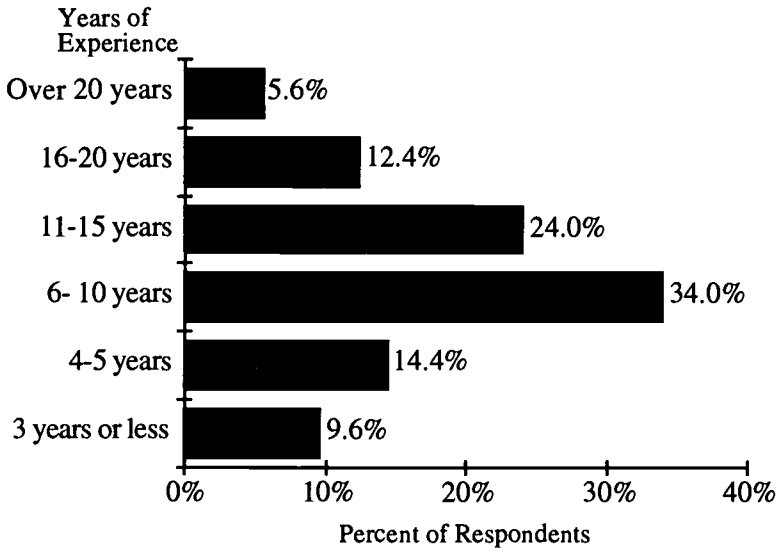
	All Counselors			First-Year Counselors			Grant-Funded Counselors		
	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
Number of Counselors:	7,558	8,041	8,291	305	289	262	98	182	212
Mean Annual Base Salary:	$38,144	$38,181	$38,988	$37,118	$38,602	$40,264	$35,124	$35,129	$37,147
Ethnicity:									
African American	12%	12%	11%	16%	17%	22%	12%	13%	14%
Hispanic	18%	19%	21%	7%	11%	7%	22%	22%	24%
White	70%	69%	67%	77%	72%	71%	65%	64%	61%
Other Minorities	<1%	<1%	1%	<1%	0%	<1%	0%	1%	1%
Highest Degree:									
Bachelors	8%	8%	8%	10%	12%	11%	7%	11%	11%
Masters	91%	90%	90%	87%	82%	86%	90%	88%	88%
PhD	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%
No Degree	<1%	<1%	<1%	1%	3%	1%	2%	1%	0%

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1993-94 through 1995-96
Note: Columns may not add to 100% because of rounding. Statistics above are based on full-time equivalent counselors who were assigned to campuses.

the majority of 1995-96 counselors had master's degrees (90.4%). Of first year counselors in 1995-96, only 85.7 percent had master's degrees. Although a higher percentage of first-year counselors had only a bachelor's degree compared to all counselors, a higher percentage also had Ph.D. degrees.

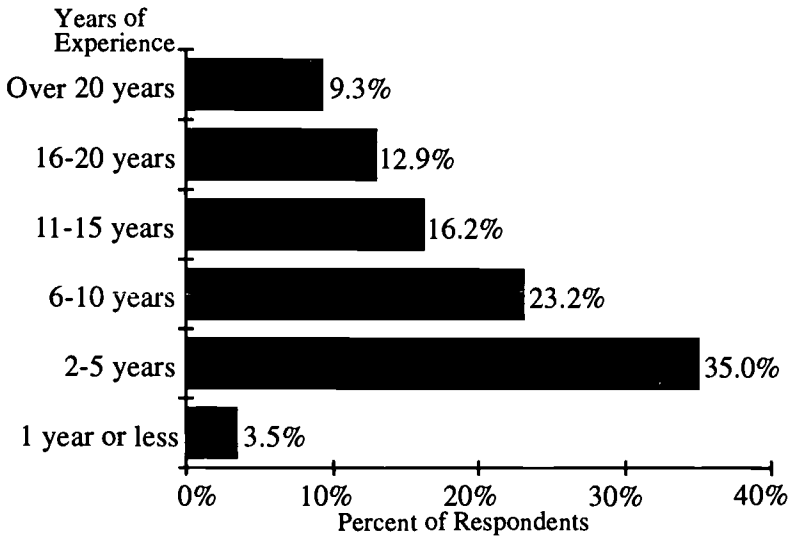
Counseling experience and teaching experience of counselors are shown in Figures 1 and 2. Three years of teaching experience is one of the requirements for counselor certification in Texas. Over 90 percent of counselors surveyed in 1994-95 had more than three years of teaching experience before becoming a counselor, and 42.0 percent had more than 10 years of teaching experience. Thirty-five percent of all

FIGURE 1
Counselors' Teaching Experience



Source: TEA (1994), Research and Evaluation Division, Texas Counseling and Guidance Study Survey
Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

FIGURE 2
Years of Experience as a Counselor



Source: TEA (1994), Research and Evaluation Division, Texas Counseling and Guidance Study Survey
Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

counselors had between 2 and 5 years of counseling experience. Counselors with the most teaching experience — more than 15 years — typically had fewer years of experience as a counselor. Counselors with the most years of counseling experience — more than 10 years — typically had fewer years of teaching experience.

From the 1994-95 TEA survey, 42.0 percent of counselors reported having no specialization, while 12.1 percent had more than one area of specialization. As Figure 3 shows, the three most common specializations reported were human development, special education, and vocational education. Fewer than 3 percent of counselors reported specializations in developmental levels such as early education, middle school, or high school.

Few national data on school counselors are available. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) estimates the number of guidance counselors based on data reported by the states. Table 12 on page 30 compares Texas to all states by student enrollment, number of counselors, and student/counselor ratio (NCES, in press). With over 8,000 counselors 1994-95, Texas had the largest number of counselors of any state. Among states most similar to Texas in enrollment, Florida and New York had student/counselor ratios similar to Texas, ranging between 450 and 500 students per counselor. California stood out as the state with the highest ratio at 1,082 students per counselor, and Illinois also had a very high ratio.

Counselor Supply and Demand

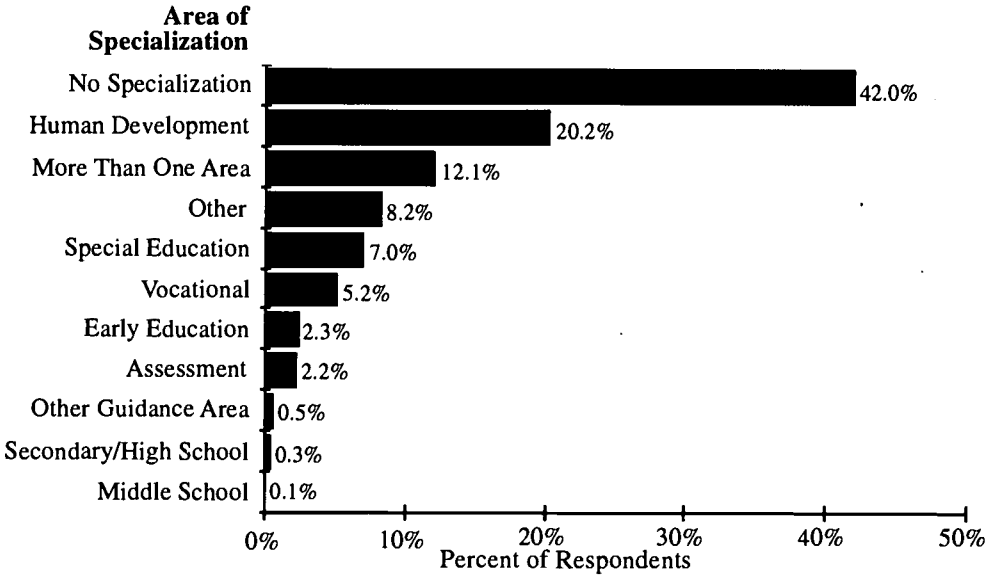
Student/Counselor Ratios

The supply and demand for school counselors in Texas can wield varying degrees of influence on the organization, implementation, and staffing of local school guidance and counseling programs. Often, the student/counselor ratio, or number of students per counselor, is used as a general indicator of counselor workloads and student access to counseling and guidance services.

Although most of the 6,638 campuses statewide (81.9%) had a full- or part-time counselor in 1995-96, another 1,200 (18.1%) campuses with 256,105 students, or nearly 7 percent of students statewide, did not. Because these data were reported to TEA through PEIMS data collection in the fall of 1995, they may include schools in which there were counseling position vacancies during the fall of the 1995-96 school year. Over half of the schools without counselors enrolled fewer than 200 students, 76 percent enrolled fewer than 350 students, and nearly 88 percent had fewer than 500 students. Of campuses with counselors, 15 percent were served by less than a full-time counselor, sometimes sharing a counselor with other campuses in the district or region. Nearly 42 percent of campuses were served by exactly one counselor FTE, while 25 percent were served by more than one counselor FTE.

Statewide the average number of students per counselor continued to improve, moving down to 451 students per counselor in 1995-96 from 476 in 1993-94 and 595 in 1988-89. However, student/counselor ratios varied dramatically across campuses, ranging from about 49 students per counselor to over 1,500 students per counselor for the middle 98 percent of campuses in 1995-96. Student/counselor ratios also varied on average among ESC regions. Districts in the El Paso region averaged the lowest at 267 students per counselor in 1995-96, while those in the Wichita Falls region averaged 626 students per counselor (see Figure 4 on page 31).

FIGURE 3
Counselors' Areas of Specialization



Source: TEA (1994), Research and Evaluation Division, Texas Counseling and Guidance Study Survey
Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Other variation in student/counselor ratios statewide was related to campus and district characteristics. Table 13 on page 32 highlights relationships between student/counselor ratios and selected campus characteristics. For instance, higher campus financial support for instruction (average instructional costs per pupil) and personnel (at the highest average teacher salary level) were associated with lower campus average student/counselor ratios. However, ratios differed very little across districts above and below average in district wealth. As noted in a previous report (TEA, 1994a), an equalization of student/counselor ratios had occurred after 1988-89. This was explained to be the result, in part, of equalization in the state school finance system and possibly the earmarking of state funds for counselors at the elementary campus level.

As Table 13 shows, campuses with enrollments of 400 to 800 students had higher average student/counselor ratios, while campuses with higher or lower enrollments had lower average ratios. Perhaps enrollments at these campuses have been less conducive to employing a second full-time counselor, although most employed one full-time counselor. Lower than average ratios existed for campuses with above 800 students enrolled (a ratio of 405 to 1 and averaging 3 counselors per campus) and for campuses with fewer than 200 students (averaging less than one full-time counselor per campus). Small enrollment campuses often shared a counselor among two or more campuses while maintaining smaller student/counselor ratios on average. Campus enrollments typically vary depending upon the grade levels served, with generally lower enrollments at elementary campuses and higher enrollments at the high school level. As Figure 5 on page 33 shows, student/counselor ratios tended to be lowest at the high school level and highest on elementary campuses. The average student/counselor ratio for high schools (319 to 1 in

TABLE 12 – 1994-95 Students Per Counselor by State

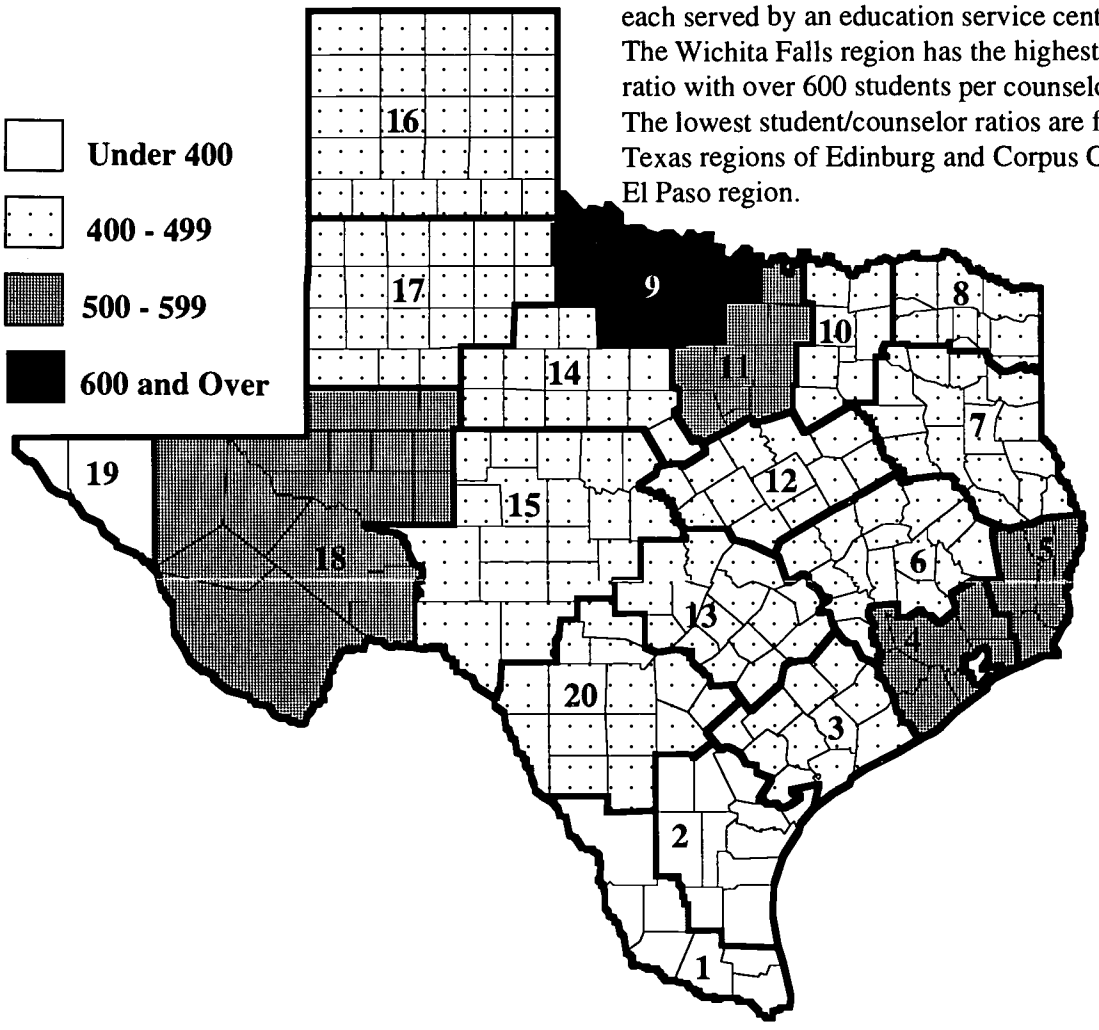
State	Student Enrollment	Guidance Counselors	Students Per Counselor
Vermont	104,533	353	296
District of Columbia	80,450	264	305
New Hampshire	189,319	617	307
Virginia	**1,060,809**	**3,130**	339
Hawaii	183,795	532	345
Missouri	878,541	2,483	354
Maine	212,601	591	360
South Dakota	143,482	394	364
Arkansas	447,565	1,212	369
New Jersey	**1,174,206**	**3,130**	375
Iowa	499,550	1,302	384
Nebraska	287,100	728	394
North Carolina	**1,156,767**	**2,926**	395
Oregon	521,945	1,278	408
Montana	164,341	398	413
South Carolina	648,673	1,514	428
Kansas	460,838	1,073	429
Oklahoma	609,718	1,368	446
Massachusetts	893,727	2,004	446
Alabama	736,472	1,643	448
Wisconsin	860,686	1,914	450
Connecticut	506,824	1,115	455
Texas	**3,677,171**	**8,026**	**458**
Florida	**2,108,968**	**4,585**	460
Maryland	790,938	1,719	460
New York	**2,766,208**	**5,770**	479
Rhode Island	147,487	306	482
North Dakota	119,288	246	485
Pennsylvania	**1,765,891**	**3,626**	487
Delaware	106,813	214	499
Idaho	240,448	478	503
New Mexico	327,248	641	511
Ohio	**1,814,290**	**3,510**	517
West Virginia	310,511	596	521
Kentucky	657,642	1,254	524
Washington	938,314	1,735	541
Georgia	**1,270,948**	**2,338**	544
Nevada	250,747	452	555
Alaska	127,057	229	555
Michigan	**1,614,784**	**2,876**	561
Indiana	968,933	1,650	587
Colorado	640,521	1,066	601
Tennessee	881,355	1,389	635
Mississippi	505,962	794	637
Wyoming	100,369	155	648
Illinois	**1,916,172**	**2,757**	695
Arizona	737,424	1,009	731
Louisiana	797,933	1,068	747
Utah	474,675	529	897
Minnesota	821,693	901	912
California	**5,407,043**	**4,999**	1,082
United States	44,108,775	84,887	520

Source: NCES (in press)
Note: Statistics are in bold for states with more than 1,000,000 students. Statistics in this table vary slightly from Texas statistics elsewhere in this report because of the earlier reporting of these data to NCES.

FIGURE 4
Student/Counselor Ratio by Education Service Center Region
School Year 1995-96

ESC		Students Per Counselor	ESC		Students Per Counselor
1	Edinburg	371	11	Fort Worth	508
2	Corpus Christi	371	12	Waco	481
3	Victoria	459	13	Austin	443
4	Houston	510	14	Abilene	455
5	Beaumont	502	15	San Angelo	488
6	Huntsville	494	16	Amarillo	458
7	Kilgore	485	17	Lubbock	476
8	Mt. Pleasant	437	18	Midland	567
9	Wichita Falls	626	19	El Paso	267
10	Richardson	470	20	San Antonio	404

Source: TEA, PEIMS 1994-95, 1995-96
Note: Categories based on 1994-95 data; the above does not include categories for campuses with no data.



Texas is divided into 20 geographic regions, each served by an education service center (ESC). The Wichita Falls region has the highest student/counselor ratio with over 600 students per counselor in 1995-96. The lowest student/counselor ratios are found in the south Texas regions of Edinburg and Corpus Christi, and the El Paso region.

TABLE 13
1995-96 Student/Counselor Ratio by Key Campus Characteristics

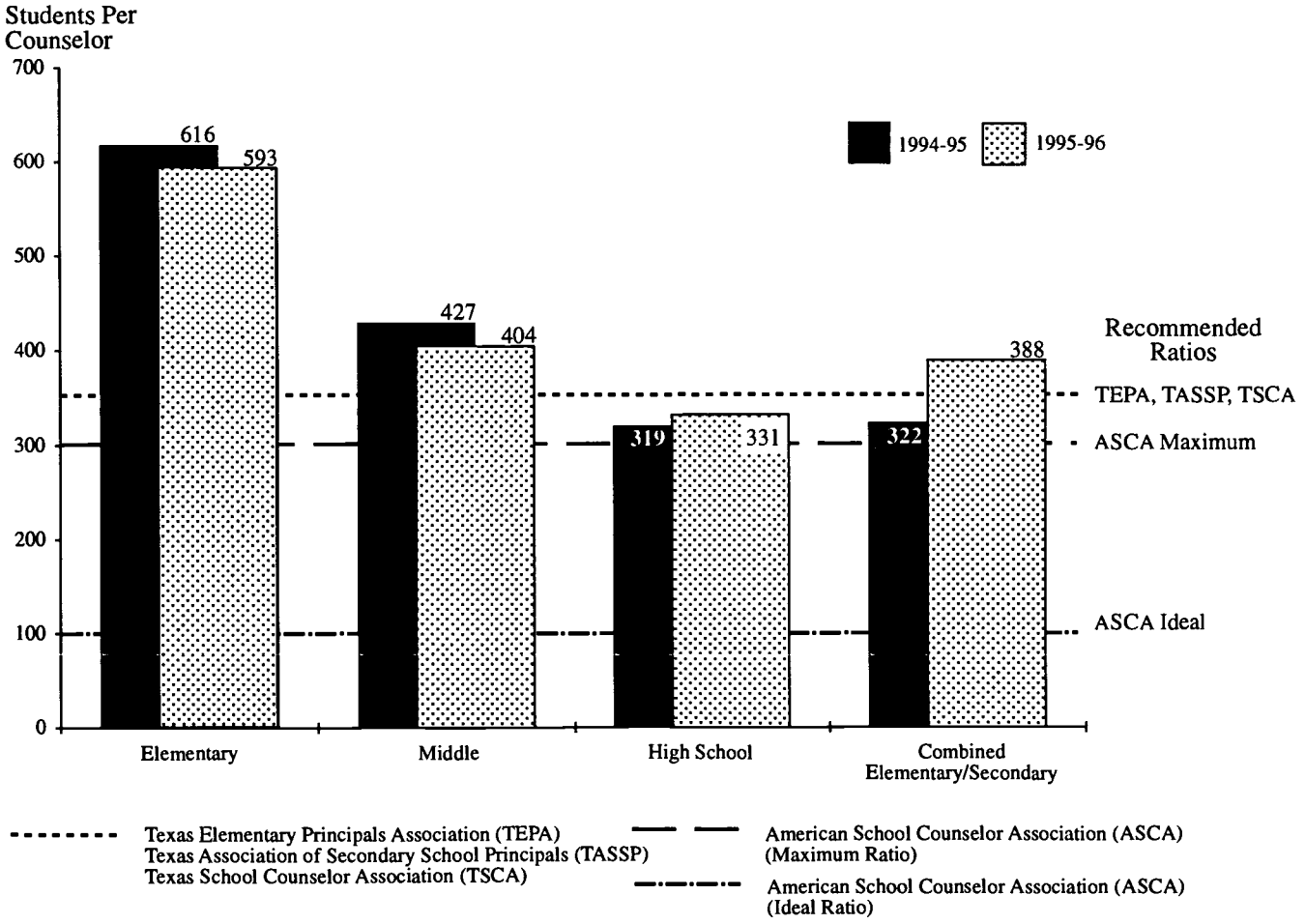
Campus Characteristic	Counselors	Counselors Per Campus	Student/Counselor Ratio
Enrollment			
Over 800	3,953	3.0	405
600 to 800	1,520	1.3	531
400 to 600	1,428	1.0	524
200 to 400	908	.7	456
Under 200	359	.3	308
Instructional Cost Per Pupil			
Under $2,226	1,623	1.3	543
$2,226 to under $2,460	1,892	1.5	481
$2,460 to under $2,708	1,907	1.5	439
$2,708 to under $3,125	1,771	1.4	393
$3,125 and over	973	.8	362
Average Teacher Salary			
Under $26,468	817	.7	499
$26,468 to under $28,059	1,325	1.1	467
$28,059 to under $29,430	1,747	1.4	436
$29,430 to under $31,055	1,865	1.5	480
$31,055 and over	2,411	1.9	413
Percent Minority Pupils			
Under 20%	1,429	1.0	510
20% to under 35%	1,279	1.2	473
35% to under 55%	1,485	1.2	468
55% to under 85%	1,840	1.5	409
85% and over	2,137	1.6	422
Percent Economically Disadvantaged Pupils			
Under 22.1%	1,951	1.6	452
22.1% to under 38.9%	1,781	1.4	423
38.9% to under 54.9%	1,474	1.1	448
54.9% to under 75.9%	1,486	1.2	444
75.9% and over	1,478	1.2	491
Dropout Rate			
Under 1.0%	2,096	1.2	410
1.0% to under 3.5%	1,559	2.6	320
3.5% to under 6.0%	773	3.0	354
6.0% and over	457	2.1	294
TAAS: Percent Passing All Tests Taken			
Under 46.0%	2,094	1.7	369
46.0% to under 58.1%	1,756	1.4	436
58.1% to under 66.8%	1,524	1.3	477
66.8% to under 76.1%	1,473	1.2	474
76.1% and over	1,225	1.0	556
State Total	8,291	1.2	451

Source: TEA, PEIMS 1994-95, 1995-96
Note: Categories based on 1994-95 data; does not include categories for campuses with no data.

1994-95 and 331 to 1 in 1995-96) was lower than the 350 to 1 ratio recommended by state professional education associations, including the Texas School Counselor Association. Ratios in elementary schools (593 to 1 in 1995-96) were almost twice those at the high school level. Certainly, this variation in ratios by grade level should be considered when variation in time counselors surveyed spend on various duties across elementary, middle, and high school campuses is discussed.

Additional variation in 1995-96 student/counselor ratios was linked with student achievement and demographic characteristics, as is given in Table 13. For example, as the campus percentage of students passing all TAAS tests taken increased, student/counselor ratios generally went up. The relationship between ratio and the TAAS percentage passing tended to become more pronounced as the percentage

FIGURE 5
Student/Counselor Ratio by Campus Type — 1994-95 and 1995-96 School Years Compared to Recommended Ratios



Source: TEA, PEIMS; TEA (1990) for recommended ratios
Note: Texas high schools have student/counselor ratios that approximate state and national recommendations. There are almost twice as many students per counselor in Texas elementary schools as recommended by most state and national professional associations.

of economically disadvantaged students on campus increased. In contrast, as the campus percentage of minority students and dropout rate went up, student/counselor ratios generally declined. Taken together, these patterns suggest that counseling program resources have frequently been focused on campuses with high percentages of students at risk of failing or dropping out of school. Student/counselor ratios varied inconsistently as percentages of economically disadvantaged students on campus increased but were highest at campuses with the highest percentages of these students (75.9 % and up), perhaps indicating that counseling program resources have focussed less systematically on these students.

Counselor and Educator Workforce

Counselor staffing levels can be further described within the context of the Texas educator workforce, which includes administrators (superintendents, principals, central office staff, and other administrators), professional staff (includes counselors, librarians, and other staff), and teachers. Counselors made up 2.9 percent of the 273,027 educators in Texas public schools in 1993-94 (Data and Decision Analysis [DDA], Inc., 1996; SREB & DDA, Inc., 1996). From 1989-90 to 1993-94, the number of counselors increased 26.0 percent, ahead of all other educators by assignment except for gifted education teachers (32% increase) and bilingual/English as a second language (ESL) teachers (52%). The percentage of males in the 1993-94 counselor workforce was low (18%) but not as low as for teachers of English language arts, special education, bilingual/ESL, and kindergarten and elementary. However, counselor positions showed the highest percentage of African Americans (11.7%) of all educator assignments (averaging 8.4%), as well as the third highest percentage (17.3%) for Hispanic educators, who averaged 14.5 percent across all assignments.

Similar to supply and demand conditions for educators generally, counselors staying in their counselor assignments *from the previous year* provided the largest supply for meeting the demand for counselors. Counselors new to the education profession (new entrants) and returnees (educators returning to work as counselors after an absence from the education profession) help replace those who leave counseling and help meet the demand for counselors that is fueled by enrollment growth or policy changes. In 1993-94, 96.1 percent of guidance counselors were retained from the previous year's education workforce (see Table 14). Only 0.6 percent (or 48) of 1993-94 counselors were new to the workforce, and 3.3 percent (or 260) had reentered the workforce. Thus, those moving into counselor positions were coming primarily from other educator positions. Although counselors do leave their positions for other educator positions, the net gain of educators moving into counselor positions was 697 in 1992-93 and 414 in 1993-94 (SREB & DDA, Inc., 1996).

Another aspect of counselor workforce dynamics is the attrition (turnover) rate, or percentage of counselors who exit the educator workforce and do not return the following year. In 1992-93, the attrition rate for counselors was 5.3 percent, which compared to 6.8 percent for all Texas educators (SREB & DDA, Inc., 1996). The only two groups with lower attrition rates were librarians (5.2%) and teachers of physical education and health (4.6%). Counselors who exited the educator workforce in 1992-93 tended to be older on average (51.0 years) than retained, reentering, or newly hired counselors; they had higher average salaries than the other counselors; and were represented by lower percentages of minority counselors, except for those who reentered the workforce. These percentages are consistent with expected characteristics for retiring counselors or for those who may be returning to college to work on an advanced degree.

TABLE 14
Trends in Counselor Workforce Supply

	Year				
Counselors	**1989-90**	**1990-91**	**1991-92**	**1992-93**	**1993-94**
Retained From Previous Year	94.8%	96.8%	96.4%	95.9%	96.1%
Reentrants*	4.9%	3.0%	3.1%	3.4%	3.3%
Newly Hired*	0.3%	0.2%	0.5%	0.7%	0.6%
Total Position Head Count*	6,262	6,561	6,866	7,549	7,869

Source: DDA, Inc. (1996) analysis of TEA PEIMS data
* Position head count represents the total number of educators assigned to positions with counseling as a primary activity. New entrants are counselor educators new to the education profession; reentrants are educators returning to work as counselors after an absence from the education profession.

District-to-district mobility was also low for counselors. Of the 7,147 counselors who remained in the education workforce from 1992-93 to 1993-94, 279 (3.9%) counselors moved to a position in a different district. Of these 279 counselors moving to a different district, only 49 were moving into non-counseling positions. In contrast, incoming district-to-district mobility for 1993-94 counselors was somewhat higher than outgoing mobility for 1992-93 counselors. Of the 7,561 counselors employed in 1993-94 who were in any educator position the previous year, 424 (5.6%) came from other districts. Of these 424 counselors, 194 came from non-counseling positions in other districts.

Although new entrants typically account for a very small portion (48 total or 0.6% in 1993-94) of counselor supply used to meet the demand for counselors, the connection between counseling degrees awarded and entry into a counseling position is still worth discussion because counselor certification requires completion of graduate level counseling courses. In 1993-94, degrees awarded to individuals with a major in counseling totalled 1,022; 478 individuals receiving these degrees had no previous educator experience in Texas (SREB & DDA, Inc., 1996). Ultimately, 48 (4.7%) of the 1,022 were hired into counseling positions. Of the 48, 32 had bachelor's degrees, and 8 who were hired also came from fields related to guidance such as educational psychology, social work, and general psychology.

Considering the generally low attrition and high retention rates for counselors, it is not terribly surprising that so few individuals earning degrees with a counseling major had not been hired into counseling positions the following school year. Assuming all individuals who earned degrees (1,022) also became certified counselors, the potential replacement pool would equal 13.0 percent of the 7,869 individuals in counselor positions in 1993-94. Thus, with just one year's worth of data, indications are that the potential school counselor pool is quite large.

Based on changes in the historical educator-to-student ratios, SREB and DDA, Inc. (1996), developed *statewide* projections of surpluses and shortages for educator supply and demand in the year 2000. Operationally, they defined shortage as a projected increase in the educator-to-student ratio, while a surplus indicates more individuals are available than are needed to maintain the historical ratio. Their projections assume historical educator retention, reassignment, reentry, and new entry rates; thus, the projection for counselors by the year 2000 is that a surplus of 500 (6.0%) counselors will exist in Texas

over the estimated 8,290 counselors needed for a projected 3,737,800 students. These surpluses, however, should be viewed carefully because a major factor in the Texas educator supply is the extent to which available individuals (especially counselors) are limited by geographic immobility and discouraged by lack of incentives. Furthermore, if historical student/counselor ratios are considered inadequate, the implication is that the projected surplus of counselors presents a potential opportunity to further reduce student/counselor ratios by the year 2000.

Counselor ExCET Results

Counselor ExCET results (e.g., TEA, Division of Professional Educator Assessment, 1992) can provide additional information about the number of individuals likely to qualify for counselor certification. Table 15 shows that the number of individuals taking first-time Counselor ExCET examinations has been steadily increasing over the past four years from 707 examinees in 1991-92 to 1,035 examinees in 1994-95, with passing rates dropping slightly from 91.9 percent of 1991-92 examinees to 89.6 percent in 1994-95. Thus, the number of individuals taking and passing the Counselor ExCET during either of the past two years compares closely with the number of individuals receiving degrees with a counseling major in 1993-94. Even though passing rates have been lower for African American and Hispanic examinees than they have been for the combined White and Other ethnicities group, the *total number* of African American and Hispanic examinees passing has increased from 154 in 1991-92 to 234 in 1994-95. Although regional variations in supply exist, ample opportunity appears to exist statewide, assuming perfect mobility, for further increasing the ethnic diversity of individuals hired into counseling positions, possibly through more aggressive recruitment and provision of incentives. For example, although the number of African Americans and Hispanics (188) who passed the Counselor ExCET in 1993-94 on the first attempt represented less than one-fourth of examinees who passed, it exceeded the total number (48) of 1993-94 degree recipients with counseling as a major who were hired into counselor positions the following year.

TABLE 15
Performance by Ethnicity on First-time ExCET Examination for Professional Counselor Certificate*

	Total			Hispanic			African American			White and Other**		
Examination Year	Number of Exams Taken	Number of Exams Passed	Percent of Exams Passed	Number of Exams Taken	Number of Exams Passed	Percent of Exams Passed	Number of Exams Taken	Number of Exams Passed	Percent of Exams Passed	Number of Exams Taken	Number of Exams Passed	Percent of Exams Passed
Sept. 1991 – Aug. 1992	707	650	91.9	128	110	85.9	59	44	74.6	520	496	95.4
Sept. 1992 – Aug. 1993	832	762	91.6	189	150	79.4	60	42	70.0	583	570	97.8
Sept. 1993 – Aug. 1994	882	803	91.0	174	138	79.3	76	50	65.8	632	615	97.3
Sept. 1994 – Aug. 1995	1035	927	89.6	241	178	73.9	82	56	68.3	712	693	97.3

Source: State Board of Educator Certification
* The number of examinees does not represent the actual number of persons who became certified during examination years.
** 'Other' includes Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, and test takers who did not specify their ethnicities.

Supply and Demand: Case Study Findings

During the individual counselor and principal case study interviews, principals were asked if they had hired any counselors, what the applicant pool was like, and how they would define the ideal counselor. Counselors were asked how many times they had applied for a counselor position and whether there were many applicants. A number of principals had not hired a counselor. Of those who had, the large majority reported many applicants for the position (this was less true in some smaller districts). Two principals mentioned that there were 10-12 qualified applicants for two to four district openings. In some cases principals mentioned difficulty in finding specialized counselors, such as those who were trained in counseling techniques for the early grade levels, were certified in sign language, were experienced in working at the elementary level with students at risk, or were Spanish speakers. Several also mentioned wanting to see more males and minorities in the applicant pools. Principals saw teachers with the proper certification as the best applicants. In describing their ideal counselor, principals mentioned a number of characteristics including a counselor who: can relate well to children at the age level being served; is well organized; works well with other adults; is experienced in working with the age level of students on campus; shows love and compassion to students; is a student advocate; has excellent personal and communication skills; works well with parents; is someone students can trust; is a hard worker willing to go the extra mile; is caring, warm, flexible, and empathic; and is computer literate.

One principal added that her ideal counselor would be someone who was young to middle-aged so that person could achieve longevity at the school and be trained by the current counselor who had 25 years of counseling experience. Generally, counselors were not aware of the number of applicants for the counselor position into which they were hired. However, one counselor indicated that when she applied there were three counselor positions open, and 24 applicants applied for those positions; several counselors mentioned that there were many applicants for each open position.

Program Implementation

Counseling Services and Program Emphasis: Survey Findings

On the 1994 survey, counselors were asked for each duty defined under the TEA Comprehensive Model, what percent of their time they currently spend and what percent they ideally want to spend on that duty. Table 5 on page 22 presents the responses broken down by campus type (elementary, middle, and high school) and summarized by the four components of the TEA Comprehensive Model (guidance curriculum, responsive services, individual planning, and system support). Also included in this table are the percentages of time that counselors reported spending on other counseling and guidance duties and non-counseling/non-guidance duties, and the percentage of time recommended (TEA, 1990) for each TEA Comprehensive Model component.

Across all three campus types, counselors reported spending the most time on responsive services, with elementary and middle school counselors spending over half of their time in this area. Although the amount of time currently spent on responsive services exceeds the percentages recommended in the TEA Comprehensive Model, counselors ideally would like to devote even more time to these services. As Table 6 on page 22 shows, counseling individuals is the responsive service on which most time is spent. Group counseling is the next most common responsive service activity for elementary counselors, while middle and high school counselors spend more time consulting with relevant individuals. Ideally,

counselors across grade levels would increase their time spent on both group and individual counseling, while decreasing time spent in the referral process.

Under the TEA Comprehensive Model, duties under the guidance curriculum component relate to direct student services. This component includes responsibilities associated with teaching guidance curriculum and assisting teachers in conducting instruction of the guidance curriculum. Elementary school counselors reported spending 22.4 percent of their time on guidance curriculum activities; middle and high school counselors spend less than 10 percent of their time on guidance curriculum. While all three groups ideally wanted to increase time on this component, both current and ideal times spent were lower than the ranges recommended under the TEA Comprehensive Model; this was especially true at the middle school level. From the case studies, participants reported that allocating time to the guidance curriculum component, as recommended under the TEA Comprehensive Model, is difficult, especially on middle and high school campuses.

High school counselors reported 20.3 percent of their time spent on individual planning activities, primarily working with students in groups or individually on developing educational, career, and personal plans. Elementary and middle school counselors reported spending less time on this area, as is appropriate for these grade levels. Middle and high school counselors ideally wanted to increase by 2-3 percent time spent on this component. Both the current and ideal times indicated by elementary counselors were within the range recommended by the TEA Comprehensive Model, while the middle and high school counselors' current and ideal percentages were slightly below the recommended percentages.

Across the grade levels, counselors averaged spending around 10 percent of their time on system support activities, including planning and evaluating the guidance program, supervising personnel, and particularly with planning and evaluating the district/campus group standardized testing program. While elementary counselors ideally preferred maintaining the same percent of time spent on system support, middle and high school counselors wanted to decrease slightly time spent on this component overall. A higher percentage of time on system support is recommended for high school counselors under the TEA Comprehensive Model.

Counselors surveyed were also asked to record percentages of time spent doing other counseling/guidance duties (those not included in the 13 duties listed but still considered to be related to counseling and guidance) and doing other non-counseling/non-guidance duties. On average, counselors reported spending about 7 percent of their time doing other counseling/guidance tasks, with elementary counselors reporting the least time and high school counselors reporting the most time. About 11 percent of middle and high school counselors' time and about 5 percent of elementary counselors' time was reported to be spent on non-counseling/non-guidance duties. Counselors ideally wanted time spent on these areas to decrease, especially time spent on non-counseling/non-guidance duties.

General categories of duties that the surveyed counselors reported for other counseling/guidance and non-counseling/non-guidance duties are summarized in Table 16. Two-thirds of counselors reported one or more other counseling/guidance duties and three-fourths reported one or more non-counseling/non-guidance duties. What one counselor may have considered a counseling duty, such as test administration, another counselor may have considered to be a non-counseling duty. In some cases,

TABLE 16
Other Guidance/Counseling and Non-Guidance/Non-Counseling Duties* by Area Identified by Counselor Survey Respondents

Duty Areas	Other Guidance/Counseling Duties	Other Non-Guidance/Non-Counseling Duties
Administrative	Faculty committees, registration, and attendance	Principal-related tasks and student registration
Scheduling	Master/student schedule planning, maintenance, and changes	Register new students, change/record schedules, and evaluate transcripts
Students at risk	Coordination, follow-up and program administration	Core team leader for students at risk
Special Education	Related speech, federal, and inclusion programs	Coordinate vision and hearing testing, required meetings, and record keeping
Drug Prevention	Drug free schools and drug awareness week programs	Drug prevention activities
Referrals	Vocational, technology preparation and special services	Records and letters of recommendation
Program Coordination	Schoolwide, mentor, career, self-esteem, financial aid, and scholarship programs	Special program reports, migrant education reports, and honor roll
Clerical	Student records, PEIMS data entry, referral, and committee paperwork	Typing memoranda, letters, copying, filing, and student records
Teacher-related	Staff counseling, orientation, conferences, and substitute teaching	Locating teachers for parent/teacher conferences, teaching computer classes
Staff Development	Attend meetings, workshops, professional development, and inservices	Site-based management, campus leadership team, and curriculum meetings
Testing	Administer and coordinate standardized and mandated tests	Test administration and related clerical work
Parent-related	Parent calls, counseling, coordinate parenting classes, open house, provide information	Parenting classes and translations for non-English speakers
Intervention	Conflict resolution, peer mediation, discipline, individual visits with students	
Extracurricular		UIL coordinator/coach
Social Services-related	Family aid service, outside referrals, health education and home visits	Home visits and volunteer services coordinator
Evaluation	Compile data, statistics, and work on interim and other evaluation reports	Work on Texas Education Agency and local evaluation reports
Miscellaneous Professional	Library or nurse duties, night school, newsletter, supervisor for student committees	Sponsorship of student activities and nurse duty
Misc. Non-Professional		Cafeteria, bus, hall, social, senior honors activities, and extracurricular duties
Transition-related	Pre-registration, college visitation, new student orientation, school visits	Transition planning between middle and high school and college night planning

Source: TEA (1994), Research and Evaluation Division, Texas Counseling and Guidance Study Survey
* Counselor survey respondents indicated an average of 6.6 percent of their current time spent on other guidance/counseling duties and 9.1 percent of their time on non-guidance/non-counseling duties. Counselors indicated ideal times spent on these duties to be 3.6 and 1.4 percent, respectively.

counselors considered one aspect of a duty to be related to counseling, while another aspect would be considered a non-counseling duty. For example, some counselors considered test coordination as a counseling duty but considered the related clerical tasks, such as counting test booklets, as non-counseling duties. The other most frequent counseling/guidance duties reported were those related to referral and coordination tasks; the next most frequent were scheduling duties. Almost one-fourth of the non-counseling/non-guidance duties reported were miscellaneous non-professional duties, such as hall, cafeteria, or bus duty. In addition, 20 percent of other non-counseling/non-guidance duties reported were clerical tasks, such as copying, filing, data entry, and typing.

Program priorities. Counselors surveyed were asked to rate each duty by priority (see Table 17). Across grade levels, a large majority of counselors (75.6%) rated counseling individual students as having a very high priority. The next highest rated duty was counseling small groups of students. For high school counselors, the second highest rated duty was guiding students through the development of plans, with 72.1 percent of high school counselors and 47.5 percent of all counselors giving this duty a very high priority rating

For 52.0 percent of the elementary counselors, teaching the school developmental guidance curriculum was a very high priority, while middle and high school counselors rated it a moderate priority. Across grade levels, counselors rated coordinating resources for students and using the referral process as having

TABLE 17
Counseling Duties by Priority

	Percent Indicating Priority Level			
Counselor Duties	**Very High**	**High**	**Moderate**	**Low**
Counsel individuals	**75.6%**	18.5%	4.2%	1.6%
Counsel small groups	**61.8%**	27.0%	8.6%	2.4%
Guide students	**47.5%**	29.2%	17.2%	6.2%
Consult with parents, teachers, etc.	**41.4%**	41.3%	15.2%	2.1%
Teach guidance	**33.2%**	28.6%	27.7%	10.4%
Coordinate resources	16.4%	**44.2%**	34.3%	5.1%
Use referral process	17.0%	**38.6%**	36.6%	7.7%
Plan guidance program	30.7%	**33.9%**	28.0%	7.3%
Other counseling duty	20.9%	**27.0%**	25.4%	26.8%
Assess with other sources	6.4%	24.3%	**49.1%**	20.2%
Interpret test results	9.2%	29.5%	**45.7%**	15.5%
Plan standardized testing	9.1%	23.1%	**41.3%**	26.6%
Assist teaching guidance	14.3%	34.1%	**39.6%**	11.9%
Non-counseling duty	11.6%	9.3%	16.3%	**62.8%**
Supervise personnel	3.6%	8.3%	26.9%	**61.1%**

Source: TEA (1994), Research and Evaluation Division, Texas Counseling and Guidance Study Survey
Note: Bold numbers represent highest percentage for each duty. Rows may not add to 100 percent because of rounding and/or exclusion of responses in more than one category.

a high priority. While 37.1 percent of elementary counselors gave assisting teachers in teaching guidance activities a high priority, middle and high school counselors more often rated it moderate in priority. Across the grade levels, counselors generally rated testing and assessment activities as having moderate priority. Also across the grade levels, the lowest priorities were given to supervising personnel and performing other non-counseling/non-guidance duties, with the latter receiving the most frequent (62.8%) rating of low priority.

These priority ratings were generally consistent with the amount of time that counselors indicated spending on each component of the TEA Comprehensive Model. Across grade levels, counselors gave the highest priority ratings to duties falling under the responsive services component, especially counseling individual students and small groups of students and consulting with parents, teachers, and others. Elementary counselors gave a higher priority to planning and teaching guidance curriculum than did the middle and high school counselors, an area in which they reported spending between three and four times the amount of time that middle and high school counselors reported. Middle and high school counselors gave guiding students through plans a higher priority than did elementary counselors, an area in which especially high school counselors reported spending a higher percentage of time. With the exception of planning a guidance program, which received a high priority rating, system support duties were given a moderate to low priority consistent with the smaller amounts of time reportedly spent on these areas. Middle and high school counselors gave other counseling/guidance duties a higher priority rating than did elementary counselors, and this was reflected in a larger allocation of their time to these duties as compared to elementary school counselors.

Campuswide activities. On the survey, counselors reported participation in a variety of campuswide activities presented in Table 18 on page 42. Activities are shown in the categories (weekly, monthly, yearly, never) most often reported by counselors. These responses indicate that counselors have a wide range of participation in campus or schoolwide activities on a weekly, monthly, and yearly basis. Middle and high school counselors most often reported scheduling and maintenance of permanent records as weekly activities. The most frequent weekly activities reported by elementary counselors were special education/speech referrals (46%). Across the grade levels, between 35 and 41 percent of counselors reported conducting weekly activities related to student needs assessments and identification of students at risk. All three groups reported involvement with monthly activities related to site-based management.

The most common annual activities reported were TAAS and other test administration. Counselors also indicated yearly involvement in the identification of students for gifted/talented programs and campus improvement planning activities. Middle and high school counselors also reported yearly involvement with new teacher orientation, attendance committees, and learning styles diagnosis.

Counseling Services and Program Emphasis: Case Study Findings

Across schools in the case study visits, counselors reported conducting individual counseling sessions with students. Group counseling sessions were conducted with students at the six elementary schools, the special education campus, three of the high schools, and three of the middle/junior high schools. These groups were formed on the basis of students' common needs to help them with issues such as substance abuse problems, divorce in their families, dysfunctional families, grief, low self-esteem, potential school failure, and sexual abuse.

At all elementary schools, the special education campus, and half of the campuses with middle or high school grades, classroom guidance lessons were conducted. Most often in elementary schools, topics were addressed by counselors coming to classrooms on a weekly or biweekly basis. A wide variety of topics was addressed, especially self-esteem enhancement, but also including study, coping, test-taking, and self-help skills; positive lifestyle choices; respect for others; appropriate behavior; dealing with cultural differences; how to say "no"; and stress management. When classroom guidance was reported at the high school level, it generally was less than 10 percent of counselor time.

Counselors all mentioned involvement with student transitions within and across grade levels and schools. This was especially true at the middle/junior high campuses where counselors worked with the incoming students from elementary schools and the outgoing students to high schools. High school counselors also reported extensive activities informing students of postsecondary career and higher education options.

Across case study campuses, counselors also reported many other duties performed as part of counseling and guidance programs. At 12 of the 18 schools with achievement testing and other testing programs, counselors were responsible for testing program administration. At 11 of the 13 campuses with middle or high school grades, counselors were responsible for scheduling students into classes.

TABLE 18
Counselors' Involvement in Campuswide Activities by Highest Percentages

Elementary School		Middle/Junior High School		High School	
Weekly					
Special Education/Speech Referrals	46%	Scheduling	78%	Scheduling	77%
Identification of Students at Risk	40%	Maintenance of Permanent Records	61%	Maintenance of Permanent Records	67%
Student Needs Assessment	35%	Identification of Students at Risk	41%	Student Needs Assessment	40%
		Student Needs Assessment	41%	Identification of Students at Risk	38%
Monthly					
Site Based Management	43%	Special Education/Speech Referrals	46%	Special Education/Speech Referrals	52%
		Site Based Management	39%	Site Based Management	35%
Yearly					
TAAS Administration	60%	TAAS Administration	82%	Other Test Administration	66%
Other Test Administration	56%	Other Test Administration	72%	TAAS Administration	65%
Gifted/Talented Identification	47%	New Teacher Orientation	62%	New Teacher Orientation	54%
Campus Improvement Planning	43%	Gifted/Talented Identification	49%	Gifted/Talented Identification	52%
		Attendance Committee	45%	Campus Improvement Planning	49%
		Campus Improvement Planning	41%	Attendance Committee	38%
		Learning Styles Diagnosis	37%	Learning Styles Diagnosis	36%
Never					
Non-Guidance Curriculum Development	57%	Non-Guidance Curriculum Development	46%	Non-Guidance Curriculum Development	43%
Scheduling	48%				
New Teacher Orientation	48%				
Maintenance of Permanent Records	39%				
Attendance Committee	38%				
Learning Styles Diagnosis	34%				

Source: TEA (1994), Research and Evaluation Division, Texas Counseling and Guidance Study Survey

Interviewees at the elementary level estimated the highest percentage of guidance and counseling program time is spent on guidance curriculum, followed by responsive services, individual planning, and system support. Similar to elementary schools, most program time on the special education campus was devoted to guidance curriculum, followed by individual planning, responsive services, and system support. In contrast, responsive services was allocated the highest percentage of program time in middle/ junior high schools, followed by individual planning, and then guidance curriculum and system support at low percentages. Similarly, responsive services and individual planning were deemed to take the larger percentages of time in high schools, followed by guidance curriculum and system support

In all case study schools, a variety of approaches was used to help more students focus on individual goal attainment. At six schools, interviewees reported contact with students who had failing grades on a six-weeks basis. Another approach was bringing guidance curriculum into classrooms, as well as training teachers in conflict resolution and classroom management so they are able to help deliver and reinforce some of the content of the guidance curriculum. Approaches reported at middle/junior high schools included a leadership conference for all seventh graders, schoolwide drug prevention efforts, tutoring and mentoring programs with local universities to reach at-risk youth, and bringing in resources and speakers from the community to expose students to different vocational choices and provide information to students about real job situations and the kind of skills needed for employment. Among approaches mentioned for focusing on student goal attainment at high schools were guidance centers with software and databases for students to obtain information about careers and postsecondary education; books and videos for students to view on areas such as teen pregnancy, self-esteem, and peer pressure, helping counselors to reach more students; career/college fairs where representatives from local colleges, businesses, and the military talk with students about various postsecondary options; shadowing, mentoring, and interning opportunities where students can learn directly about specific businesses; and teacher support in preventing violence, particularly when trained by counselors in skills such as classroom management, conflict resolution, supporting after school programs, tutoring, and mentoring.

Program Evaluation: Case Study Findings

Across schools in the case study, whenever some form of evaluation was used to inform or improve design and organization, counselors were said to handle non-guidance and counseling duties less often. When professional duties were more clearly defined and some formal follow-up for evaluating success in meeting program objectives had been established, counselors were less likely to be "pulled in all directions at once." Across the board, counselors interviewed stated that it was very important that they follow up with students to assess program efforts so that quality and quantity of student services can be improved. Whenever a formal evaluation process of assessing needs, setting program objectives, measuring success, and evaluation-based program revision was in place, beneficial strides toward program improvement and student success were reported.

Impact of Budget and Resources: Survey and Case Study Findings

Counselors' responses to questions about the adequacy of their computer resources, facilities and space, budget, and counseling and guidance materials are summarized in Table 19 on page 44. Although the majority of counselors surveyed in 1994 reported that their budget, facilities and space, computer resources, and counseling and guidance materials were adequate, many counselors felt their resources in these areas were not adequate. Elementary counselors expressed dissatisfaction with the adequacy of

their computer resources more often than middle and high school counselors. Counselors were almost evenly divided in whether they saw their counseling and guidance budgets as adequate; 45.0 percent agreed that their budgets were adequate, while 41.7 percent thought they were inadequate. Counselors at all grade levels in the case study interviews felt they could not fully perform their duties when they lacked appropriate office space, personal computers, or telephones.

TABLE 19
Counselors' Opinions About Counseling and Guidance on Campus

	Percent Agreement		
Statements by Area	**Agree**	**Neutral**	**Disagree**
Support and Resources:			
Principal supportive of role	84.2%	7.9%	7.8%
Other staff supportive of role	80.9%	11.0%	8.1%
Roles are clearly defined	78.7%	4.7%	16.5%
Principal supportive of staff development	77.6%	14.0%	8.3%
Adequate counseling materials	61.3%	10.0%	28.5%
Adequate facilities, space	59.8%	4.0%	36.0%
Adequate computer resources	54.3%	6.0%	39.7%
Adequate budget	45.0%	13.0%	41.7%
Adequate counseling coordination and consultation with:			
Teachers	78.1%	7.4%	14.3%
Campus administrators	75.9%	8.2%	15.9%
Parents	75.8%	10.9%	13.4%
Other counselors	73.0%	9.2%	17.8%
Other school staff	70.8%	15.9%	13.2%
Health and social services	51.1%	19.4%	29.4%
Youth services	44.4%	25.3%	30.1%
Counseling and guidance programs should be directed to:			
General education students	98.9%	0.8%	0.4%
Students identified as at risk	98.2%	1.3%	0.5%
Students with disabilities	93.3%	4.3%	2.4%
Minority students	92.2%	5.4%	2.5%
Gifted and talented students	91.3%	6.4%	2.2%
Students with limited English proficiency	88.3%	7.5%	4.3%
Migrant students	86.0%	10.9%	3.1%
Counseling and guidance programs adequately serve:			
General education students	79.3%	5.4%	15.4%
Minority students	75.1%	11.3%	13.6%
Students with disabilities	75.0%	10.2%	14.9%
Students identified as at risk	71.5%	8.9%	19.5%
Gifted and talented students	70.0%	12.9%	17.0%
Students with limited English proficiency	58.9%	18.9%	22.3%
Migrant students	51.0%	30.9%	17.9%

Source: TEA (1994), Research and Evaluation Division, Texas Counseling and Guidance Study Survey
Note: Rows may not add to 100% because of rounding and/or exclusion of responses in more than one category.

Counselor Salaries

The average Texas counselor salary for 1995-96 was $38,988, a slight increase over counselor salaries in 1993-94 and 1994-95. Estimated fringe benefits increased the total payroll cost to about $56,500 per counselor (State Auditor's Office, 1995). Fringe benefits included contributions to retirement programs, health and insurance programs, pay for leave time, and unemployment programs.

Although the average student/counselor ratio in Texas for 1995-96 was 451 students per counselor, 1,200 campuses with 256,105 students had no counselor and 257 campuses with 154,485 students had student/counselor ratios over 1,000 to 1. As shown in Table 20, reducing the ratio on these campuses to 1,000 students per counselor would require 290 additional counselors at an estimated payroll cost of about $16 million. A 1,000 to 1 student/counselor ratio is three times as many students per counselor as recommended by Texas professional education organizations.

Reducing student/counselor ratios statewide to 350 students per counselor would require increasing the current counselor workforce by 40.9 percent, at a payroll cost of over $191 million. To put these costs in perspective, the $191 million to reduce the student/counselor ratio to 350 to 1 would increase average district per pupil expenditures in the state by $51. Average per pupil expenditures in 1994-95 were $4,504. This represents an average property tax rate increase of $.03. The average total tax rate in 1994-95 was $1.4106.

Counselor salaries varied across district types, with counselors in major suburban and other central city districts having the highest average salaries. Salary averages also differed across campus type, with high school counselors having the highest average ($40,916), followed by middle school counselors ($38,917) and elementary school counselors ($37,277).

Counselor salaries continue to increase at a slower rate than teacher salaries. The increase in teacher base pay from 1994-95 to 1995-96 was 6.3 percent ($1,855). Counselor base pay increased by 2.1 percent ($807). Base pay is the contracted salary for regular duties. It does not include supplements for things such as career ladder, athletics, club sponsorships, and band or orchestra assignments.

TABLE 20
1995-96 Estimates for Financing Lower Student/Counselor Ratios

Campuses by Ratio (1996)	Current Counts		Estimates					
			1,000/1 Ratio		500/1 Ratio		350/1 Ratio	
	Campuses	Students	Counselors Needed	Payroll Needed	Counselors Needed	Payroll Needed	Counselors Needed	Payroll Needed
No Counselors	1,200	256,105	256	$14,469,933	512	$28,939,865	732	$41,342,664
Ratios Over 1,000/1	257	154,485	34	$1,944,510	189	$10,672,912	321	$18,154,400
Ratios 500–1,000/1	2,074	1,368,680	—	—	645	$36,448,579	1,818	$102,731,797
Ratios 350–500/1	1,647	1,123,137	—	—	—	—	517	$29,210,989
Total	5,178	2,902,407	290	$16,414,443	1,346	$76,061,356	3,388	$191,439,850

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1995-96; State Auditor's Office (1995) for estimated payroll cost per counselor.

Human Resources

Staff Support and Role of Others in the Guidance Program: Survey Findings

For each of the 13 counseling and guidance duties defined under the TEA Comprehensive Model, plus other counseling/guidance and non-counseling/non-guidance duties, surveyed counselors were asked to indicate if additional staff persons were needed to perform the duty and, if so, which types — counselors, clerical support, paraprofessionals, administrative support, or other professionals — were needed. As can be seen in Table 7 on page 23, the additional staff person most often indicated was an additional counselor. The key areas in which counselors indicated this need were counseling individual students (66.1%), counseling small groups of students (64.6%), and guiding students through the development of plans (55.6%). Across grade levels, the percentages were very similar, with middle and high school counselors needing slightly more often another counselor to guide students in the development of plans. This may reflect this activity occurring more frequently at the middle and high school level than at the elementary school level. Also, high school counselors more often than the other counselors reported needing another counselor to perform other counseling/guidance duties. Counselors were also a staff shortage area frequently mentioned by case study adult and student focus group participants.

Counselors expressed the most need for clerical support in performing non-counseling/non-guidance duties. Elementary counselors were more likely to report needing paraprofessional help or no additional help needed for these duties, while middle school and especially high school counselors more often wanted clerical support in these areas. These differences possibly reflect the differences in non-counseling/non-guidance duties across elementary and secondary grades. Across the grade levels, administrative support was needed by 32.9 percent of the counselors for planning and evaluating the standardized testing program. Counselors most often indicated needing other professionals to help coordinate school and community resources and use referral processes to refer students to special programs or services.

Counselors were asked if there was adequate counseling coordination and consultation with various school staff and others (see Table 19 on page 44). Over 70 percent of counselors reported adequate counseling coordination with school staff and parents. Only 44.4 percent of the counselors agreed that there was adequate coordination and consultation with youth services, and slightly over half (51.1%) indicated adequate coordination and consultation with health and social services. While most of these areas were not covered specifically, counselors in the case study interviews also indicated dissatisfaction with coordination with youth services. Across case study sites, counselors were very enthusiastic about the idea of having an integrated, coordinated system of youth services in one location, with nearly all indicating there was not such a system in their community.

Responses to the questions about coordination and consultation sometimes varied by campus type. More elementary and middle school counselors agreed that there was adequate coordination and consultation with teachers than did high school counselors. Elementary school counselors were the most satisfied with coordination and consultation with administrators. A higher percentage of high school counselors agreed coordination and consultation with other counselors was satisfactory than did middle and elementary school counselors. This may reflect the greater likelihood of there being other counselors on high school campuses, perhaps making coordination easier than at lower grade levels, such as

elementary schools, where having only one counselor is more likely. Only 38.5 percent of elementary counselors were satisfied with coordination and consultation with youth services, whereas 46.6 percent of high school counselors and 49.7 percent of middle school counselors were satisfied.

Staff Support and Role of Others in the Guidance Program: Case Study Findings

Staff support. Interviewees at all case study campuses stated that without adequate resources they could not deliver their ideal counseling and guidance programs. This was especially true regarding an adequate student/counselor ratio and an adequate number of support staff, especially clerical staff.

Across campuses, counselors noted that many of their duties require paperwork, detracting from their capacity to proactively enhance their programs. They reported staying in the evenings or taking work home in the attempt to perform all their duties and responsibilities. Common across secondary school levels was the desire for an additional counselor to help ensure implementation of more proactive practices. Other duties common to the middle and high school counselors involved handling student registration, enrollment, scheduling, and administration of the TAAS. High school counselors estimated spending 25 to 75 percent of their time on paperwork. Estimates of time spent on non-counseling/non-guidance duties were also higher at the middle and high school campuses than for other types of campuses visited.

Role of others in the guidance program. Interviewees at 14 campuses noted some district support of and involvement in the campus counseling and guidance program. Forms of involvement included establishing missions, timelines, guidelines, needs assessments, strategic planning, and budget allocations; involvement in school-to-school or grade-level transitions; guidance curriculum for all grade levels; resource materials; a district counselor resource center; social workers, psychologists, and other support staff; seeking grant-funded counselor positions; and college application and financial aid resource staff to help students and parents.

When resources within or in nearby communities were available, at least some community involvement was reported in campus counseling and guidance programs. As expected, community resources were more often used at campuses located in larger communities, where more resources are generally available. Most frequently, off-campus involvement focused on community members and agencies providing further counseling and social services for students and/or their parents who are referred by school counselors. Among agencies and community members providing further services were Protective and Regulatory Services, TDHS, local runaway or homeless shelters, Alcoholics Anonymous, legal aid groups, Planned Parenthood, United Way agencies, psychologists, psychiatrists, community clinics, local programs for students at risk of dropping out, programs for pregnant teens, programs for chemically dependent individuals, resources for dependents of local military personnel, and hospitals. On-campus involvement included volunteers from the community participating in mentoring programs; participating as speakers for career days or career awareness activities, for drug and alcohol awareness programs, and for parent advisory meetings; and participating as sponsors for students in scholarship programs and as donors to help fund the purchase of incentives for students and other materials. A Communities-in-Schools program was mentioned at two schools. Often reported at high schools was program support from local universities and colleges in dual credit programs, General Educational Development (GED) testing programs, provision of speakers, and support with student college applications and financial aid. Because

of the ever-increasing plethora of student needs, counselors reported needing to spend an increasingly larger percentage of time finding outside resources to meet students' needs than they had in the past.

Only one campus reported strong parental involvement in the counseling and guidance program. With very few exceptions, interviewees considered parental involvement in counseling and guidance programs to be inadequate; all participants felt that truly successful programs must have strong parental involvement. Approaches for involving parents included monthly parent support groups, counseling and guidance advisory committees, mentoring program participation, parents as speakers, invitations to schoolwide programs and lunch at school, contacting parents at registration, volunteer service in the counseling and guidance office, calling parents to report progress or possible student failures/discipline problems, seeing parents in school or home visits, answering parents' questions over the phone, school open houses, parent orientations, career and college nights, PTA meetings, needs assessments, and referral to community resources or services. Most parental involvement focuses on meeting students' and parents' needs rather than parents helping deliver counseling and guidance services.

While nearly all counselors across 20 campuses reported strong principal and teacher support of counselors and counseling and guidance programs, program services were almost always delivered by counselors. At several campuses, principals and/or teachers handled test administration to relieve counselors of these duties. However, counselors handled test administration and scheduling duties at most high schools studied. Most of the reported teacher involvement in the program centered around frequent formal or informal contacts with teachers by counselors to assess changing student needs and teacher needs for counselor help with guidance materials or classroom guidance lessons and to meet with teachers and parents together. On a few campuses, counselors conducted informal or formal teacher and other school staff training in areas such as stress management and dealing with cultural differences.

In sum, *counselors were responsible for the delivery of counseling and guidance services*. Even when there were paid clerical or other support staff and/or volunteers, counselors conducted the programs offered in almost all cases. While clerical assistance was of some help, all counselors reported still having to do a great deal of clerical and administrative work themselves because of the volume of work accompanying tasks such as test administration, class scheduling, student registration, and special programs such as special education programs.

Stress Due to Time Pressure: Survey Findings

Counselors reported that counseling individual students was the activity they found most stressful due to time pressure. As shown in Table 9 on page 25, 65.1 percent of counselors rated the level of stress associated with counseling individual students as high or very high. Counselors also reported that counseling small groups of students and non-counseling/non-guidance duties were stressful due to time pressure. Duties associated with testing and assessment activities, supervising, and assisting teachers in teaching the guidance curriculum were most frequently seen as low stress. Generally speaking, the remaining duties were seen as moderately stressful.

Differences in the stress levels reported for duties by campus type possibly reflect differences in priorities and/or expectations. While 54.1 percent of elementary counselors saw teaching the guidance curriculum as being highly or very highly stressful due to time pressure, much lower percentages of middle and high

school counselors reported it to be stressful. In guiding students through the development of plans, however, 59.7 percent of high school counselors reported high or very high stress, while much lower percentages of middle and elementary school counselors did so. For those counselors who reported having non-counseling/non-guidance duties, 45.1 percent of the elementary counselors, compared to slightly over 65 percent of the middle and high school counselors, reported these duties to be highly to very highly stressful.

Except for non-counseling/non-guidance duties, counselors' ratings of duties most stressful due to time pressure were consistent with where they reported spending time and what they considered to be highest priority. Responsive services, especially counseling individuals and small groups of students and consulting with others, were rated high priority, and counselors indicated a large percent of time spent in these areas. This was true of teaching guidance curriculum lessons for elementary counselors and guiding students through the development of plans for middle and high school counselors. Middle and high school counselors reported non-counseling/non-guidance duties as being more stressful than did elementary school counselors. This was consistent with their more often reporting spending time on these duties. Middle and high school counselors in the case studies expressed frustration over having to do non-counseling/non-guidance duties that they considered to be low priority rather than performing duties for which they had been trained and that were needed by students. Interviewed counselors handled these frustrations by working extra hours on non-counseling/non-guidance duties after school so they could be available for students, parents, teachers, and other school staff during school hours.

Counselor Roles and Professional Identity: Survey and Case Study Findings

As shown in Table 19 on page 44, 78.7 percent of the surveyed counselors agreed that their roles and responsibilities had been clearly defined, 84.2 percent agreed that their principal was supportive of their role, and the large majority (80.9%) agreed that other school staff were supportive of their role. Elementary school counselors more often than secondary counselors agreed that their roles were clearly defined and the principal and other school staff were supportive of their role. Overall, while the large majority of counselors expressed having a clear role definition and principal and staff support of that role, there were still counselors who did not feel they had the clear role definition and support, especially at the middle and high school levels.

Case study participants felt the counseling and guidance program design must include a strong counselor professional identity. What the roles and responsibilities of counselors ***are*** and ***are not*** should be delineated, with non-guidance/non-counseling duties eliminated, according to study participants. They felt that professional identity includes counselors and the counseling and guidance program being considered essential to a successful education process. Essential to this are empowered counselors who request what they need and do not feel compelled to work extra hours in the attempt to meet everyone's needs. They also felt counselors should be paid commensurate with their professional roles and responsibilities.

Staff Development: Survey and Case Study Findings

In response to questions about staff development needs, almost one-fourth of counselors surveyed saw counseling individuals and small groups as areas where staff development was greatly needed, as shown in Table 8 on page 24. More than half of counselors also said staff development was either greatly needed or needed related to coordinating resources for students, guiding students through the development of plans, assisting teachers in teaching guidance, and teaching guidance. These preferences are consistent with the duties that counselors rated as having the highest priorities. The large majority (77.6%) of surveyed counselors agreed that their principals were supportive of their staff development needs (see Table 19 on page 44).

While staff development was not always discussed directly, in the case study interviews many counselors mentioned the need for more counselor-specific staff development. Counselors often suggested this was a service Education Service Centers could provide — offer training that was specifically for them in areas such as developmentally appropriate guidance curriculum, up-to-date counseling techniques, and setting up campus programs, such as mentoring programs.

Services to Students

In the vision described under the TEA Comprehensive Model, *comprehensive* entails that all students benefit from counseling and guidance programs and that the programs address the whole complexity of needs students experience as part of human (personal and academic) development. The recently adopted ExCET competencies envision a professional counselor who provides a comprehensive developmental program that encourages all learners to fulfill their academic, personal, social, and career potential.

Program Access/Results: Case Study Findings

Student Access to Counseling and Guidance Services

Across the 20 case study schools with counselors, all students had access to counseling and guidance services through self-referral or referral by counselors, teachers, school staff, and parents. Except for prekindergarten students at one campus, all students at the elementary schools received classroom guidance lessons. In addition, they received services, as referred, for either group or individual counseling and through participation in mentoring programs and schoolwide programs such as drug prevention awareness, conflict mediation, guest speakers, career awareness activities, TAAS preparation, and after-school and Saturday programs. All middle and high schools visited offered individual counseling, while half offered classroom guidance, usually addressing career awareness or test-taking skills, and group counseling sessions on topics such as emotional disturbance, disruptiveness, and low self-esteem. Centers housing VCRs, computers, or other materials were available in many of the middle and high schools for students to use for obtaining information about careers and postsecondary education and for self-help. At three middle schools and three elementary schools, students who are failing are identified each six weeks for follow-up with services. Students also have access to services through registration, scheduling, and across-grade transition activities. Across all schools, counselors reported frequent informal and formal contact with teachers to monitor and follow up on students' needs for services. In the words of one principal, teachers are the school's "first line [for] counseling and guidance."

Student Needs

Student and adult interviewees most often mentioned that average achieving students were less likely to be sufficiently served by counseling and guidance programs than were low and high achieving students. While students in special programs are usually targeted for counseling and guidance program services, interviewees often deemed these students to be underserved because their needs are so great. Students who do not seek services but need services were mentioned as another underserved group. At middle schools, counselors wanted to better address students' career awareness needs.

Students, counselors, teachers, and parents interviewed at middle schools and high schools felt more counseling and guidance time should be devoted to students with personal needs. Across all schools, students and adults mentioned students with personal needs requiring more counseling and guidance services — for example, those with substance abuse problems, those from divorced families, those from homes where languages other than English are spoken, and those with low self-esteem. Some students and adults interviewed thought that increasing the number of minority, Spanish-speaking, and male counselors would help students feel more comfortable receiving services. The bottom line was that all interviewees favored (a) having counseling and guidance services for all students, (b) having counselors readily available, (c) meeting the counseling needs of all students regardless of types of needs, and (d) having counselors with time available for outreach activities to reticent students.

Overall, a general sentiment among focus group interviewees was that students' academic and personal needs are intertwined. Most agreed that if students had unmet personal needs, academic success could be hindered. As one counselor said, "If the personal is okay, the rest follows in place."

At all six elementary campuses, interviewees agreed that students' career needs were least addressed but felt that was appropriate for these grade levels. At five of the six elementary campuses, most adult interviewees thought students' personal needs were most addressed, followed by academic needs. At the sixth elementary campus, both principal and counselor saw academic needs being addressed most, followed by personal needs, but other adults in the group saw academic and personal needs being equally important.

At the six middle/junior high schools, interviewees agreed that counseling and guidance programs addressed students' career needs the least, but several felt all three areas of student needs — academic, personal, and career — are intertwined and that all three were addressed. At most of these campuses, most emphasis was placed on meeting personal and academic needs, but all interviewees in these groups preferred seeing more time devoted to needs in all three areas. Several adults interviewed also felt more emphasis on career was needed for eighth grade students.

Interviewees at the six high schools thought areas most addressed were students' academic needs and/or both academic and career needs, whereas personal needs were least addressed. Overall, they felt personal needs should be better addressed for all three areas to receive good counseling and guidance coverage.

At the campus with no counselor, the principal reported students' academic needs to be most important, while other staff interviewed felt students' personal needs had highest priority. At the special education

campus, interviewees agreed that serving students' academic and personal needs was equally important but, for these students, academic needs were also personal development needs. At the Grade 7-12 campus, staff saw career needs receiving the greatest emphasis in the counseling and guidance program but noted that personal needs were being met because the school is in a small community. Parents interviewed at this campus viewed all three — academic, personal, and career needs — with equal importance.

Program Access/Results: Survey Findings

In general, surveyed counselors responded that counseling and guidance programs should be directed to all students. As Table 19 on page 44 shows, fewer than 5 percent of counselors disagreed with directing counseling and guidance programs to any specific group of students. The groups that most counselors felt were not adequately served by existing counseling and guidance programs were students with limited English proficiency (LEP) (22.3%) and students identified as being at risk of school failure or dropping out (19.5%). The large percentage of neutral responses regarding counseling and guidance services for LEP and migrant students is due in part to responses of counselors at schools that do not have students in these groups. In breaking down the responses by grade level, a slightly higher percent of elementary school counselors (85.0%) agreed that general education students were adequately served than did middle (76.4%) and high school counselors (75.5%). The percentage of counselors reporting that at-risk, LEP, and migrant students were adequately served was highest for elementary school counselors, somewhat lower for middle school counselors, and lowest for high school counselors. Responses regarding services to students with disabilities and gifted and talented students were fairly uniform across campus types.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Objectives of this study of counseling and guidance programs were to describe the current status of the counselor, to assess implementation of counseling services by examining counselor duties and the staffing needs of guidance programs, and to explore questions related to supply and demand of counselors. This was accomplished through analysis of statewide demographic and employment data, a statewide survey of counselors, and an in-depth case study of 21 diverse schools across the state. To give participants a common descriptive tool, the survey and case study interviews were designed around the components and duties of the TEA Comprehensive Model. The model defines a proactive, comprehensive, and developmental school counseling and guidance program that is consistent with state and national school counseling association recommendations. The model is presented as a framework for discussion of counseling and guidance practices rather than a standard against which they should be evaluated.

Planned, Designed, and Prevention-Oriented Programs

- Generally, counseling and guidance program missions at the 21 case study sites were student-centered.

- Participants at all 21 campuses reported that problems students face are becoming increasingly more serious and complex. These problems include poverty, violence, gang involvement, dysfunctional families, child abuse, substance abuse, increasing numbers of students who are at risk of dropping out, and students who lack needed personal and social skills.

- All counselors interviewed reported using a variety of informal needs assessments; less frequent was the use of formal (often written) needs assessments. Whenever a formal evaluation process of assessing needs, setting program objectives, measuring success, and evaluation-based program revision was in place, beneficial strides toward program improvement and student success were reported.

- Students at the case study sites spoke about the need for counselors to be more visible and available to students, educating students about types of services available, and spending more time seeking out students with needs.

- Counselors were generally positive about the potential usefulness of the TEA Comprehensive Model in providing a clearer definition for counselors' roles and responsibilities.

- System support was not center-stage in the focus of counselors responding to the survey or to participants in the case study interviews as the TEA Comprehensive Model was discussed at the majority of the sites. Although ideally counselors wanted to increase time devoted to planning the guidance program, in general, enhancing preventive elements of the program was equated with allocating more time and resources to the guidance curriculum rather than to planning the guidance program.

Counselor Profile and Supply and Demand

- In 1995-96, there were 8,291 counselors in Texas public schools; an additional 238 counselors are employed by districts and cooperatives but not assigned to campuses. In 1994-95, Texas had the largest number of public school counselors of any state.

- The Texas public school counseling staff is predominantly female; the average age of counselors is 47. Ethnicity of counselors remains more diverse than Texas teachers but still does not reflect the diversity found within the student body. The majority of counselors have master's degrees.

- The student/counselor ratio in Texas in 1995-96 was 451 students per counselor. State professional counseling organizations recommend a maximum of 350 students per counselor.

- At current student/counselor ratios and rates of entry to and exit from the counseling profession, a surplus of counselors is projected within the next five years. This presents a potential opportunity to further reduce student/counselor ratios.

- Although principals at the case study sites generally reported many applicants for counselor positions, they mentioned difficulty finding specialized counselors, such as bilingual counselors, and a desire to see more male and minority applicants.

Program Implementation

- Counselors surveyed reported spending a large percentage of their time providing responsive services, especially counseling individuals and small groups of students and consulting with relevant individuals.

- On average, time allocated to the guidance curriculum was less than the recommended range in the TEA Comprehensive Model; the greatest difference between current practice and the model was found in middle schools. Case study participants reported that allocating time to the guidance curriculum, according to TEA Comprehensive Model recommendations, is difficult to do on secondary campuses.

- Elementary school counselors spent more time on classroom guidance activities than did middle and high school counselors; secondary counselors, especially high school counselors, spent more time on individual planning than did elementary school counselors.

- About 11 percent of middle and high school counselors' time and about 5 percent of elementary school counselors' time was reported to be spent on non-counseling/non-guidance duties. Twenty percent of non-counseling/non-guidance duties reported were clerical tasks, such as copying, filing, data entry, and typing.

- The duties counselors allotted the most time to were seen as the highest priority, most stressful in terms of time, and the areas in which staff development was most needed.

- More than three-fourths of middle and high school counselors surveyed reported weekly involvement in scheduling activities; over 60 percent reported weekly involvement in maintenance of permanent records.

- Over 60 percent of counselors (and over 80 percent of middle school counselors) are involved in annual TAAS administration.

- The majority of surveyed counselors reported that their facilities and space, computer resources, and counseling and guidance materials were adequate; counselors were divided in whether they saw their counseling and guidance budgets as adequate.

Human Resources

- Additional staff persons most often needed were counselors. Surveyed counselors also expressed the need for clerical support in performing non-counseling/non-guidance duties, administrative support for planning and evaluating the testing program, and other professionals to help coordinate school and community resources and refer students to special programs or services. Interviewees at all case study campuses stated that without adequate resources they could not deliver their ideal counseling and guidance programs. This was especially true regarding adequate student/counselor ratios and an adequate number of support staff, especially clerical staff.

- Only 44.4 percent of counselors surveyed agreed there was adequate coordination and consultation with youth services, and slightly over half (51.1%) indicated adequate coordination and consultation with health and social services. Because of the ever-increasing plethora of student needs, counselors at the case study campuses reported needing to spend an increasingly larger percentage of time finding outside resources to meet students' needs than they had in the past.

- Although three-fourths of the surveyed counselors felt there was adequate counseling coordination and consultation with parents, the case study campuses described a need for greater parental involvement.

- Counselors at several of the case study campuses specifically noted the large volume of clerical and administrative work accompanying processes related to the special education program.

- The average counselor salary in 1995-96 was $38,988. Counselor pay increased by 2.1 percent from the previous year, compared to a 6.3 percent increase in teacher salaries.

Services to Students

- In addition to individual counseling sessions with students, counselors at the case study schools conducted group counseling sessions for students with common problems such as emotional disturbance, disruptiveness, and low self-esteem A wide variety of topics was addressed in classroom guidance lessons including study, coping, test-taking, and self-help skills; positive lifestyle choices; respect for others; appropriate behavior; dealing with cultural differences; and stress management. Counselors also participated in schoolwide programs such as drug prevention awareness, conflict mediation, guest speakers, career awareness activities, TAAS preparation, and after-school and Saturday programs. Secondary counselors also coordinated tutoring, mentoring, shadowing, and internship programs and helped students obtain information about careers and postsecondary education. All counselors were involved in across-grade transition activities.

- Surveyed counselors responded that counseling and guidance programs should be directed to all students.

- The groups that most counselors felt were not adequately served by existing counseling and guidance programs were students with limited English proficiency and students identified as being at risk of school failure or dropping out. Case study participants also felt that average achieving students and students who do not seek services are underserved. While students in special programs are usually targeted for counseling and guidance program services, they often deemed these students to be underserved because their needs are so great.

- Students, counselors, teachers, and parents interviewed at case study middle and high school campuses felt more counseling and guidance time should be devoted to students with personal needs.

POTENTIAL STRATEGIES AND POLICY INITIATIVES

Recent concerns emerging in policy research and counseling and guidance literature continue to stress that youths' needs are different than in the past and that local stakeholders need to become partners in efforts to meet these needs. Studies suggest that effective policy strategies use locally existing networks as change agents and emphasize cooperative efforts between the state, regional, and local levels (McLaughlin, 1990). The following recommendations for potential strategies and initiatives are directed at all stakeholders in the education system (students; school, district, and Education Service Center staff; parents; community members; professional organizations; and policymakers) and cannot be read as initiatives counselors alone can implement. Although stakeholders at all levels are addressed in the recommendations, efforts must come together at the local level. The recommendations, drawn from findings of this two-year study of Texas public school counseling and guidance programs, are organized under the categories of Planning, Program and Counselor Support, and Addressing Student Needs, with the realization that the three areas are inseparably interrelated.

Recommendations

Planning

The literature (e.g., Gysbers and Henderson, 1994) emphasizes that the transition from a traditional to a comprehensive counseling and guidance program must be a gradual process and underscores the importance of building planning time into the counselor's schedule. Furthermore, the counseling and guidance program design must be conceptualized through a planning phase that includes input from all stakeholders.

- Conduct realistic planning based on local objectives and local resources including financial and human resources in the school, community, district, and region.
- Prioritize counselor duties (including non-counseling/non-guidance duties) and align the counselor job description with the role of the counselor as defined locally.
- Examine counselor workloads for areas that clerical and other support staff can handle so counselors can be burdened less with tasks that do not involve direct services to students.
- Reevaluate local special education processes from the standpoint of the new commissioner's rules on special education that provide greater flexibility to districts in implementing federal regulations to determine if paperwork associated with those processes can be streamlined.
- Provide variations in program designs for counselors implementing comprehensive developmental counseling and guidance programs on campuses with less than ideal student/counselor ratios and other resources.

- Continue efforts to recruit and retain minorities to the counseling profession.

- Examine campus and district staffing patterns in relation to the counseling and guidance program so counselors can best meet student needs with available resources.

Program and Counselor Support

Through coordination with teachers, administrators, and other school staff the counseling and guidance program is integrated into the education program. Through coordination with school and community services, counselors bring together resources for students and use an effective referral process to assist students. As developmental specialists, counselors recognize students' needs and see that those needs are met but are not necessarily the individuals who deliver all services (TEA, 1990).

- Explore administrative applications of technology in areas such as scheduling and registration to bring about greater efficiency in performing these duties.

- Continue efforts to identify opportunities for counselor professional development and availability of training designed specifically for counselors and scheduled at times convenient for them. Provide funding and time for counselors to attend training and other professional development activities.

- Continue efforts to ensure continuity of services to students across the district as they make the transition from grade to grade and school to school.

- Explore ways to ensure participation of parents in students' academic planning, course selection, and options regarding postsecondary choices.

- Continue to explore ways to educate all stakeholders (students; school, district, and ESC staff; parents; and community members) about their roles and responsibilities as part of a comprehensive counseling and guidance program, including communicating what the roles and responsibilities of counselors are and are not.

- Develop local, regional, and state networks to serve as clearinghouses of information for designing counselor professional development and about availability of professional development opportunities; to provide information about resources and materials for counseling and guidance programs; and to link counselors with information on services and organizations locally and regionally that can serve as resources for counselors.

Addressing Student Needs

- Assure that counselors are available to students on campuses with no counselor through local, regional, and state efforts.

Areas for Further Study

Planning

- Examine the contexts and conditions under which student/counselor ratios vary and factors related to regional variations in student/counselor ratios.
- Examine counselor staffing configurations on campuses with 400 to 800 students to explore, beyond the campus level, solutions for obtaining additional full- or part-time counselors to achieve lower student/counselor ratios for campuses in this enrollment range.
- Reexamine recommended student/counselor ratios by campus type (elementary, middle, high school) within the context of campus staffing configurations.
- Determine the extent to which counselors with additional specializations, skills, or personal characteristics are sought by districts — for example, bilingual, vocational, minority, or male counselors.
- Evaluate state-level efforts related to interagency coordination of youth services.

Program and Counselor Support

- Examine geographic and other variations in counselor supply and demand.
- Examine the role of the ESCs in supporting counseling and guidance programs through community education, counselor professional development, and provision of curriculum and other materials.
- Analyze counselor salaries in relation to other educator salaries and salaries in other professions for which counselors are qualified.

Addressing Student Needs

- Conduct further analysis of student/counselor ratios by student group, focussing on groups of students who may be underserved.
- Analyze the relationship between student/counselor ratio and percent of time spent on preventive services.

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APPENDIX 1: Survey Instrument

Texas Education Agency
Office of Policy Planning and Evaluation
Texas Counseling and Guidance Study — September 1994

I. Counselor Profile Information

Please circle the number of the response that most closely matches your situation.

1. How many years have you been a counselor?

1 1 or less years **2** 2-5 years **3** 6-10 years **4** 11-15 years **5** 16-20 years **6** More than 20 years

2. How many years of teaching experience did you have before you became a counselor?

1 3 or less years **2** 4-5 years **3** 6-10 years **4** 11-15 years **5** 16-20 years **6** More than 20 years

3. Which of the following best reflects your area of specialization?

1 Vocational practices
2 Assessment practices
3 Human development practices
4 Special education
5 Other (please specify) _____
6 No specialization area

INSTRUCTIONS:
Please answer the questions in this survey as they apply to the counseling and guidance program on the campus at which you received the survey. If you have any questions, feel free to call Catherine Christner or Martha Pérez at 512-463-9701.

II. Campus-wide Activities

How often are you involved in the following activities? Circle the number of the best response for each activity. On the average, I have participated *at least once* every week, month, year, or never:

	Week	Month	Year	Never
1. Site based management	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
2. Attendance committee	4	3	2	1
3. Identification of students at risk	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
4. TAAS administration	4	3	2	1
5. Other test administration	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
6. Campus improvement planning	4	3	2	1
7. Scheduling	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
8. Student needs assessment	4	3	2	1
9. Learning styles diagnosis	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
10. Special education/speech referrals	4	3	2	1
11. Gifted/talented identification	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
12. Maintenance of permanent records	4	3	2	1
13. New teacher orientation	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
14. Non-guidance curriculum development	4	3	2	1

III. Evaluating Counselor Duties	1. Current Time	2. Ideal Time
INSTRUCTIONS: Please answer each of the six questions regarding the counselor duties listed below. Follow the directions for each question. Do not leave any blanks. For questions 1 and 2, fill in percentages for each duty. For questions 3 through 6, circle the <u>one</u> number corresponding to the best response for each duty.	What percent of your time is <u>actually</u> spent on this duty? (Total = 100%)	What percent of your time <u>should be</u> spent on this duty? (Total = 100%)
A. Plan and evaluate a comprehensive program of guidance, including counseling services.	%	%
B. Supervise activities of clerical, paraprofessional, and volunteer personnel.	%	%
C. Teach the school developmental guidance curriculum.	%	%
D. Assist teachers in the teaching of guidance related curriculum.	%	%
E. Guide individuals and groups of students through the development of educational, career, and personal plans.	%	%
F. Counsel individual students with their concerns.	%	%
G. Counsel small groups of students with their concerns.	%	%
H. Consult with parents, teachers, administrators, and other relevant individuals to enhance their work with students.	%	%
I. Coordinate with school and community personnel to bring together resources for students.	%	%
J. Use a referral process for assisting students and others in using special programs and services.	%	%
K. Participate in the planning and evaluation of the district/campus group standardized testing program.	%	%
L. Interpret test and other appraisal results.	%	%
M. Use other sources of student data for assessment purposes.	%	%
N. Perform other counseling/guidance duties (please specify): 1.	%	%
2.	%	%
O. Perform non-guidance/non-counseling duties (please specify): 1.	%	%
2.	%	%
Total	100%	100%

3. Staff Support	4. Staff Development	5. Priority	6. Stress
Does the counseling program need additional staff for this duty? Circle the number of the one <u>most</u> needed for each duty. **1** Counselor **2** Clerical support **3** Paraprofessionals **4** Administrative support **5** Other Professionals (social workers, teachers, nurses, etc.) **6** No staff needed	Rate your staff development needs in each area. Circle the number of the best response for each duty. **1** Greatly needed **2** Needed **3** Neutral **4** Not needed	What priority should this activity receive? Circle the number of the best response for each duty. **1** Very high **2** High **3** Moderate **4** Low	How stressful is this part of your job due to time pressure? Circle the number of the best response for each duty. **1** Very high **2** High **3** Moderate **4** Low
1 2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
1 2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
1 2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
1 2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
1 2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
1 2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
1 2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
1 2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
1 2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
1 2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
1 2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
1 2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
1 2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
1 2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
1 2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
1 2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
1 2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
1 2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4

IV. Counselor Perceptions

Circle the number of the response that most closely represents your opinion on each of the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know/ Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. My roles and responsibilities as a counselor have been clearly defined to me.	5	4	3	2	1
2. I have adequate computer resources.	5	4	3	2	1
3. I have adequate facilities and space.	5	4	3	2	1
4. I have an adequate budget.	5	4	3	2	1
5. I have adequate counseling and guidance materials.	5	4	3	2	1
6. The principal is supportive of my role.	5	4	3	2	1
7. Other school staff are supportive of my role.	5	4	3	2	1
8. The principal is supportive of my staff development needs.	5	4	3	2	1
9. There is adequate counseling coordination and consultation with:					
a. teachers	5	4	3	2	1
b. campus administrators	5	4	3	2	1
c. parents	5	4	3	2	1
d. other counselors	5	4	3	2	1
e. other school staff	5	4	3	2	1
f. youth services	5	4	3	2	1
g. health and social services	5	4	3	2	1
10. I believe counseling and guidance programs should be directed to:					
a. general education students	5	4	3	2	1
b. students with disabilities	5	4	3	2	1
c. students identified as at risk	5	4	3	2	1
d. minority students	5	4	3	2	1
e. students with limited English proficiency	5	4	3	2	1
f. gifted and talented students	5	4	3	2	1
g. migrant students	5	4	3	2	1
11. On my campus, the following student groups have an adequate counseling and guidance program:					
a. general education students	5	4	3	2	1
b. students with disabilities	5	4	3	2	1
c. students identified as at risk	5	4	3	2	1
d. minority students	5	4	3	2	1
e. students with limited English proficiency	5	4	3	2	1
f. gifted and talented students	5	4	3	2	1
g. migrant students	5	4	3	2	1

Please mail your completed survey *by September 30, 1994,* in the enclosed postage paid, self-addressed envelope to:

Texas Education Agency
Office of Policy Planning and Evaluation
Counseling Study
1701 North Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas 78701-1494

APPENDIX 2: ASCA Role Statements

Major Functions to be Performed by the School Counselor

The nature of the helping process is to direct efforts in an organized way toward making the school, teachers, and curriculum sensitive to those aspects of personal development most associated with life success. The cognitive-developmental stages of psychological maturity deserve the highest recognition in conceptualizing the major thrust of interventions.

Commitment to Students

- The counselor recognizes that each student is entitled to just treatment regardless of race, sex, religious preference, handicapping condition, or cultural differences.
- The counselor is available to all to provide assistance with personal understanding and use of opportunities, especially those available in the school setting.
- The counselor assumes that both cognition and perception influence behavior and the valuation process.
- Structured developmental guidance experiences are presented systematically through groups (including classrooms) to promote growth of psychological aspects of human development. Interventions become integral to curriculum areas.

Professional Commitment to School Counselors

- It is the counselor's obligation to respect each individual's integrity and promote the growth and development (or adjustment) of students receiving assistance.
- Before entering into any counseling relationship, the individual should be informed of the conditions under which assistance may be provided.
- Counselors reserve the right to consult with other competent professionals about the individual. Should the individual's condition endanger the health, welfare, or safety of self or others, the counselor is expected to refer the counselee to another appropriate professional person.
- Counselors shall decline to initiate or shall terminate a counseling relationship when other services could meet the client's needs. Counselors shall refer the client to such services.

Commitment to Parents

- To capitalize upon parents' influence in the educational process, the counselor involves them at strategic periods and events in order to maximize students' response to opportunities provided by the school.

Commitment to Teachers

- The counselor acknowledges that teachers, in creating positive, interactive relationships with students, provide the primary basis for intellectual, emotional, and social growth in the school.

Counselor Responsibility to the Profession

The role of the counselor as a professional and duty to advocate the role of counseling include that he or she:

- Is well informed on current theories and research that have may impact professional practice.
- Uses time and skills in an organized, systematic way to help students and resists any effort aimed at unreasonable uses of time for non-guidance activities.

- Continues to develop professional competence and maintains an awareness of contemporary trends in the field as well as influences from the world at large.
- Fosters the development and improvement of the profession by assisting with appropriate research and participating in professional association activities at local, state, and national levels.
- Discusses with professional associates (teachers, administrators, and other support staff) practices that may be implemented to strengthen and improve standards or the conditions for helping students.
- Maintains constant efforts to adhere to strict confidentiality of information concerning individuals and releases such information only with the signature of the student, parent, or guardian.
- Is guided by sound ethical practices for professional counselors as embodied in the Ethical Standards of the American Personnel and Guidance Association–American School Counselor Association.
- Becomes an active member of the American School Counselor Association and state and local counselor associations to enhance personal and professional growth.

Source: Summarized from *ASCA Role Statement: The Practice of Guidance and Counseling by School Counselors* (ASCA, 1981)

The Role in Career Guidance: Expectations and Responsibilities

Prioritize Guidance

Career guidance is a delivery system that systematically helps students reach career development outcomes of self-awareness and assessment. To make career guidance a high-priority, several basic goals must be kept in mind:

- Delivering career guidance to persons equitably to ensure excellence of delivery for each person.
- Providing quality career guidance for all students rather than limiting it to specific student groups.
- Involving all professional educators in the delivery of career guidance to the greatest extent possible.
- Career development is a lifelong process.
- Career guidance is developmental in nature; it stems from self-awareness.
- Career guidance views people's work values as part of their total system of personal values, thus viewing work as an integral part of a person's total lifestyle.
- The school counselor as a career guidance professional should assume leadership in the implementation of career development outcomes.

The role of the school counselor in serving as a career guidance professional is one of coordinating and facilitating, not writing and implementing the plan for the classroom teacher. The school counselor as a career guidance professional concentrates on the delivery of a series of common core experiences leading to career maturity through awareness, exploration, decision making, and planning. The common core experiences should provide the following for *all* students:

- Individual and group counseling to clarify work values and develop coping and planning skills.
- Formal and informal assessment of abilities, personality traits, and interests.
- Occupational/career information through community linkages, such as field trips, speakers, shadowing experiences, and internships.
- An opportunity for continuous evaluation and revision of the goal-setting process and action planning, including an annual review of all students' plans of study.
- School counselors, administrators, and faculty must become familiar with the concept of career guidance.
- Professional development and activities related to the implementation of career guidance shall take place during the school day, with appropriate compensation provided to participants.
- Developing an understanding of career guidance must include sensitivity to all students, especially in terms of race, gender, and exceptional students.
- The counselor as a career guidance professional works with the campus core committee to develop career guidance goals and objectives. Emphasis is on faculty interaction to implement clearly articulated and developmentally sequenced goals.

The rapidity of occupational change and the uncertain nature of a service- and information-oriented, high-technology society have combined to change career guidance practices in significant ways. The promises and pitfalls of the high-tech approach include:

- The promise through computer-assisted management to relieve school counselors from needing to spend long hours maintaining student records has the potential pitfall of violating student confidence.

- The promise of greatly expanding the nature, scope, and accessibility of educational/occupational information systems has the potential pitfalls associated with assuring the validity and lack of bias found in such materials.
- The promise of making computerized, career decision-making systems available to students has the potential pitfall of failing to use the counselor/student relationship to move toward comprehensive career planning.

Source: Summarized from *ASCA Role Statement: The Role of the School Counselor in Career Guidance: Expectations and Responsibilities* (ASCA, 1985)

School Counselor Role in Preparing Students For the Workforce

In 1992 the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) released a report on what schools must teach students to prepare them for the workforce. ASCA states that the role of the school counselor relates directly to these elements. These role statements illustrate how the four components of a comprehensive school counseling program (guidance curriculum, responsive services, individual planning, and system support) fit directly to the acquisition of these elements and the closely related National Career Development Guidelines Competencies (NCDGC), which provides developmental competencies that are appropriate for each age level.

Resources
Guidance curriculum is used to teach students about allocation of the resources of time, money, materials, facilities, and people, along with the interrelationships of life roles.

Interpersonal
Guidance curriculum is used to teach students how to participate as team members, teach others, serve clients, be a leader, negotiate, and work with cultural diversity. The guidance curriculum should also cover establishing a positive self-concept and positive attitudes towards learning; how society influences work; and the skills needed for interacting positively with others and seeking, maintaining, and changing jobs.

Information
Through guidance curriculum, students are taught how to acquire, evaluate, organize, maintain, interpret, and communicate information. Also taught is how the needs of society affect work.

Systems
Individual planning and guidance curriculum are used to teach understanding, improving, and designing systems. Also taught are how to monitor and correct performance and the skills involved in decision making and career planning.

Technology
Guidance curriculum is used to teach students how to select, apply, maintain, and troubleshoot technology. Also included is teaching students skills to locate, evaluate, and interpret career information.

Foundation
This group of competencies includes both basic skills (reading, writing, mathematics, listening, and speaking); thinking skills (creative thinking, decision making, problem solving, seeing things in the Mind's Eye, knowing how to learn, and reasoning); and personal qualities (responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, and integrity/honesty). Basic skills are taught through the guidance curriculum. Also included is teaching students the relationship between education and career planning. Thinking skills and personal qualities are addressed through a combination of individual planning, guidance curriculum, and responsive services.

Source: Summarized from *The Role of the School Counselor in Preparing Students for the Workforce* (ASCA, 1992)

APPENDIX 3: Characteristics of High and Low Performing Counseling Programs

Characteristics of High and Low Performing Counseling Programs

Recommendation #1: Establish a School Plan	
Low Performing Programs	**High Performing Programs**
A set of loosely related services performed almost exclusively by counselors	A well-defined planning process that leads to well-coordinated services for all students
Students "fall through the cracks"	An ongoing monitoring system is set up to constantly assess student performance and provide services where needed
Counselors operate in isolation from the school, community, and district	Counselors are part of planning teams
No coordinated planning process to provide for the needs of students; plans are viewed as a bureaucratic requirement	Planning process involves everyone in the school, community: students, parents, teachers, administrators, and counselors
Little district support	District provides services and support to schools by: • providing technical assistance in their assessment of needs and evaluation • providing special allocation of resources to schools serving large numbers of "at-risk" students • periodically reviewing school plans • identifying elements that should be coordinated across and among schools
Do not use data on a regular basis to analyze and improve students' learning	Use data regularly to analyze and improve students' learning
Recommendation #2: Clarify the Role of the Counselor	
Low Performing Programs	**High Performing Programs**
School principals view counselors as quasi-administrators whose primary function is to schedule students into classes	School principals emphasize the importance of the counselor as a monitor and promoter of student potential as well as a coordinator of school's guidance plan
Counselors spend most of their time doing technical tasks, paperwork, and seemingly unrelated jobs as assigned (bus duty, supervision)	Counselors develop close alliances with teachers and link their work with students in the classroom
Counselors work with students exclusively on an individual basis	Counselors use group counseling, classroom presentations, and computer technology as well as individual counseling
Counselors operate in isolation	Schools create conditions for collaboration of counselors, teachers, and administrators—particularly for high-risk populations—to devise strategies for: • improving student performance and interest in school • understanding and addressing the needs of a changing student population • encouraging minority and poor students to continue their education • involving parents in the educational process • forging partnerships with community agencies, businesses, and universities to better serve the needs and interests of all students

Recommendation #2: Clarify the Role of the Counselor *(continued)*

Counselors act as "gatekeepers" to limit access by performing screening functions	Counselors serve as "advocates" for all students, encouraging them to maximize their potential
Counselors' sphere of influence is limited to working with students and other counselors	Counselors are viewed as having a central role in schoolwide change to improve student achievement and services
Recommendation #3: Involve Parents	
Low Performing Programs	**High Performing Programs**
Parent involvement is minimal and usually limited to PTA, fundraising, or attending open houses	Parent and family involvement means ensuring their participation in students' academic planning, course selections, and options regarding postsecondary choices
Regular day schedule prevails regardless of the needs of the community; parents are expected to adjust their schedules to the school's	Information for parents is provided at a time and in places that are convenient for family work schedules; this may mean flexible scheduling for counselors, teachers, and administrators
Recommendation #4: Provide Guidance and Support for Children and Young Adolescents	
Low Performing Programs	**High Performing Programs**
Too many excuses for why poor kids can't learn	All students are viewed as potential high achievers
Students separated by "perceived" ability into homogeneous groups	Most/all instruction in heterogeneous groups
Only high-ability students taught advanced-level material or given college information	All students get same rigorous core curriculum and are offered the full range of postsecondary opportunities
Low achievement and poor school functioning blamed on others	Staff views improving achievement and school functioning as its responsibility
Few support services for students	Ample support services closely integrated with instructional program
Little college information given to students and parents until high school and usually not until 11th and 12th grades	Extra efforts are made at elementary and middle school to work with students and parents in understanding college options and financial aid opportunities
Recommendation #5: Provide Better Services Through Collaboration	
Low Performing Programs	**High Performing Programs**
Few students get served — schools try to "do it all"	Schools build a support system with human service agencies, colleges, and other community organizations
School services focus on students who are academically successful or potential dropouts; the students "in the middle" get ignored	"Average" students get the needed extra attention by collaboration with colleges and businesses through: • mentorships • employment • grants • college transition programs

Source: Selected from table in *Making the Vision a Reality* (CEEB 1996), pp. 10-17

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(1) acceptance policies on student transfers from other school districts;

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(3) nondiscrimination in extracurricular activities and the use of school facilities;

(4) nondiscriminatory practices in the hiring, assigning, promoting, paying, demoting, reassigning, or dismissing of faculty and staff members who work with children;

(5) enrollment and assignment of students without discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin;

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In addition to conducting reviews, the Texas Education Agency staff representatives check complaints of discrimination made by a citizen or citizens residing in a school district where it is alleged discriminatory practices have occurred or are occurring.

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