

IMPLEMENTATION OF FEATURES OF THE ASCA NATIONAL MODEL
IN ALABAMA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

by

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ABSTRACT

The publication of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model (2003, 2005, 2012) revolutionized school counseling by offering a foundational blueprint for unification and national support affirming a new vision for school counseling. The ASCA National Model is a developmental, comprehensive, data-driven plan that links school counselors and standards-based education reform to deliver a comprehensive school counseling program. This study utilized a stratified random sample of 159 subjects (53 in each school level) selected to proportionally represent the free-reduced lunch quartiles of Alabama public schools. The research examined the extent of implementation of the ASCA National Model in Alabama public schools across all grade levels – elementary (PreK- Grade 5), middle (Grades 6-8), and high – school (Grades 9-12), as well as data use. *Qualtrics* software sent electronic surveys, reminders, and analyzed responses of a stratified random sample of Alabama public school counselors. This study was the first in Alabama to use the School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS; Elsner & Carey, 2005; Clemens, Carey, & Harrington, 2010) which is endorsed by the Center for School Counseling Research and Evaluation (CSCORE, 2013) of the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and the National Panel for Evidence-Based School Counseling. This research potentially offered timely evidence to facilitate the ongoing Alabama State Board initiative, Plan 2020, created to prepare all students to be successful in college and/or career upon graduation from high school. Results revealed informative demographic and related information as well as interesting comparisons with ASCA National Standard guidelines. However, the ANOVA procedures and the Kruskal-Wallis nonparametric test did not indicate statistically significant differences in the implementation of the ASCA National Model or data use by the levels of Alabama public school counselors using the three factor SCPIS analysis.

DEDICATION

I dedicate the completion of my doctoral studies to the love and support of my family. My dear husband, Fred (affectionately known as “Woof”), was unwavering despite health issues, encouraging me to follow my dreams, and constantly innovating a way to make it work. My children were advocates as well: Ryan, Ty, Jessica, and Seth. Two of them already have their doctorates (Ryan- MD and Jessica- JD), and now it was my turn. My parents, Dr. Dorothy and Leon Chambers, have been lifelong cheerleaders, with my mother inspiring my vision, receiving her doctorate at UA in the 1960s. The past five years now seem fleeting and yet, at times, felt endless. These years encompassed monumental changes in my life: retirement; downsizing from our home of 30+ years; letting go of relationships, places, and possessions; relocating to the coastal end of the state; and transforming as “CC” through the blessed birth of four wonderful grandchildren: Colt and Archie, thanks to Jess and Derek; and Brickell Ann and Carver Estelle, thanks to Ryan and Katie. Carver was born the day after my successful proposal defense-- a double blessing! A special thanks for the generous hospitality of my daughter Jessica, her husband Derek Carson, and their sons, Colt and Archie. My frequent visits with my daughter’s family in Birmingham to complete my Tuscaloosa coursework resulted in Colt declaring their guest bed as “CC’s bed.” As a computer software engineer graduate from Auburn University, my son Seth generously offered his computer expertise to pull my dissertation and tables together, even taking time off work to be available at a critical launch time. Even though out of state, Ty offered stalwart support as a CPA and former UA M.A. Accounting graduate. During all these transitions, my faith, my family, and my doctoral studies propelled me forward toward an

uncertain, but beckoning future. Prayer sustained my journey, comforting and encouraging me to resiliently embrace each new day with thankfulness and hope. Now one journey is ending and another is commencing. Life is such an adventure- "...and miles to go before I sleep."

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Embarking on my doctoral journey was such a leap of faith. I had dreamed about it for years, but other priorities always pushed it back. Many people questioned “why now?” but I responded with “why not?” I have been blessed with opportunities to serve on the Alabama School Counseling Association (ALSCA) Executive Board to recognize school counseling programs implementing the ASCA National Model and to assist school counselors across Alabama to use data to show how their programs make a difference in the lives of their students and benefit their school communities by annually conducting workshops, ALCA fall sessions, and mentoring applicants. My honor as the only Alabama school counselor to date who achieved the Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP) further compelled me to empower other school counselors to find their voices. Additionally, my passion for play therapy and sandtray, inspired me to develop my skills and share innovative techniques to enhance counseling services.

I will be eternally grateful to the University of Alabama’s program in Counselor Education and Supervision for selecting me as a student in their doctoral program. I remember that fateful interview with Dr. Allen Wilcoxon, Dr. Karla Carmichael, and Dr. Mark Leggett as they kindly soothed my trembling efforts to communicate my heartfelt desire to pursue doctoral studies at UA. All were instrumental in my instruction and development as a counselor educator. Dr. Wilcoxon astutely guided my group and internship supervision and enlightened my perspectives on numerous pedagogical issues. His focus enhanced my reflection and intentionality as a counselor educator and supervisor. Additionally, he contributed to my dissertation committee. Dr. Carmichael established the University of Alabama as an officially

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
LIST OF TABLES.....	xii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xiv
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Theoretical/Conceptual Framework.....	1
History and Development of the Comprehensive School Counseling Program (CSCP) ...	2
Background.....	2
Positive Results of Comprehensive Programs and ASCA National Model	2
Accountability and Data Use in School Counseling for Student Improvement Outcomes	6
Alabama School Counseling Research Related to the Implementation of the ASCA Model	8
Alabama School Counseling Research of Related Issues Prior to the ASCA National Model	9
Alabama School Counseling After Implementation of the ASCA National Model.....	10
Alabama State Board of Education Plan 2020.....	11
Statement of the Problem.....	12
Summary of Intentions for this Study.....	13
Significance of the Problem.....	15

Research Questions.....	15
Assumptions of the Study.....	16
Limitations of the Study.....	16
Definitions of Key Terms.....	16
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW	25
Development of the Comprehensive School Counseling Program (CSCP).....	25
Background in Education Reform	25
Background in School Counseling Reform	26
Overview of Models and Historical Sequence.....	26
Positive Results of Comprehensive Programs	28
ASCA National Model.....	30
ASCA Model’s Impact on Students.....	33
Impact of ASCA Model Programs.....	35
Accountability and Data Use in School Counseling for Student Improvement Outcomes	37
Background.....	38
Challenges.....	41
Types of Evaluation	42
Suggestions for Research and Evaluation.....	43
Use of Data Studies in School Counseling	43
Student Improvement Outcomes as a Result of Data Use	45
Centers for School Counseling Research.....	47
Alabama School Counseling Research Related to Implementation of the ASCA Model	50

Background.....	50
Alabama School Counseling Research of Related Issues Prior to the ASCA National Model	52
Alabama Research of School Counseling After Development of the ASCA National Model	54
Alabama State Board of Education Plan 2020.....	58
CHAPTER III: METHOD	61
Research Design.....	61
Participants.....	62
Instrumentation	68
Procedures.....	70
Data Analysis	72
CHAPTER IV: RESULTS.....	75
Research Question One.....	75
Examining the School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS)	92
Research Question Two	96
Research Question Three	100
CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION.....	103
Introduction.....	103
Research Question One.....	106
Research Question Two.....	110
Research Question Three.....	111
Statewide Status on Accountability and Data Use in School Counseling	112
Statewide Status on Comprehensive School Counseling Programs (CSCP).....	114
Statewide Status of the ASCA National Model (2003, 2005, 2012)	116

Statewide Status for Alabama State Board of Education Plan 2020	117
Limitations	118
Future Directions in the School Counseling Profession	119
Recommendations.....	123
Summary Thoughts and Conclusions	126
REFERENCES	127
APPENDIX A.....	142
APPENDIX B.....	143
APPENDIX C.....	144
APPENDIX D.....	145
APPENDIX E	147
APPENDIX F.....	148

LIST OF TABLES

1. Survey Population Parameters for Response Rates	64
2. Degree/Certification in School Counseling	66
3. Gender.....	67
4. Ethnicity.....	67
5. Geographic Location of School	68
6. <i>Qualtrics</i> Question Response Rates.....	76
7. School Counselor Coordinator/Director with School Counseling Background	76
8. Counseling Degree from CACREP-accredited Program.....	77
9. Training Participation on Implementation of ASCA National Model.....	78
10. Training Participation on Data Use in Implementation of ASCA National Model.....	79
11. Number of Schools Served by Counselor.....	79
12. Counselor Age	80
13. Number of Years as School Counselor.....	81
14. Counselor-to-Student Ratio	82
15. Counselor Time Use: Guidance Curriculum.....	84
16. Counselor Time Use: Individual Student Planning	85
17. Counselor Time Use: Responsive Services	87
18. Counselor Time Use: System Support.....	88
19. Counselor Time Use: Duties Not Related.....	89
20. Years Comprehensive School Counseling Program (CSCP) Implemented	91

21. Counselor Units	92
22. School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS) Average Scores	95
23. Descriptive Statistics.....	98
24. Descriptive Statistics.....	98
25. Descriptive Statistics.....	98
26. Tests of Between-Subjects Effects.....	99
27. Tests of Between-Subjects Effects.....	99
28. Tests of Between-Subjects Effects	99
29. Descriptive Statistics.....	102

LIST OF FIGURES

1. Survey Populations Parameters.....	148
2. Counselor Level of Degree/Certification.....	149
3. Gender.....	150
4. Ethnicity.....	151
5. Geographic Location of School.....	152
6. <i>Qualtrics</i> Question Response Rates.....	153
7. School Counselor Coordinator/Director with School Counseling Background.....	154
8. Degree from CACREP-accredited Program.....	155
9. Training Participation on Implementation of ASCA National Model.....	156
10. Training Participation on Data Use in Implementation of ASCA National Model.....	157
11. Number of Schools Served.....	158
12. Counselor Age.....	159
13. Number of Years as School Counselor.....	160
14. School Counselors 1-5 Years & > 5 years.....	161
15. Counselor-to-Student Ratio.....	162
16. ASCA Criteria Comparison of Counselor-to-Student Ratio.....	163
17. Counselor Time Use: Guidance Curriculum.....	164
18. Counselor Time Use: Individual Student Planning.....	165
19. Counselor Time Use: Responsive Services.....	166

20. Counselor Time Use: System Support.....	167
21. Counselor Time Use: Duties Not Related.....	168
22. Years Comprehensive School Counseling Program (CSCP) Implemented	169
23. CSCP Implemented 0-5 Years & > 5 Years	170
24. Counselor Units	171
25. Average Counselor Units.....	172
26. School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS) Average Scores	173

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The publication of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model (2003, 2005, 2012) revolutionized school counseling by offering a foundational blueprint for unification and national support affirming the “one vision, one voice” axiom (ASCA, 2003, p. 1). The ASCA National Model is a developmental, comprehensive, data-driven plan that links school counselors and standards-based education reform to deliver a comprehensive school counseling program. Nonetheless, a decade after the initial introduction of the ASCA National Model, many schools have not fully implemented aspects of the model. This study will examine the extent of implementation of the ASCA National Model in Alabama public schools across all grade levels (i.e., elementary, middle, and high school).

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

Several related research topics are of interest to this study. Each will contribute to frame the study. They include: (1) the history or development of comprehensive school counseling or developmental counseling into ASCA’s National Model (2003, 2005, 2012), (2) accountability and the use of data in school counseling for student improvement outcomes, and (3) school counseling research in Alabama. These three topics were chosen because of central beliefs embedded in this study. The basic views are that: (1) studying school counseling history across the nation will help define the future in the field, (2) focusing attention on accountability measures and the use of data reveal successes and failures, and increases intentionality, and (3) appreciating the statewide journey in school counseling informs forward progress. All three

topics (shown above) contribute to this current research study and offer an understanding of issues related to the implementation of the ASCA National Model. These three theoretical axioms will be discussed further in Chapter 2.

History and Development of the Comprehensive School Counseling Program (CSCP)

Knowledge about the past history in the field of school counseling influences the present and future choices, goals, and directions. The development of the ASCA National Model (2003) was the result of a variety of movements in school counseling.

Background

During the past several decades, the school counseling profession transitioned through reorganizational changes developing a broader structure for students and their families. Over 30 years ago, the field was initially described as “developmental guidance and counseling” (Dinkmeyer & Caldwell, 1970, p. 2). Several decades later, the phrase “comprehensive guidance and counseling program” (Gysbers, 2001a, p. 96; Sink, 2002) or “comprehensive school counseling program” (CSCP; Campbell & Dahir, 1997, p. 1; Dahir, Sheldon, & Valiga, 1998) was used.

Positive Results of Comprehensive Programs and ASCA National Model

As a result of the move to comprehensive school counseling programs, many positive steps have been documented in the literature though the years. Of prominence was the initial publication of the ASCA National Model (2003), which operationalized the impact of ASCA’s National Standards (Campbell & Dahir, 1997). While the ASCA National Model offered a “new vision,” (2003, p. 1); it remained steadfast with noticeable elements of the past, including the three ASCA domains (academic, personal/social, and career), the *Transforming School Counselor Initiative* structure (Education Trust, 1997), and theoretical and practical applications

of comprehensive, developmental, and results-based school counseling from the past leaders in the field (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006; Myrick, 1993; Johnson & Johnson, 1991).

With the initial publication of the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2003), school counselors were challenged to deliver a comprehensive school counseling program (CSCP) “while focusing on student achievement and outcomes and the alignment with the academic mission of the school” (ASCA, 2003, p. 1). The following key question was emphasized. “How are students different as a result of what school counselors do?” (p. 1). Some concerns were also voiced during this formative time after the ASCA National Model was published. For example, several researchers posited that little evidence existed to support the view that comprehensive school counseling programs improved academic achievement, instead, they noted that proximal strategic interventions to improve achievement were considered more appropriate (Brown & Trusty, 2005a). Consequently, support was given to proximal outcomes for targeted interventions as opposed to overall distal academic achievement scores. Furthermore, counselor roles as “collaborators and/or catalysts” (Brown & Trusty, 2005b, p. 13) were contradictory to expecting or proving causal relationships.

The second edition of the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2005) offered some modifications and further connected school counseling to the goals of school improvement. Advocacy, collaboration, use of data, and leadership skills by school counselors were considered necessary to create systemic change (Mason, 2011; Mason & McMahon, 2009; McMahon, Mason, & Paisley, 2009; Sink, 2009). Goal setting was also encouraged through action plans. In the second edition of the ASCA National Model (2005), the four components (foundation, the delivery system, the management system, and the accountability system) remained. School counselors were encouraged to consider how other student standards important to state and

district initiatives align with their comprehensive school counseling program. The revised ASCA National Model recommended that school counselors spend 80% of their time in direct service with students.

In 2012, the third edition of the ASCA National Model was published. Prevalent principles remained from previous editions, including that school counseling programs were to be data-driven, comprehensive in scope, preventive in design, and developmental in nature to promote student achievement. Multiple aspects of the second edition remained in the revision, including the framework components: foundation, management, delivery, and accountability; themes of leadership, advocacy, collaboration, and systemic change; alignment of other student state and district standards; and the process and perception data. Yet, the third addition offered extensive restructuring, including the ASCA National Standards were renamed ASCA Student Standards to reflect the emphasis on with the comprehensive school counseling program. Additionally, ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors (2010) and ASCA School Counselor Competencies (2012) were added in the foundation component. Furthermore, the beliefs and philosophy statement were restructured into beliefs and vision. Goal setting increased in focus through the use of data. With significant emphasis in the third edition, a new school data profile was also designed to help school counselors track achievement, attendance, behavior, and school safety data to identify program gaps. New small group action plans and lesson plans were created to increase focus on small groups as well. The former program audit was also revised, streamlined, and renamed the school counseling program assessment, shifting terminology from an outside audit to an internal review process. Lastly, while the second edition described program results data, these were renamed outcome data in the third revision of the ASCA National Model.

The third edition of the ASCA National Model (2012) also conveyed a clearer distinction between direct and indirect student services in use of time, again recommending that 80% or more of a counselor's time should be spent with students. Additionally, it was recommended that program management and school support should take up 20% or less of the counselor's time. System support was eliminated and some elements of this section were moved to other components. Innovative templates, guidelines or tips for data analysis, and revisions significantly enhanced and emphasized the analysis and collection of data for school counselors.

In slightly over a decade of use, the ASCA National Model (2003, 2005, 2012) has impacted school counselors and students in positive ways (Bryant & Constantine, 2006). For example, as teachers and school counselors increase their comprehensive school counseling program (CSCP) collaboration, students ultimately benefit from the more fully implemented program (Galassi & Akos, 2007; Sink, 2005, 2008; Sink, Akos, Turnbull, & Mvududu, 2008; Whiston & Quimby, 2009). Further, the implementation of the ASCA National Model has resulted in better addressing needs of advanced placement equity and African American students (Davis, Davis, & Mobley, 2013), improving reading achievement (Edwards, Thornton, & Holiday-Driver, 2010), developing response to intervention (Fairbanks, Sugai, Guardino, & Lathrop, 2007; Ryan, Kaffenberger, & Carroll, 2011), closing the achievement gap, (Holcomb-McCoy, Gonzalez, & Johnston, 2009), and addressing student mental health needs (Kaffenberger & O'Rourke-Trigiani, 2013). Scholars in the field have asserted that when certified professional school counselors have the time, the resources, and the structure of a comprehensive guidance program, they contribute to positive and learning environments in schools (Lapan, Gysbers, & Petroski, 2001; Lapan, Gysbers, & Sun, 1997; Nelson & Gardner, 1998).

Conversely, even with the solid evidence of the positive impact of the ASCA National Model (2003, 2005), problems exist with implementation. Large implementation gaps exist between schools that deliver the described comprehensive programs to all students (Lapan, 2012) and schools that do not follow suit. Studies of six states (i.e., Connecticut, Missouri, Nebraska, Rhode Island, Utah, Wisconsin) provided recent evidence of the relationship between positive student educational outcomes and school counseling program organization, student-to-school-counselor ratios, counselor time use, and specific counseling activities (Burkard, Gillen, Martinez, & Skytte, 2012; Carey & Dimmitt, 2012; Carey, Harrington, Martin, & Hoffman, 2012; Carey, Harrington, Martin, & Stevenson, 2012; Dimmitt & Wilkerson, 2012; Lapan, 2012). These studies also established the basic correlational relationships to use with studies in other states to identify preferred school counseling practices and program structures that foster them (Carey & Dimmitt, 2012).

Accountability and Data Use in School Counseling for Student Improvement Outcomes

Numerous forces within school counseling, educational factors, government policies, and legislative policies converged on the importance of increased accountability in school counseling. In this accountability era, school counselors will have more significant student outcomes to consider when they incorporate effective data use as an integral part of their program implementation (Carey & Dimmitt, 2008; Dimmitt, 2009; House & Hayes, 2002; Lapan, 2012; Martens & Andreen, 2013; Steen & Kaffenberger, 2007; Studer, Oberman, & Womack, 2006; Ware & Galassi, 2006; Wilkerson, Perusse, & Hughes, 2013; Young & Kaffenberger, 2011).

Within the field of education as a whole, “high stakes” (Isaacs, 2003, p. 290) testing was advocated to verify or improve student achievement. Over the past two decades, parallel to

general education, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of outcome data in school counseling (Carey & Dimmitt, 2008; Whiston, 2002; Whiston & Sexton, 1998). Outcome data in school counseling has been paired with an increasing push for accountability in counseling interventions and programs (Dahir & Stone, 2003; Fairchild & Seeley, 1995; Isaacs, 2003). These convergent forces have led to a stronger interest in the relationship between research and practice in school counseling (Bauman, 2004; Brown & Trusty, 2005b) and the view that "...school counselor data use is a hallmark of the ASCA National Model" (Carey & Dimmitt, 2012, p. 147).

In review, within the school counseling profession, the ASCA National Standards (Campbell & Dahir, 1997) focused on nine standards in three domains of academic, personal/social, and career development and provided the foundation for the ASCA National Model for school counseling programs (ASCA, 2003, 2005, 2012). States and districts in the U.S. adopted standards-based school counseling models (Hatch & Bowers, 2002) and *No Child Left Behind Act* (U.S. Department of Education, 2004) legislated achievement evaluated by data and accountability measures at the state level.

Over time, there has also been an increased emphasis on school counselor training (Astramovich, Coker, & Hoskins, 2005; Bauman, 2004; Rowell, 2005), and meaningful collaborations between university researchers and practitioners in the field (Rowell, 2005; Thomas, 2005). The school counseling field currently has several centers that communicate information about research, the effect of school counseling on student achievement, and data-driven practice. A detailed list can be examined in Chapter 2.

Alabama School Counseling Research Related to the Implementation of the ASCA Model

In the academic year 2010-2011, public domain information on the ASCA website (www.schoolcounselor.org) listed 1,802 school counselors in the state of Alabama, with a student-to-counselor ratio of 1:419. ASCA's (2011) recommended student/counselor ratio is 1:250.

Alabama was among the first group of states in the U.S. to adopt the ASCA National Model (2003). The revised *Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance State Model for Alabama Public Schools* or "*State Plan*" introduced by the Alabama Department of Education (ALSDE, 2003) publicly acknowledged counseling and guidance as an integral component of each school system's and school's total education program. The *State Plan* followed the newly published ASCA National Model (2003), consulting with Dr. Norman Gysbers prior to implementation.

Alabama has sustained its role as a leader in school counseling. In 2008, Alabama was among the first 22 states to have a school counseling program achieve status of *Recognized ASCA Model Program* (RAMP), demonstrating exemplary implementation of the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2013). One school program (>1%) has been recognized in Alabama. In 2009, a national survey recognized Alabama as one of 17 states achieving the highest rating of the "established model" (Martin, Carey, & DeCoster, 2009, p. 381). Additionally, Alabama has an active state school counseling organization, the Alabama Counselors' Association (ALCA). The Alabama School Counseling Association (ALSCA) has the largest membership of the 13 divisions in the Alabama Counseling Association (ALCA, 2014). The field has shown signs of significant inroads and the potential for growth to improve school counseling in Alabama. The Alabama Department of Education has also recently revised the *State Plan* (2003) with *The Alabama Model*, presently pending approval (ALSDE, 2015).

In the state of Alabama, the University of Alabama was the first school counseling program to acquire Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) status in 1982, followed by Auburn University, which became CACREP accredited in 1986. Boes, Snow, and Chibbaro (2009) advocated support for the production of professional school counselors in Alabama and the southeastern states to assume the roles and tasks proposed by ASCA to meet the needs of 21st century students. At the time of publication, Boes et al. reported that only six of the fifteen universities in Alabama had attained CACREP certification. As of 2015, 13 (87%) of the 15 universities with school counseling training programs in the state of Alabama were accredited by CACREP (CACREP, 2015).

CACREP (2015) is the largest and most prestigious accrediting body in the nation for counseling programs. CACREP was created to: (1) present guidelines reflecting the expectations of the profession, (2) endorse professional quality programs, and (3) strengthen the accreditation of counseling. Endorsed by the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC, 2014), CACREP promotes the standardization of the counselor's scope of practice by established curriculum guidelines (CACREP, 2015).

Alabama School Counseling Research of Related Issues Prior to the ASCA National Model

Following the national trend of establishing and implementing comprehensive guidance and counseling programs (CSCP), the Alabama State Department of Education distributed the newly formulated statewide guidance and counseling model, *Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance State Model for Alabama's Public School* (ALSDE, 1996) to all school systems throughout the state. Alabama has made significant progress with the ASCA National Model (2003) alignment, but studies have indicated that significant barriers inhibit fully implemented comprehensive school counseling programs in the state (Barron, 2002; Burnham & Jackson,

2000; King, 2003). The issue of role ambiguity among Alabama school counselors has been raised by educators through the decades (Anderson, 1983; Barron, 2002; Burnham & Jackson, 2000; Carrington, 1977; Cecil & Cecil, 1984; Cecil & Cobia, 1991; Cecil & Comas, 1985; Childress, Davis & Manning, 1986; Cooley, Johnson, & McCullers, 1986; Jarrell, 1980; Johnson, 1977; King, 2003; Manning, 1984; Mason, Dyal, & Meadows, 1999; Parker, 1977). Historically, school counselors through the years have often been assigned and accepted inappropriate non-counseling duties. Several studies published early in the 21st century on school counseling role issues and perceptions in Alabama (Barron, 2002; Burnham & Jackson, 2000; King, 2003) revealed continuing concerns about role ambiguity in school counseling and issues regarding inappropriate non-counseling duties assigned to school counselors.

Alabama School Counseling After Implementation of the ASCA National Model

Non-counseling duties are discouraged in the ASCA National Model (2003, 2005, 2012). In agreement, the *Alabama State Plan* (2003) recommends that 80% to 90% of the school counselor's time should be in direct contact with students through the delivery program components of guidance curriculum, individual student planning, and responsive services. The fourth ASCA National Model component, system support, has been designated for indirect guidance support activities such as consultation, professional development, program development, and fair-share duties. Fair-share duties are not to encompass above 10% to 20% of a counselor's total time (ALSDE, 2003; ASCA, 2003, 2005).

The ALSDE (2003) explicitly stated, "Non-guidance responsibilities assigned to school counselors should not be above and beyond those of other certified staff members, and should not interfere with the delivery of guidance services" (p. 9). While the ALSDE (2003) supported the implementation of the ASCA National Model (2003) by its legislation, overuse of non-counseling duties are prevalent, and changes appear to be received poorly by some school

systems. Several recent studies conducted in Alabama have further disclosed this dilemma (Burnham, Dahir, & Stone, 2008; Chandler, Burnham, & Dahir, 2008; Edwards, Thornton, & Holiday-Driver, 2010).

Alabama State Board of Education Plan 2020

The Alabama State Board of Education's plan for the year 2020 aspires to "improve student growth and achievement, close the achievement gap, increase the graduation rate, and increase the number of students graduating high school that are college- and career- ready and prepared to be successful in our global society" (ALSDE, 2014, p. 1). The Alabama College and Career Ready Standards (CCRS) provide the Alabama Insight online curriculum tool to each district for educators to explore and map the standards. Components of the Plan 2020 endorse integration of school counseling. For example, Plan 2020 Strategies for Support Systems propose to "implement Alabama's Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance Plan" (p. 17), which is closely aligned with the ASCA National Model (2003).

The previous review of the literature on school counseling in Alabama offers position strides and failures at total implementation of the ASCA National Model. Results of this proposed research could reveal the current status of the implementation of the ASCA National Model in Alabama schools and provide insight to facilitate attaining the acknowledged 2020 school counseling goals in Alabama. According to Gysbers (2006), "strong leadership at the state level is a key to developing effective and accountable comprehensive counseling and guidance programs at the local level" (p. 247). Hatch and Chen-Hayes (2008) asserted that "school counselors, educational stakeholders, and school counselor educators must continue to examine factors that help or hinder school counselors' successful implementation of the ASCA National Model program components" (p. 41).

Statement of the Problem

The communication and understanding of the benefits of a fully implemented comprehensive school counseling program (including positive student outcomes) is essential to encourage support at the local level. This study proposes to affiliate Alabama with the leaders in one of the cutting-edge research institutions in school counseling at CSCORE (2013) at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst (Carey & Dimmitt, 2006). Communicating progress in Alabama, and the shortcomings through this study, will hopefully enhance future support for school counseling in the state. Similarly, a previous Alabama study (Barron, 2002) examined the state mandated implementation of the *Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance State Model for Alabama's Public School* (ALSDE, 1996) which had not yet been researched, to determine the actual implementation of the authorized state plan. This study plans to provide a stratified random sampling of current implementation of the mandated Alabama State Plan (2003).

In the past 20 years, only four rigorous quantitative statewide evaluations of school counseling programs have been published, and only from two states, Missouri and Washington State (Lapan et al., 1997; Lapan et al., 2001; Sink et al., 2008; Sink & Stroh, 2003). As a whole, the results of these four studies suggested that CSCPs produce measurable benefits at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. However, the first three studies used differing CSCP models for research and only the last study was completed after the creation of the ASCA National Model (2005). All of these cited research studies recommended further replication studies on the impact of CSCP implementation.

In December 2012, in a special issue of the flagship school counseling journal published by ASCA, *Professional School Counseling* presented six statewide high school research studies in six states (Connecticut, Missouri, Nebraska, Rhode Island, Utah, Wisconsin) using a variety of

designs and instrumentations. All studies were conducted after the publication of the ASCA National Model (2003, 2005) (Burkard et al., 2012; Carey & Dimmitt, 2012; Carey, Harrington, Martin, & Hoffman, 2012; Carey, Harrington, Martin, & Stevenson, 2012; Dimmitt & Wilkerson, 2012; Lapan, 2012). The Utah and Nebraska studies evaluated the extent to which components of the *ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs* (ASCA, 2012) were associated with student educational outcomes (Carey & Dimmitt, 2012). These two studies shared a common design and instrument (School Counseling Program Implementation Survey [SCPIS]; Appendix A) that was published with author affiliations with the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and the Center for School Counseling Research and Evaluation (CSCORE, 2013). Both studies recommended the use of standardized instruments (such as the SCPIS) and comparable research designs in subsequent statewide evaluations to enhance comparability across states (Carey, Harrington, Martin, & Hoffman, 2012; Carey, Harrington, Martin, & Stevenson, 2012). Limitations included the correlational design that diminished the strength of any inferences that could be made, the inclusion of only high school counselors, as well as the self-report nature of data that can create biased results. This study also employed a self-report format, but encompassed all school levels PK-12 and simply investigated implementation of the ASCA National Model through the SCPIS survey without comparison to student outcomes.

Summary of Intentions for this Study

This study replicated the use of the SCPIS (Clemens et al., 2010; Elsner & Carey, 2005; Appendix A) as a part of the investigation. Research findings from the six studies, previously described, support the argument that “when highly trained, professional school counselors deliver ASCA National Model comprehensive school counseling program services, students

receive measurable benefits and results may be most beneficial for youth living in poverty” (Lapan, 2012, p. 88). Furthermore, the findings of the six high school studies suggested that school counselor use of data influences positive outcomes for students. With the basic correlational relationships established by these previous six studies, future studies should consider optimal school counseling practices and program structures (Cary & Dimmitt, 2012).

As a professional school counselor, I intentionally tried to effectively meet student needs, compelled by the core principle ethics of beneficence “to do good” and maleficence “to do no harm” (Herlihy & Corey, 2006). As a professional school counselor and counselor educator, I aspire to foster successful implementation of the ASCA National Model (2012) in all school counseling programs using data relevant to the population to identify, address, and assess salient services to improve student learning. With these goals in mind, this research included the following steps: (1) Utilize the SCPIS (Clemens et al., 2010; Elsner & Carey, 2005; Appendix A); (2) examine how Alabama school counselors at all grade levels (elementary, middle, and high) demonstrate ASCA National Model (2005) program implementation; (3) investigate at all school levels (elementary, middle, high) regarding features of the ASCA National Model (2005), as measured by SCPIS (Clemens et al., 2010; Elsner & Carey, 2005; Appendix A); and, (4) explore which characteristics of the school counseling program (i.e., student-to-school-counselor ratio, counselor time use, length of time that a comprehensive school counseling program has been implemented, counseling coordinator with school counseling background) are associated with higher implementation of the ASCA National Model (Appendix B). Ultimately, I seek to inspire school counselors not just “to do good,” but to transform intentional practice and impact on student outcomes to provide “better and best” practice.

Significance of the Problem

1. This study included elementary and middle school grade levels, while previous research with the SCPIS (Clemens et al., 2010; Elsner & Carey, 2005; Appendix A) only explored high school counseling programs.
2. This study was the first in Alabama to use the SCPIS (Clemens et al., 2010; Elsner & Carey, 2005; Appendix A) which is endorsed by CSCORE (2013) of the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and the National Panel for Evidence-Based School Counseling to review outcome data and evidence-based practice, identify needed research studies, and document school counseling practice.
3. This study potentially offered timely evidence regarding the current implementation of the ASCA National Model in Alabama schools to facilitate the ongoing Alabama State Board initiative for the year 2020. Plan 2020 is the strategic plan for education in Alabama with the goal to prepare all students to be successful in college and/or career upon graduation from high school. Plan 2020 Strategies for Support Systems propose to “implement Alabama’s Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance Plan” (ALSDE, 2014, p. 17), which is closely aligned with the ASCA National Model (2003).

Research Questions

This research sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the extent of implementation of features of the American School Counselor Association’s (ASCA) National Model (2005) in Alabama school counseling programs as measured by total score and subscale scores of programmatic orientation, school counselors’ use of computer software, and school counseling services identified by the

School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS)? Demographic and related information as listed in Appendix B was summarized and examined.

2. Is there a difference in the extent of implementation of features of the ASCA National Model (2005) in Alabama school counseling programs between school grade levels of elementary, middle school, and high school using total score and subscale factor scores identified by the SCPIS?
3. Is there a difference in the extent that Alabama school counseling programs use data to make decisions in implementing features of ASCA's National Model (2005) as measured by SCPIS items with data terminology, overall and across school grade levels (elementary, middle school, and high school)?

Assumptions of the Study

1. The participants provided honest and accurate responses.
2. The School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS) was valid and robust for the purposes of data collection in this study.

Limitations of the Study

1. The survey format of school counselors was a self-report instrument which presented the possibility of distortion or bias by the responder (Houser, 2009).
2. The survey was completed by Alabama school counselors which may not be generalizable to other states.

Definitions of Key Terms

For the purposes of this study, the following terms are defined:

1. *Alabama State Board of Education Plan 2020* is the strategic plan for education in Alabama with a goal to prepare all students to be successful in college and/or career upon

graduation from high schools. The Alabama State Board of Education's plan for the year 2020 aspires to "improve student growth and achievement, close the achievement gap, increase the graduation rate, and increase the number of students graduating high school that are college- and career- ready and prepared to be successful in our global society" (ALSDE, 2014, p. 1). Plan 2020 Strategies for Support Systems propose to "implement Alabama's Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance Plan" (p. 17), which is closely aligned with the ASCA National Model (2003). <http://www.alsde.edu>

2. *American School Counselor Association (ASCA)* is a professional organization whose members are school counselors certified in school counseling with unique qualifications and skills to address all students' academic, personal/social, and career development needs (ASCA, 2010). ASCA is a division of the American Counseling Association (ACA, 2013). The Alabama School Counseling Association (ALSCA) is directly affiliated with ASCA with 895 current members (ALCA, 2014).
3. *ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs* (2003) revolutionized school counseling by offering a foundational blueprint of a developmental, comprehensive, data-driven school counseling program fostering unification and national support, linking school counselors with the "one vision, one voice" axiom (ASCA, 2003, p.1). This model uses standards-based education reform to deliver a comprehensive school counseling program and strategically positions school counseling from ancillary to integral partners in student achievement through its four components of foundation, program management, delivery, and accountability (ASCA, 2003).
4. The second edition of *The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs* (ASCA, 2005) further connected school counseling to the goals of school

improvement. Advocacy, collaboration, use of data, and leadership skills by school counselors would be necessary to create systemic change (McMahon et al., 2009). In this edition of the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2005), the components continued as the foundation, the delivery system, the management system, and the accountability system. School counselors were encouraged to consider how other student standards important to state and district initiatives align with their comprehensive school counseling program. In use of time, counselors were recommended to spend 80% of their time in direct service with students.

5. The third edition of *The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs* (ASCA, 2012) described school counseling programs as “data-driven, comprehensive in scope, preventive in design, and developmental in nature to promote student achievement” (p. 1) which was the core of all editions. Multiple aspects of the second edition continued in the third edition. For example, the framework components: foundation, management, delivery, and accountability; themes of leadership, advocacy, collaboration, and systemic change; alignment of other student state and district standards with their comprehensive school counseling program; and process and perception data remain as before. Yet, in the third edition, extensive restructuring and multiple revisions and additions were evident. Changes incorporated the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors, the ASCA School Counselor Competencies, beliefs and vision statement, as well as increased focus on small groups and goal setting through the use of data. With significant emphasis, a new school data profile was designed to help school counselors track achievement, attendance, behavior, and school safety data to identify gaps. ASCA National Standards was renamed ASCA Student Standards to reflect the

emphasis on students. Program results data were renamed outcome data. The third edition conveyed a clear distinction between direct and indirect student services, which were recommended for 80% or more of total counselor time; while program management and school support were advised at 20% or less. The system support topic from the second edition of the ASCA National Model was eliminated. Innovative templates, additional guidelines or tips for analysis, and revisions significantly enhanced the analysis and collection of data for school counselors.

6. *ASCA National Standards* (renamed *ASCA Student Standards* in ASCA, 2012, 3rd ed.) organized the school counseling guidance curriculum that structures student competencies in Academic, Career, and Personal/Social domains with grade-specific learning outcomes for students PreK-12 (Campbell & Dahir, 1997). In the third edition (ASCA, 2012), the ASCA National Standards were renamed ASCA Student Standards to reflect the emphasis on students, although the content was not changed.
7. *College- and Career-Ready Standards* (CCRS; ALSDE, 2010) were approved by the Alabama State Board of Education in November 2010, combining both Common Core and Alabama's standards. The Alabama Insight online curriculum tool is available to every district in Alabama for educators to explore and map the standards.
<http://alex.state.al.us/ccrs/>
8. *Common Core State Standards* (CCSS, 2015) provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers. With American students fully prepared for the future, our communities will be

best positioned to compete successfully in the global society—Mission Statement.

<http://www.CoreStandards.org>

9. *Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance State Model for Alabama Public Schools or “State Plan”* was initially adopted by the ALSDE in 1996 representing the first CSCP in Alabama. Following the development of the ASCA National Model (2003), the Alabama program was updated to incorporate the innovative model and was entitled, revised *Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance State Model for Alabama Public Schools* (2003). The State Plan (2003) was introduced by the ALSDE and publicly acknowledged counseling and guidance as an integral component of each school system’s and school’s total education program. Reflecting the ASCA National Model, Alabama’s *State Plan* echoed ASCA’s motto of “one vision, one voice” for comprehensive school counseling and guidance programs throughout the state (ASCA, 2003. p. 1). The *State Plan* used three premises: “(a) School counseling and guidance programs are based on specific student knowledge and skill content; (b) School counseling and guidance programs are outcome-based; and (c) School counseling and guidance programs are developmental and comprehensive in scope and sequence” (ALSDE, 2003, p. 1).
10. *Comprehensive School Counseling Program (CSCP)* has been described as a results-based system that outlines and directs the primary roles and functions of professional school counselors toward the promotion of students’ academic, career, and personal/social developmental competencies (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006).
11. *Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)* is the largest and most prestigious accrediting body in the nation for counseling programs created to: (1) present guidelines reflecting the expectations of the

profession, (2) endorse professional quality programs, and (3) strengthen the accreditation of counseling. <http://www.cacrep.org>

12. *Counselor time use* is an assessment tool in the Management component of the ASCA National Model's framework (2003, 2005) to determine the amount of time spent toward the recommended 80% or more of the school counselor's time to direct and indirect services with students. Direct services include school counseling core curriculum, individual student planning, and responsive services. Indirect services are provided on behalf of students as a result of school counselors' interactions with others such as consultation and collaboration with stakeholders like parents, teachers, other educators, and community organizations (ASCA, 2012). School support and fair share duties should not total more than 10% to 20% of a counselor's total time (Alabama Department of Education, 2003; ASCA, 2012).
13. *Data-based decision making (DBDM)* is the process of collecting, analyzing, reporting, and using data for school improvement (Dahlkemper, 2002).
14. *Disaggregating data* are comparing data from different groups of students using demographic variables such as ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, special education status, grade level, and English Language Learner status to get a better understanding of the meaning and implications of the data (Dimmit, Carey, & Hatch, 2007).
15. *Grade level designations* are from elementary school ranging from Pre-Kindergarten to 5th Grade; middle school ranging from 6th to 8th Grades; and high school ranging from 9th to 12th Grades.

16. *Length of time* that a comprehensive school counseling program has been implemented is a variable input rated in number of years as a part of demographic data of school counselor participants.
17. *National Board for Certified Counselors, Inc. and Affiliates (NBCC)*, is an independent not-for-profit credentialing body for counselors, incorporated in 1982 to establish and monitor a national certification system, to identify those counselors who have voluntarily sought and obtained certification, and to maintain a register of those counselors. NBCC (2014) advances counseling as the premier certification body of the profession.
<http://www.nbcc.org>
18. *Non-counseling or non-guidance duties'* time limits are included in the Alabama State Plan. "Non-guidance responsibilities assigned to school counselors should not be above and beyond those of other certified staff members, and should not interfere with the delivery of guidance services" (ALSDE, 2003, p. 9). A list of inappropriate activities for school counselors such as coordinating testing programs or supervising classrooms or common areas is included in the ASCA Executive Summary (2012).
19. *Outcome research* evaluates whether an intervention causes changes in behavior, affect, and/or cognition (Dimmitt et al., 2007)
20. *Professional school counselors* are advocates, leaders, collaborators and consultants who create opportunities for equity in access and success in educational opportunities by connecting their programs to the mission of the schools and subscribing to the tenets of professional responsibility presented in the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors (ASCA, 2010, p. 1).

21. *Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP)* is a national recognition award presented by ASCA to school counseling programs that demonstrate exemplary implementation of a comprehensive, data-driven school counseling program reflecting the ASCA National Model (2012) through the successful completion of 12 components.

<http://www.schoolcounselor.org>

22. *Research-based practices* review relevant outcome research literature and decide what interventions can be implemented in a particular school (Carey & Dimmitt, 2008).

23. *Response to Intervention (RTI)* is a relatively new service delivery model of instruction and intervention that is recommended in the Individuals with Disabilities Act (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). According to the National Center on Response to Intervention, RTI integrates assessment and intervention within a multilevel prevention system to maximize student achievement and to reduce behavior problems (Fairbanks et al., 2007). www.rtinetwork.org

According to the ASCA National Model (2012), RTI is an “effective, efficient, data-driven and highly collaborative process that takes advantage of the collective expertise of the school counselor, parent, RTI team and the student” to assist in the academic and behavioral development of students. It “can help school counselors garner support and promote buy-in from other stakeholders for advancing a comprehensive school counseling program” (p. 74).

24. *School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS)* (Clemens et al., 2010; Elsner & Carey, 2005; Appendix A) is the survey instrument used in this dissertation study. The three identified subscales or factors on the SCPIS are programmatic orientation, school counselors’ use of computer software, and school counseling services.

Programmatic orientation implies a level of intentionality as opposed to reactive services by administering a proactive program. Computer software use was paired with accessing, analyzing, and using data. School counselor services related to how the services were provided within the program (Clemens et al., 2010).

25. *Standards-based practice* specifies scope, sequence, and student performance expectation (Dimmit et al., 2007).

26. *Student educational outcomes* include suspension rate, discipline incidence rate, attendance rate, graduation/dropout rate, average ACT score, percentage of students taking the ACT, percentage of students scoring proficient in math on the state standardized test, percentage of students scoring proficient in reading on the state standardized test, percentage of students taking Advanced Placement courses, percent proficient in reading (Perkins data), percent proficient in math (Perkins data), percent proficient in technical skills (Perkins data), percent program completion (Perkins data), percent graduation (Perkins data), percent placed (Perkins data), nontraditional program participation rate (Perkins data), and nontraditional program completion rate (Perkins data).

27. *Student-to-school-counselor ratio* is the ratio of students compared to the number of school counselors in a school. ASCA listed Alabama with 1,802 school counselors and 755,552 students resulting in a student-to-counselor ratio of 1:419. ASCA's recommended ratio has been reported as 1:250 (ASCA, 2011).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Numerous studies addressing the implementation of the ASCA National Model (2003, 2005, 2012) have been explored. Studies across the U.S. have been linked to the school counseling history, the development of comprehensive school counseling programs, the importance of accountability, and the use of data in school counseling for student improvement outcomes. The following topics contribute to the investigation of the school counselor's role regarding the intentionality and impact on improving student outcomes, a goal of all educators. Assessment of the past and vision for the future is essential for school counseling to progress. According to Rossman and Rallis (2003), the process of evaluation itself changes both the practice and the approach to school counseling, because it forces the field to look at what individuals are doing and why, thereby hopefully increasing intentionality and impact. This process of review and assessment was critical to this study.

Development of the Comprehensive School Counseling Program (CSCP)

Background in Education Reform

According to Sink and Stroh (2003), institutional change in American education is described as gradual, but it has not been immune to societal evolution. The publication of *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) and the passage of the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* (U.S. Congress, 1994) accelerated school reorganization and reform progress in various states. The subsequent review will examine significant transformations in the field of professional school counseling.

Background in School Counseling Reform

During the past several decades, the school counseling profession has transitioned through structural changes to better address the needs of students and their families. In the 1970s, school counseling was described as “developmental guidance and counseling” (Dinkmeyer & Caldwell, 1970, p. 2). Later, beginning in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the term “comprehensive guidance and counseling program” (Gysbers, 2001a, p. 96; Sink, 2002) or “comprehensive school counseling program” (CSCP; Campbell & Dahir, 1997, p.1; Dahir et al., 1998) was used.

In the 1970s and 1980s, three program models of school counseling emerged from the research of Myrick (1993), Johnson and Johnson (1991), and Gysbers and Moore (1981), and later Gysbers and Henderson (2000). Myrick’s (1993) developmental model included six interventions of direct and indirect services; individual, small group, and classroom guidance; and responsibilities of the classroom teacher to deliver classroom guidance. Johnson and Johnson (1991) developed competency-based guidance, “a total student services program developed with the student as the primary client” (p. 6). The focus was on school success competencies and transition to higher education or employment. Gysbers and his colleagues developed a model focused on results and consisting of an organizational structure of competencies, structural and program components, and resources (Gysbers, 2001a, 2005; Gysbers & Lapan, 2003; Gysbers & Moore, 1981; Gysbers & Henderson, 2001, 2005, 2006). This collaborative work was published as a model school counseling program that would eventually serve as a template for the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2003, 2005, 2012; Sink et al., 2008).

Overview of Models and Historical Sequence

As the professional school counseling field developed, three stages became prominent (Gysbers, 2001b; Sink, 2002): the position approach, services model, and the comprehensive

guidance and counseling movement. The first period (1910s to 1950s), the position approach or orientation, involved dispersal of occupation and career information to high school students with minimal thought to psychosocial and educational student concerns, and no services below high school level (Gysbers & Henderson, 2001). The second period (1960s to 1980s) was a services model or pupil personnel services. This model included middle school and focused on crisis and reactive services for at-risk students as well as educational and career guidance for college bound students, neglecting the mainstream student (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000). The third stage, (beginning in the late 1970s and early 1980s) of the comprehensive school guidance and counseling program, brought a time of transformation with the enactment of federal legislation (e.g., National Defense Act of 1958 and Carl D. Perkins Vocational Act of 1984) that supported the further development of school counseling. Other influential issues included emphases on developmental theories (e.g., Piaget, Kohlberg, Erikson, Super) and the economic and political demands for accountability in education, program evaluation, and curriculum improvements (Gysbers, 2001a; Sink, 2002). In the third stage, all students were to be served through a framework of a competency-based or results-based comprehensive guidance and counseling program (Johnson & Johnson, 2003; Lapan, 2001). Another strong influence was the *Transforming School Counseling Initiative* (TSCI) (Education Trust, 1997). The TSCI was supported by the Dewitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund (Guerra, 1998) and was implemented to create a new model program for training school counselors. The five-year national initiative was grounded in the belief of educational reform that all students can learn and be successful in schools and that school counselors should play an essential role by identifying and addressing systemic barriers to student learning (Martin, 2002). The school counselor training provided by the *Transforming School Counselor Initiative* (Education Trust, 1997) added theoretical and

practical applications of comprehensive, developmental, and results-based school counseling (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006). The significant change in the school counselor's role and function were represented by terminology shifts to professional school counselor from the previous historical title of school guidance counselor or guidance counselor (Bemak, 2000; Lambie & Williamson, 2004). The pivotal implication of terminology was impactful to school counseling, and cannot be minimized because language defines our world and constructs the way we comprehend and view our reality (Freedman & Combs, 1996). Consequently, it remains vital for professional school counselors to use consistent language to define their professional identity (Lambie & Williamson, 2004). In summary, school counseling programs were designed to be comprehensive, collaborative, and developmental in nature and scope (Campbell & Dahir, 1997; Paisley, 2001).

Positive Results of Comprehensive Programs

A Comprehensive School Counseling Program (CSCP) has been described as a results-based system that outlines and directs the primary roles and functions of professional school counselors toward the promotion of students' academic, career, and personal/social developmental competencies (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006). According to the literature, the implementation of comprehensive counseling and guidance programs promotes positive student outcomes. Studies have shown that in middle and high schools with more fully implemented comprehensive developmental guidance programs, students have reported earning higher grades, having better relationships with teachers, feeling greater satisfaction with school, and having more access to career and college information (Lapan et al., 1997; Lapan et al., 2001). Empirically-based data have provided clear and consistent evidence that when school counselors were aware of and were more fully engaged in implementing the work tasks established in frameworks for comprehensive guidance and counseling programs, school counselors were

removed from marginalized positions and placed into roles that more effectively promote essential educational and career objectives for students (Lapan et al., 2001). Other studies have indicated that comprehensive curriculums about career, academic, and social/personal development can positively impact student knowledge in those domains (Bergin, Miller, Bergin, & Koch, 1990; Gerler & Anderson, 1986; Gerler & Drew, 1990; Gerler, Kinney, & Anderson, 1985). Similarly, Sink and Stroh (2003) completed a statewide study that indicated early elementary-age students who attended the same school for three years or more did better academically when there was a comprehensive developmental guidance program. In a study including elementary, middle, and high schools, school counseling interventions that focused on the development of cognitive, social, and self-management skills resulted in sizable gains in student academic achievement (Brigman & Campbell, 2003). Comprehensive school counseling programs (CSCP) became the preferred way of organizing and managing guidance and counseling in schools, placing the position of counselor into an organized, sequential, structured, district-wide program for K-12 students (Gysbers, Lapan, & Jones, 2000; Johnson, 2000).

Even with CSCPs, counselors in the 21st Century are overwhelmed with challenges and expectations. Some of the issues include counselor role ambiguity, increasing student diversity, growing technological expertise requirements, and educational emphasis on accountability (Paisley & McMahon, 2001; Baker, 2000; Gysbers & Henderson, 2000; Paisley & Borders, 1995). Reframing challenges into opportunities is one key to successful transformation. The school counseling profession has faced such challenges as determining appropriate roles and areas of program focus, creating collaborative partnerships for change with all stakeholders, setting appropriate boundaries, providing opportunities for appropriate professional development, developing as culturally responsive counselors, using technology to enhance the

school counseling program, pursuing leadership and advocacy roles, and incorporating accountability (Paisley & McMahon, 2001; Gysbers & Henderson, 2001; Herr, 2001).

The ASCA National Model

The leaders in school counseling took up the massive challenge and embraced the opportunities for change, creating a new vision and voice for school counseling (ASCA 2003, 2005, 2012). The accumulating press for intentionality and impact culminated in dynamic initiatives over the past two decades as previously described. Over time, the school counseling profession has made significant progress to incorporate the changes in public education (Herr, 2001). In more recent years, the school counseling field has worked to align school counseling programs with current national education directives, while simultaneously aligning with the needs and mission statements of local school districts (Baker, 2000). The ASCA National Model, currently in its third edition, has prompted the school counseling field's effort to align and to move forward with a united front. Each edition of the ASCA National Model will be briefly reviewed.

ASCA's National Standards (Campbell & Dahir, 1997) usage of the academic, personal/social, and career domains helped to pave the way for the preventive, comprehensive, and data-driven aspects of the ASCA National Model (2003, 2005, 2012). Renamed ASCA Student Standards (ASCA, 2012), these competencies and indicators "identify and prioritize the specific knowledge, attitudes, and skills that students should be able to demonstrate as a result of a school counseling program" (p. 29).

With the publication of the ASCA National Model (2003), school counselors were linked with "one vision, one voice" and were directed to use standards-based education reform and to strategically position school counseling from ancillary to integral partners in student

achievement through its four components of foundation, program management, delivery, and accountability (ASCA, p. 1). The structure and implementation of the model “specifically calls for the intentional use of school data to drive program delivery, accountability, and evaluation” (Mason, 2011, p. 276). School counselors were challenged to focus on student achievement and outcomes by answering the question, “How are students different as a result of what school counselors do?” (ASCA, 2003, p. 1) and were persuaded to align with the academic mission of their school.

The second edition of the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2005) further connected school counseling to the goals of school improvement. Advocacy, collaboration, use of data, and leadership skills by school counselors were described as necessary to create systemic change (Mason, 2011; Mason & McMahon, 2009; McMahon et al., 2009, Sink, 2009). The four components (foundation, the delivery system, the management system, and the accountability system) remained in the second edition of the model. School counselors were also encouraged to consider how other student standards, important to state and district initiatives, could be aligned with their comprehensive school counseling program. In the use of time description in the model, counselors were recommended to spend 80% of their time in direct service with students.

Several concerns were also discussed during this time. For example, it was noted that school counselor training programs were not doing enough to assist school counseling students in developing leadership skills and identities to promote systemic change. McMahon et al. (2009) asserted that school counselor educators must take an “ecological perspective” (p. 123) and adopt the same principles and approaches of collaboration and advocacy in their work in order to promote transformation in the school counseling profession. The support of school administrators was described as crucial to school counselor leadership development and school

counseling program implementation (Coll & Freeman, 1997; Stone & Clark, 2001). Studies have shown that the relationship between the principal and the school counselor is essential in determining the program's effectiveness (Brock & Ponec, 1998).

School counselors also need support, knowledge, and skills. For example, they need opportunities to participate in professional development and they need to assume leadership roles within their schools (McGlothlin & Miller, 2008). According to Perusse and Goodenough (2004), school counselors must add a workable accountability skill set into their daily practice in order for their school improvement leadership activities to be sustainable over time. Furthermore, Wood and Winston's (2007) research asserted that accountability leaders are aware that "accountability leadership fundamentally involves (a) taking responsibility for one's actions, (b) exhibiting openness and sensitivity, and (c) maintaining an attitude of answerability" (p. 167).

In the latest edition of the ASCA National Model (2012), foundational ideals from previous versions continued, included that school counseling programs were to be data-driven, comprehensive in scope, preventive in design, and developmental in nature to promote student achievement. While multiple aspects remained, (e.g., from framework components: foundation, management, delivery, and accountability; themes of leadership, advocacy, collaboration, and systemic change; alignment of other student state and district standards; to process and perception data), the revised ASCA National Model (2012) offered extensive restructuring. Examples of restructuring included renaming the "ASCA National Standards" the "ASCA Student Standards" to reflect the emphasis on students and adding the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors (2010) and ASCA School Counselor Competencies (2012) to the foundation component of the model. The beliefs and philosophy statement were also reorganized into beliefs and vision and goal setting also increased in focus through the use of data. With

notable emphasis, a new school data profile was designed to help school counselors track achievement, attendance, behavior, and school safety data. New small group action plans and lesson plans were created to increase focus on small groups. The former program audit was revised, streamlined, and renamed the school counseling program assessment, shifting terminology from outside audit to internal review. While in the second edition program results data were renamed outcome data, the ASCA National Model (2012) conveyed a clearer distinction between direct and indirect student services in use of time, with 80% or more of the counselor's time designated to be with students, while program management and school support were advised at 20% or less. The component, system support was eliminated and some elements of this section were moved to other components. Innovative templates, guidelines or tips for data analysis, and revisions significantly enhanced and emphasized the analysis and collection of data for school counselors.

ASCA Model's Impact on Students

The ASCA National Model has positively impacted school counselors and students (Bryant & Constantine, 2006). As teachers and school counselors have increased their comprehensive school counseling program (CSCP) collaboration, students have ultimately benefited from the more fully implemented program (Galassi & Akos, 2007; Sink, 2005, 2008; Sink et al., 2008; Whiston & Quimby, 2009).

Positive results have been reported across states in the U.S. For example, Wisconsin high schools with more fully implemented CSCPs were associated with higher advanced reading performance, higher graduation rates, and inversely related to retention rates (Burkard et al., 2012). Nebraska high schools with school counseling programs consistent with practices advocated by comprehensive developmental guidance and ASCA's National Model were associated with lower suspension rates, lower discipline incident rates, higher attendance rates,

and higher math and reading proficiency (Carey, Harrington, Martin, & Hoffman, 2012). Relationships among school counseling practices, secondary school demographics, and student outcomes in Rhode Island showed strong and consistent correlations between increased amount of school counseling services and positive student outcomes. When counselors provided more services that focused on improving academic success, students had significantly better attendance, fewer suspensions, better sense of belonging to their school, and fewer reports of bullying (Dimmitt & Wilkerson, 2012). In Missouri high schools, better student-school-counselor ratios were associated with improved attendance in high poverty schools and improved graduation rates and discipline rates in all schools (Carey & Dimmitt, 2012). Overall, the results of the Utah study suggested that benefits to students were associated with the implementation of a comprehensive developmental guidance model and features of the ASCA National Model. “More favorable student-to-school-counselor ratios can be important in realizing the potential benefits of the school counseling program and some benefits increase with the length of time that a program is implemented” (Carey, Harrington, Martin, & Stevenson, 2012, p. 98). Student outcomes included higher ACT scores, increased student percentages taking the ACT, and improved student achievement on math and reading state achievement tests. Research findings from the six studies supported the argument that “when highly trained, professional school counselors deliver ASCA National Model comprehensive school counseling program services, students receive measurable benefits and results may be most beneficial for youth living in poverty” (Lapan, 2012, p. 88).

In another key outcome report, a meta-analysis was completed. Based on 117 experimental studies on school counseling outcomes, school counseling interventions had a significant effect across all grade levels K-12 (Whiston, Tai, Rahardja, & Eder, 2011). The most

efficacious effects were: increasing students' problem-solving behaviors, decreasing disciplinary referrals, small group interventions, and parent workshops. To add, in terms of connections between school counseling interventions and student achievement, the results indicated that school counselor interventions have a small but significant influence on grade point average (GPA) and achievement tests (Whiston et al., 2011).

Impact of ASCA Model Programs

The ASCA National Model establishes an important role for school counselors to improve the personal/social, academic, and career aspects of students' lives as well as challenging system procedures and policies that are barriers to student success (ASCA, 2012). Davis et al. (2013) explained the school counselor's role in addressing the advanced placement (AP) equity and excellence gap for African American students. Collaboration among the school counselor, a school counselor intern, an advanced placement psychology teacher, and a counselor educator improved African American access to AP coursework and increased success on the AP psychology exam.

ASCA's position statement on student mental health stated that to adequately provide services to all students, school counselors should "advocate and collaborate with school and community stakeholders to ensure that students and their families have access to mental health services" (ASCA, 2009, p. 1). Kaffenberger and O'Rourke-Trigiani (2013) explored addressing student mental health needs by providing direct and indirect services and building alliances in the community. Collaborating with school staff and community service providers enabled school counselors to increase their ability to help more students and increase access to mental health services. DeKruyf, Auger, and Trice-Black (2013) described a conjoint professional school counselor identity that includes the roles of both educational leader and mental health

professional to position school counselors to better respond to all students, especially those with mental health concerns.

In another study, Ward (2009) evaluated achievement outcomes for students attending elementary schools with Recognized ASCA Model Programs (RAMP) in Indiana, Georgia, and North Carolina. School counselors designated with national recognition as having RAMP programs completed 12 components to verify their ability to provide equitable services to all students while implementing the ASCA National Model. Results indicated significantly higher overall student achievement, attendance rates, third grade reading achievement, and third grade low-income-related achievement compared to state averages. Examining K-12 schools in Indiana, elementary schools earning the RAMP designation in 2007-2009 produced significantly higher school-wide proficiency rates in English/Language Arts and Math. In addition, four-year longitudinal results indicated a positive difference in Math between RAMP-designated elementary schools and other non-RAMP schools. This study compared student outcome data to investigate the impact of comprehensive school counseling programs on student academic success (Wilkerson et al., 2013).

Unfortunately, even with the solid evidence of the positive impact of the ASCA National Model (2003, 2005), large implementation gaps exist between schools that deliver such comprehensive programs to all students (Lapan, 2012). For example, in a sampling of sixth through eighth grade middle schools in Washington state, students who were enrolled for five or more years in more fully implemented comprehensive school counseling programs (CSCP) performed significantly better on both the state criterion test and the *Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)*; Hoover, Dunbar, & Frisbie, 2001) when compared to students enrolled in non-CSCP schools (Sink et al., 2008). Such research has provided support to the idea that longevity and

quality of CSCP implementation foster positive academic outcomes. Students in schools with more fully implemented school counseling programs have been shown to be more likely to take the ACT and have higher than average ACT scores (Carey & Harrington, 2010a; Carey & Harrington, 2010b). Other concerns have also been reported. For example, studies have shown a lack of equitable distribution of counseling resources to the economically disadvantaged. Two studies pointed to inequitable services for African-American and Hispanic students because of larger school counselor caseloads or prioritization of crisis intervention over other services (Cox & Lee, 2007; Holcomb-McCoy, 2007).

Accountability and Data Use in School Counseling for Student Improvement Outcomes

In the current national education backdrop, accountability measures and the use of data are fundamental. With this in mind, the following quotation is relevant:

What gets measured gets done. If you don't measure results, you can't tell success from failure. If you can't see success, you can't reward it. If you can't reward success you're probably rewarding failure. If you can't see success, you can't learn from it. If you can't recognize failure, you can't correct it. If you can demonstrate results, you can win public support. (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992, p. x)

In this accountability era, numerous studies have shown that school counselors will have more significant student outcomes when they incorporate effective data use as an integral part of their program implementation (Carey & Dimmitt, 2008; Dimmitt, 2009; House & Hayes, 2002; Lapan, 2012; Martens & Andreen, 2013; Steen & Kaffenberger, 2007; Studer et al., 2006; Ware & Galassi, 2006; Wilkerson et al., 2013; Young & Kaffenberger, 2011). Furthermore, producing and communicating positive student outcomes has the potential to promote more fully

implemented comprehensive school counseling programs (CSCP), liberated from excessive and inappropriate non-counseling tasks.

Background

Numerous forces within school counseling as well as educational factors, government, and legislative policy converged toward increased accountability in school counseling. In the past years, the school counseling profession has experienced transformation influenced by developments in public education (ASCA, 2003, 2005, 2012; Bemak, 2000; Campbell & Dahir, 1997; Martin, 2002).

Two major and related reform movements influencing public education are standards-based and evidence-based practice movements (Carey & Dimmitt, 2008). The standards-based movement increased the use of data in both public schools and state educational systems. The evidence-based practice movement supported increased use of research-based interventions as well as the evaluation of school-based interventions. Both these influences were evident in the *No Child Left Behind Act* (U.S. Department of Education, 2004), which required schools to use research-based education practices and quantitative evaluation data to assess school performance. Within education as a whole, “high stakes” testing was advocated to verify or improve student achievement (Isaacs, 2003, p. 290). Simultaneously, a movement toward action research for teachers, resource reallocations aligning with school improvement goals, lack of clear counselor roles and evaluation measures, as well as a movement toward school improvement goals and evaluations for student achievement all impacted the school environment (Isaacs, 2003). Growing recognition of the importance of outcome data in school counseling (Carey & Dimmitt, 2008; Whiston, 2002; Whiston & Quimby, 2009; Whiston & Sexton, 1998) paired with an increasing push for accountability in counseling interventions and programs (Dahir & Stone, 2003; Fairchild & Seeley, 1995; Isaacs, 2003) have led to growth in the

consideration of the relationship between research and practice in school counseling (Bauman, 2004; Brown & Trusty, 2005b). Whiston (1996) explained, “practice and research are not two mutually exclusive activities” (p. 616) and endorsed an awareness of the relationship between assumed knowledge, expertise and practitioner empowerment. Within the school counseling profession, the ASCA National Standards focused on nine standards in three domains of academic, personal/social, and career development (Campbell & Dahir, 1997); all editions of the ASCA National Model for School Counseling Programs (ASCA, 2003, 2005, 2012) added theoretical and practical applications of comprehensive, developmental, and results-based school counseling to promote student achievement; and the *Transforming School Counselor Initiative* reflected Education Trust’s effort to reform school counselor training by integrating data in planning, advocacy, management, and assessment (Education Trust, 1997). Within government and legislative policy, states and districts adopted standards-based school counseling models (Hatch & Bowers, 2002) and *No Child Left Behind Act* (U.S. Department of Education, 2004) legislated achievement evaluated by data and accountability measures at the state level. In some regards, the *No Child Left Behind* legislation (U.S. Department of Education, 2004) had a positive influence on educational and school counseling accountability leadership (Dollarhide & Lemberger, 2006). With its stringent guidelines for scientific research evidence supporting the effectiveness of educational programs and interventions, certain *No Child Left Behind* provisions underscored the need for results-based school counseling practices (Carey, Dimmitt, Hatch, Lapan, & Whiston, 2008). Furthermore, emphasis has grown in school counselor training (Astramovich et al., 2005; Bauman, 2004; Rowell, 2005) in addition to stronger collaboration between university researchers and practitioners in the field (Rowell, 2005; Thomas, 2005).

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Initiative began with the development of the college-and career-readiness standards to address the lack of standardization in state education standards. In 2009, collaboration between the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council Chief State School Officers (CSSO), first drafted the college-and career-readiness standards and second, the K-12 standards (Retrieved from <http://www.corestandards.org>). Teachers played a critical role in development through work and feedback groups, the National Education Association (NEA), American Federation of Teachers (AFT), National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), and the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) (Retrieved from <http://www.corestandards.org>). In June 2010, the final Common Core State Standards (CCSS) were released by NGA and CSSO to states and territories for reviewing, adopting, and ratifying (CCSS, 2015).

The Alabama State Board of Education approved the adoption of the internationally benchmarked CCSS along with selected Alabama standards as the Alabama College- and Career-Ready Standards (CCRS) in November 2010 (ALSDE, 2010). Although the CCSS focus on the areas of English Language Arts (ELA) and Math, the standards are mandated to be addressed in all content areas. The CCSS have been fully adopted by 45 states, the District of Columbia, and four of five U.S. territories.

According to American Counseling Association (ACA, 2015), CCSS will impact the role of school counselors at all school levels with adjustment of classroom guidance content with the outcomes for their school and grade as well as increased focus on career development (CCSS, 2015). According to Vermont school counselor, Rebecca Lallier, the adoption of CCSS in her school provided an opportunity for school counselors to underscore the relevance of their work to student learning with increased collaboration, gained support for the comprehensive school

counseling programs, and efforts to help students become college and career ready (Lallier, 2013). In response to CCSS, ASCA developed Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success for K-12 College- and Career-Readiness Standards for every student to describe the knowledge, skills, and attitudes students need to achieve academic success, college and career readiness and social/emotional development (ASCA, 2014). However, the ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success were not included in the draft of the recently proposed revision of the Alabama State Plan due to growing concerns about the impact of CCSS. Increasing opposition to the CCSS Initiative resulted in Indiana withdrawing their CCSS adoption (National Review, 2013). Numerous concerns about common core include loss of local control, centralization of education, data-mining collection of student results, distancing parents and children in education, confusing math procedures, and misrepresenting claims regarding evidence based practice and international standards (The Federalist, 2014). At the present time, school counseling in Alabama is in a state of uncertainty with a newly drafted 2014 Alabama State Plan pending approval by the Alabama legislature.

Challenges

Challenges to the evaluation process in school counseling have been documented. Common challenges have included such issues as the lack of resources, time, training, and interest (Astramovich et al., 2005; Fairchild, 1993). Isaacs (2003) added that school counselors have resisted changes in their roles because of doubts in using data in a humanistic field, or because of a lack of skill, lack of confidence, lack of time, and/or lack of motivation to change.

Researchers have also noted a low level of practitioner concern about the lack of research in school counseling. Bauman (2004) aligning with Loesch's (1988), concluded that research has not been "valued, emphasized, or endorsed as an important role function for school counselors" in his paper, "Is School Counseling Research an Oxymoron?" (p. 170). Research has clearly

pointed out that school counselor education programs have a responsibility to prepare future counselors for the current educational reality. According to Isaacs (2003), school counselors have run out of time and reasons to avoid data-driven accountability. When school counselors do not have the necessary data skills, then professional development or some other form of education is recommended (Dimmitt et al., 2007). On another front, policymakers and legislators desire more than good intentions; they have stressed the need for well-designed accountability research (Sink et al., 2008). Whiston (2002) also argued that without strong empirical support, some legislators, school administrators, or parents may conclude that the funds currently used to employ school counselors could be used for other purposes such as hiring reading specialists and teacher aides or buying computers.

Types of Evaluation

“School counselor data use is a hallmark of the ASCA National Model” (Carey & Dimmitt, 2012, p. 147). Effective school counseling programs have used both research and evaluation (Dimmitt, 2010). Research has added knowledge and growth of theory to a field, while evaluation has helped stakeholders make decisions regarding use (McGannon, Carey, & Dimmitt, 2005). According to Sink (2009), leadership in accountability in school counseling relates to four major evaluation areas commonly associated with comprehensive school counseling programs, Sink’s noted areas included: program audit, results-based assessment, personnel review, and needs assessment.

School counselors use a variety of evaluations. For example, needs assessments can be used to determine program and intervention needs, while outcome research has been used to identify possible effective interventions and formative evaluations have been used to check progress and allow for modifications for improvement. Outcome evaluation can also be used to determine the impact of changes through achievement data or achievement-related data such as

attendance or course enrollment and “changes you expect in students’ knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes” (Dimmitt, 2010, p. 53). Other methods of data collection have included questionnaires, surveys, checklists, existing school data, interviews, observations, focus groups, and case studies (p. 49).

Suggestions for Research and Evaluation

To confront the divide between practice and research in school counseling, suggestions have been made. Rowell (2006) suggested that action research and especially collaborative action research provide promise noting how teaming can make evaluation more workable and successful. Dimmitt (2010) offered additional ideas about evaluation, positing that if stakeholders can be part of an evaluation team, the integrity of the project is considerably enhanced (p. 51). Dimmitt (2009) also noted how evaluation can impact the understanding of the role of the school counselor and the effectiveness of the school counseling program. Several studies have endorsed a mixed methods model (combining elements of both quantitative and qualitative methods) to accurately evaluate how school counseling programs work and what the programs do that is most effective (Bergman, 2010; Creswell, Klassen, Plano-Clark, & Clegg Smith, 2011; Greene, Benjamin, & Goodyear, 2001; Jones & Kottler, 2006; O’Cathain, 2009; Weisner & Fiese, 2011).

Use of Data Studies in School Counseling

Several studies have focused on the use of data. One reason is because school counselors are required to implement accountability strategies to increase student performance and close the achievement gap. Young and Kaffenberger (2011) examined counselors who were *Recognized ASCA Model Program* (RAMP) recipients. School counselors designated with national recognition as having RAMP programs completed 12 components to verify their ability to provide equitable services to all students. RAMP school counselors completed a 7-point Likert

scale ranging from 1(*strongly agree*) to 7 (*strongly disagree*). The study indicated that 82.5% of RAMP school counselors are continuing to use data to inform program decisions. Results indicated that RAMP school counselors understood the importance of using data to provide effective student services and provided program evaluation and improvement.

Steen and Kaffenberger (2007) evaluated a small group counseling program targeting academic issues while addressing personal/social issues with elementary school children. Results revealed that integrating academic interventions and group counseling improved students' behavior related to school achievement. Holcomb-McCoy et al., (2009) investigated school counselors' dispositions of self-efficacy or their confidence in their ability to use data to address student needs and evaluate their interventions. The study showed that willingness to use data to improve school counseling interventions was more closely related to school counselor self-efficacy than openness to change or commitment to the school counseling profession.

Graduates attending a CACREP-accredited counselor training program completed a pre- and post-test survey based on an instrument developed by the Education Trust year. Wilkerson and Eschbach (2009) found that the modules developed by the Education Trust effectively led to increased self-efficacy for graduate students regarding their readiness to develop data-driven school counseling programs and to implement the ASCA National Model. Bodenhorn, Wolfe, and Airen (2010) examined the relationship between school counselor efficacy and perception of existing achievement gaps. Participants with higher school counselor self-efficacy were more likely to identify achievement gaps in their buildings and use the ASCA Model as a framework for their school counseling programs. Overall, from these studies, it can be surmised that when school counselors feel more confident in their abilities, they are more likely to use data in achievement gap issues.

Student Improvement Outcomes as a Result of Data Use

There have been distinct calls for rigorous research that evaluates the impacts of school counseling on student outcomes (Bodenhorn et al., 2010; Clemens et al., 2010; Dimmitt, Carey, McGannon, & Henningson, 2005; Wilkerson et al., 2013). Accountability is not a new concept in education, but it has moved to a “show me” attitude or from a “focus on teaching and inputs” to a “focus on learning and outcomes” (Isaacs, 2003, p. 288). Whiston (2002) explained that without strong evidence that school counseling programs “produce positive results for children” (p. 153), the profession of school counseling is at risk. Research in education and school counseling has found that improvements in achievement-related areas like attendance and class enrollment promote student achievement outcomes (Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1993).

Numerous examples in the literature have associated student improvement outcomes with school counselor use of data. Several studies will be briefly explored. According the ASCA National Model (2012), Response to Intervention (RTI) is an “effective, efficient, data-driven, and highly collaborative process that takes advantage of the collective expertise of the school counselor, parent, RTI team, and the student” to assist in the academic and behavioral development of students. It “can help school counselors garner support and promote buy-in from other stakeholders for advancing a comprehensive school counseling program” (p. 74).

As an integral member of a Response to Intervention (RTI) team, an elementary school counselor collected and presented data for parents and staff to address student needs and promote research-based best practice. In June 2010, faculty and staff completed a 5-point Likert (1-*strongly disagree* to 5-*strongly agree*) questionnaire to evaluate their perceptions of the effectiveness of the Responsive Instruction (RI) program and the role of the school counselor in the program. The school counselor was rated with high scores of 4 to 5 on all school counselor

questions such as: “SC advocates for all children in RI” (Ryan et al., 2011). Results indicated the school counselor was considered an integral part of the RTI team to promote improved student achievement.

In another study, middle school counselors used data to determine the effectiveness of the bully and harassment lessons, the extent of bullying at the school, student awareness of strategies to resist bullying, and teacher perception of the extent of school bullying. Approximately 1,000 middle school students completed pre- and post-test surveys after bullying lessons. Parents completed a survey after attending a cyber-safety presentation. Initial data collected indicated that teacher perceptions contradicted student concerns regarding bullying. Discipline referrals for bullying were also used. After three years, results showed that students were more empowered with bully-proof strategies. Also, fewer incidents of bullying promoted a safer climate for learning (Young et al., 2009).

Bostick and Anderson (2009) conducted 10-week social skills small groups with 49 third grade students who indicated loneliness and worry about friendships. After completion of the small group sessions, students rated themselves as less worried about friendships. Furthermore, teachers and parents also indicated more positive improvements in social skills and academic achievement. The study showed how classroom and small group activities can lead to student improvement in social skills and achievement.

Recent studies have examined the implementation of the ASCA National Model year and school counselor data use for student achievement, with positive findings. A Utah study found that high school counselor data use was associated with increased student achievement as measured by the state reading and math achievement tests (Carey, Harrington, Martin, & Stevenson, 2012). Likewise, positive outcomes data in Rhode Island high schools was

associated with decreased suspension rates and fewer student reports of bullying (Dimmitt & Wilkerson, 2012).

In several studies, another related factor for positive student outcomes involved the effect of lower student-to-school counselor ratios. In Utah, better ratios were associated with improved attendance and discipline rates. For example, in Nebraska, attendance was improved as well as higher completion rates of technical proficiency in career and vocational programs; in Missouri, attendance in high-poverty schools was improved as well as graduation and discipline rates in all schools; and in Connecticut, lower suspension rates were associated with lower student-to-school counselor ratios (Carey & Dimmitt, 2012). In other words, the availability of school counselors has been associated with positive student behavior.

Salina et al. (2013) described the All Hands On Deck (AHOD) program federally funded by a School Improvement Grant at Sunnyside High School in Washington. AHOD redefined the role of the school counselor by requiring counselors to implement the themes of the ASCA National Model of leadership, collaboration, advocacy, and systemic change (ASCA, 2012). The collection and sharing of data were an integral part of improving attendance and graduation rates. Students were continuously monitored and supported through the application of academic press and social support in an atmosphere of relational trust. The counselor-led program increased the graduation rate of 49% in 2009 to 78.8% in 2012.

Centers for School Counseling Research

According to McGannon et al. (2005), school counseling currently has several centers that disseminate information about research, assessment of practice, and the effect of school counseling on student achievement. The centers are:

1. Center for School Counseling Outcome Research (CSCOR) - This center is at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and was established in 2003 with the mission to provide national leadership in the measurement and evaluation of the outcomes of school counseling interventions and programs and facilitate the National Panel for School Counseling Evidence-Based Practice (2003). The center provides resources and training to develop counselor expertise in research, program evaluation, and data use; as well as conducting research (Carey & Dimmitt, 2006). CSCOR (directed by Dr. John Carey) was renamed the Center for School Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation (CSCORE) at a ceremony on May 4, 2013 honoring Professor Emeritus Ron Fredrickson and celebrating the center's 10th anniversary.

Massachusetts was one of 12 states funded in the national *Race to the Top* (RTTT, 2012) competition funded by the U.S. Department of Education (2014) to promote reform in four areas: standards and assessments, great teachers and leaders, school turnaround, and data systems. The University of Massachusetts-Amherst and CSCORE will assist with the school counseling component. This is the first time school counseling has been included in a RTTT proposal (CSCOR, 2003; CSCORE, 2013).

2. Center for Excellence in School Counseling and Leadership (CESCaL, 2013) - This center has a mission to promote excellence in the field of school counseling and to assist school counselors, their site, and central office administrators as they design, implement, and evaluate their school counseling programs. Trish Hatch, co-author of *A Block to Build On* (2002), is the owner/director. Retrieved from <http://www.cescal.org>

3. Center for Student Support Systems (CS3, 2002) - This center is at the University of San Diego School of Education and was established in 2002 in response for the urgent need to

improve the quality of counseling and guidance and related student support services in California and beyond. Retrieved from <http://www.sandiego.edu/soe/instcenter/studentsupp/about/>

4. National Panel for School Counseling Evidence-Based Practice (2003) - This center was established by recommendations of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) and the Association of Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES). The center has been facilitated by CSCOR with the mission to review research literature to establish rules of evidence-based practice, identify needed research, and communicate findings (Carey & Dimmitt, 2006).

Retrieved from www.cscor.org

5. National School Counseling Research Center (NSCRC, 2006) - This center was developed as a joint effort by ASCA and ACES with the mission to enhance school counseling by collecting and disseminating information that facilitates school counseling professionals' efforts to validate activities that contribute to student success (Sabella, 2006).

6. School Counseling Analysis, Leadership, and Evaluation (SCALE) Research Center (n.d.) - This center was sponsored by ASCA to provide national leadership in the facilitation and dissemination of school counseling research to demonstrate the connection between comprehensive, developmental, results-based school counseling programs and student success.

Retrieved from <http://scale.schoolcounselor.org/content.asp?pl=657&contid=657>

7. Washington School Research Center (WSRC, 2000) - This center is an independent research and data analysis center established in 2000 within Seattle Pacific University. The center was funded through a gift from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation with the mission to conduct sound and objective research on student learning in public schools. Retrieved from

<http://www.spu.edu/wsrc/index.html> (WSRC, 2000).

8. What Works Clearinghouse (2002) - This center was established in 2002 by the U.S. Department of Education's (n.d.) Institute of Education Sciences. The mission was to digitally house scientifically-based efficacy research in education, as well as the findings from the National Panel for School Counseling Evidence-Based Practice (Carey et al., 2008). Retrieved from <http://ies.gov/ncee/wwc/>

The Outcome Research Coding Protocol: Coding Studies and Rating the Level of Evidence for the Causal Effect of an Intervention (2005) was used by the National Panel for School Counseling and was influenced by and adapted from the work of the What Works Clearinghouse Study Design and Implementation Device (Valentine & Cooper, 2003) and School Psychology Procedures and Coding Manual (2003). As a result, two school counseling programs were endorsed: Second Step Violence Prevention Curriculum (Committee for Children, 2006; Grossman et al., 1997) and Student Success Skills (Brigman & Campbell, 2003).

Alabama School Counseling Research Related to Implementation of the ASCA Model

According to the 2010-2011 census, Alabama has a population of 4,779,736; 132 public school systems (67 County, 65 City); and 1,499 public schools (Alabama Department of Education, 2012). In 2010-2011, ASCA listed Alabama with 1,802 school counselors and 755,552 students resulting in a student-to-counselor ratio of 1:419, while ASCA's recommended ratio is 1:250 (ASCA, 2011).

Background

Alabama was in the first group of states in the nation to adopt the ASCA National Model in 2003. The *revised Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance State Model for Alabama Public Schools* or "State Plan," the blueprint for counseling programs in the state, introduced by the Alabama Department of Education (ALSDE) publicly acknowledged counseling and guidance as

an integral component of each school system's and school's total education program.

Reflecting the ASCA National Model, Alabama's *State Plan* echoed ASCA's motto of "one vision, one voice" (2003, p. 1) for comprehensive school counseling and guidance programs throughout the state. The State Plan rests on three premises: "(a) School counseling and guidance programs are based on specific student knowledge and skill content; (b) School counseling and guidance programs are outcome-based; and (c) School counseling and guidance programs are developmental and comprehensive in scope and sequence" (Alabama Department of Education, 2003, p. 1). Alabama has continued its role as a leader in school counseling. In 2008, Alabama was among the first 22 states to have a school counseling program achieved status as a *Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP)* for its exemplary implementation of the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2013). One school program (>1%) has been recognized in Alabama.

In 2009, a national survey recognized Alabama as one of 17 states achieving the highest rating of "established model" (Martin et al., 2009, p. 381). In order to meet this criteria, states were required to have school counseling models based on Comprehensive Developmental Guidance (CDG) and/or the ASCA National Model, including school counseling curriculum standards/frameworks, and contain a majority of the following elements: aligned to state academic standards, aligned to ASCA National Standards, aligned to state career standards and/or national career standards, include examples of lesson plans and contain guidelines for program implementation (p. 382). Alabama has an active state organization, Alabama Counselors' Association (ALCA), with 2,050 members in nine chapters throughout Alabama. The largest of the 13 divisions in the ALCA is the Alabama School Counseling Association (ALSCA) with a membership of 895 (ALCA, 2014).

The University of Alabama was the first school counseling program to acquire Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) status in 1982 with Auburn University becoming CACREP-accredited in 1986. As of 2015, 13 of the 15 universities (87%) with school counseling programs in the state of Alabama were accredited by CACREP (CACREP, 2015).

Carey, Harrington, Martin, and Hoffman (2012) assert that “statewide evaluations have important implications for program improvement initiatives...” (p. 106). According to Gysbers (2006), “strong leadership at the state level is a key to developing effective and accountable comprehensive counseling and guidance programs at the local level” (p. 247). Alabama has made significant progress, but studies indicate barriers still inhibit fully implemented comprehensive school counseling programs in the state.

Alabama School Counseling Research of Related Issues Prior to the ASCA National Model

Role ambiguity affects how well school counselors understand and perform their roles to more fully implement the ASCA National Model. The issue of role ambiguity among Alabama school counselors has been raised by educators through the decades (Anderson, 1983; Barron, 2002; Burnham & Jackson, 2000; Carrington, 1977; Cecil & Cecil, 1984; Cecil & Cobia, 1991; Cecil & Comas, 1985; Childress et al., 1986; Cooley et al., 1986; Jarrell, 1980; Johnson, 1977; King, 2003; Manning, 1984; Mason et al., 1999; Parker, 1977). The consensus is that school counselors have been assigned and accepted inappropriate non-counseling duties for many years. Early in the 21st century, three Alabama studies were published on role issues and perceptions. Burnham and Jackson (2000) conducted a study of Alabama and Georgia school counselors who reported typical daily activities which were compared with recommended activities of their state comprehensive school counseling programs. Results indicated that most school counselors

overused individual counseling, misused small group counseling, guidance activities, and consultation as well as experiencing overwhelming non-counseling activities and test coordination. Approximately one-half of the school counselors responded that 13% to 40% of their time was filled with non-counseling tasks, while 10% responded that as much as 50% to 88% were non-counseling tasks.

Barron (2002) surveyed 428 school counselors in Alabama regarding awareness of the *Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance State Model for Alabama's Public Schools* (ALSDE, 1996) and their implementation of the plan. Of the 259 counselors who responded, 72% reported they were implementing the standards, with a range from 40% to 90%. Less than half (44%) responded that 100% of their daily routine was spent implementing the 1996 *State Plan*. Barriers included non-counseling responsibilities (89%) and lack of administrative support (41%). The study had similar limitations as the present study in that: only Alabama school counselors participated, so results were generalizable to only one southern state; and the study relied on self-reported data, which can be biased. Contrasting limitations involved the distribution of the survey. The current study utilized *Qualtrics*, a digital software solution, as opposed to the earlier study's use of mailing. Barron (2002) chose random sampling to allow for a representative sample across the state, while the current study used a stratified random sample based on quartiles identified in the 2013-2014 Free-Reduced Lunch Schools report (ALSDE, 2013).

King (2003) investigated the perceptions of Alabama principals and school counselors regarding school counselor duties. A stark contrast emerged in perspectives as 53% of school counselors with a corresponding 9% of principals reported that counselors were assigned non-counseling duties. Furthermore, 30% of counselors and 0% of principals reported the assignment of other duties not related to the implementation of a comprehensive school counseling program.

Even though non-counseling duties were not a part of the formal evaluation document (Alabama Department of Education, 2002), they were clearly indicated as a significant part of a school counselor's daily activities.

Alabama Research of School Counseling After Development of the ASCA National Model

In 2003, the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2003) and the Alabama *State Plan* (2003) were initially published, implemented, and later revised. These documents ushered in a new era in school counseling that was “program-centered” for all students as compared “service-centered” from the past (Alabama Department of Education, 2003, p. 1). Non-counseling duties were specifically discouraged in the ASCA National Model. In agreement, the *State Plan* in Alabama recommended that 80% to 90% of the school counselor's time should be in direct contact with students through the three delivery program components of guidance curriculum, individual student planning, and responsive services. The fourth component, system support, was designated for indirect guidance support activities such as consultation, professional development, program development and fair share duties which should not total more than 10% to 20% of a counselor's total time (Alabama Department of Education, 2003; ASCA, 2003). The *State Plan* stated, “Non-guidance responsibilities assigned to school counselors should not be above and beyond those of other certified staff members, and should not interfere with the delivery of guidance services” (Alabama Department of Education, 2003, p. 9).

With the support of the ASCA National Model (2003) and the State Plan (2003) in Alabama, non-counseling or non-guidance activities should be a minor part of a school counselor's responsibilities. Studies have indicated progress, but problems still persist. Burnham et al. (2008) surveyed 1,244 (74% of the total number of school counselors in the state) Alabama school counselors and examined the attitudes, beliefs, strengths, and challenges of school

counselors. Data were collected in October 2004, the first year the revised State Plan (2003) was implemented. Results underlined several compelling issues. Burnham et al. stated that in order to be “in line with 21st century expectations” more accountability training and use of data-driven results were needed to inform others (i.e., principals, teachers, policymakers, and stakeholders) of the effectiveness of school counseling. Overwhelmingly, school counselors indicated that principals and other administrators (not counseling coordinators) viewed counseling traditionally and a high percentage of counselors were conflicted as to their priorities regarding non-guidance duties, especially testing” (p. 8).

Chandler et al. (2008) re-examined the published research in the Burnham et al.’s (2008) study to report the status of school counseling by considering continuing concerns regarding counseling versus non-counseling duties after the implementation of the *Alabama Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance State Model for Alabama’s Public Schools (State Plan; ALSDE, 2003)* and the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2003, 2005). The study produced evidence of excessive non-counseling duties for current school counselors, similar to those in studies conducted in Alabama over the past 30 years. Particular concerns related to the internal discrepancies among the school counselors. Although 88.9% of school counselors reported implementing a comprehensive school counseling program based on the *Alabama State Plan* or the ASCA National Model, the counselors still reported high levels of non-counseling duties such as coordination of statewide testing programs (89.1%), record keeping (68.3%), and serving as building registrar (52.4%).

Edwards (2009) revealed a lack of school counselors practicing accountability (59%) through her doctoral research. Barriers included amount of time involved, dislike of research, and concern about negative consequences if data showed interventions or programs not

achieving results. In terms of training, 42% indicated they needed training through in-services, workshops or conferences to increase their likelihood of collecting, analyzing and sharing data about their school counseling program.

Dahir, Burnham, and Stone (2009) reaffirmed previous findings that revealed varying levels of importance among beliefs and priorities of elementary, middle, high school, and K-12 counselors. Elementary school counselors emphasized a commitment to strong personal-social growth for students and the implementation of a classroom guidance curriculum. Results indicated emphasis on program management, less focus on academic development, and little or no focus on career development. Middle school counselors achieved the highest average scores in all the areas examined and were most closely aligned to the Alabama State Plan and the ASCA National Model. High school counselors placed higher priority on academic development, career, and postsecondary development. However, responses also affirmed traditional practices and overuse of individual counseling.

Boes et al. (2009) presented support for the production of professional school counselors in Alabama and the southeastern states that are able to assume the roles and tasks as proposed by ASCA to meet the needs of 21st century students. The study compared the number of graduates from universities accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) and those not accredited. At the time of the article, six of the fifteen universities in Alabama had attained CACREP certification.

Kiser, Fox, and Owens (2011) explored the integration of cross curriculum training modules for school counseling and instructional leadership programs in higher education to lead to success for all students. Jacksonville State University has implemented Master's level cross curriculum models in a two-part project. Part one involved Instructional Leadership faculty to

participate in a Counselor Education course to enhance leadership qualities. Part two brought Counselor Education faculty into an Instructional Leadership course to teach the requirements for quality school counseling programs. The feedback from both counseling and instructional leadership students has been positive to develop a better understanding of counseling and leadership roles. The authors believed that both programs were strengthened through awareness and communication. Improving a better understanding of counseling and leadership roles is essential for more effective implementation of the ASCA National Model.

Hendon and Jenkins (2012) investigated the impact of a Teacher Advisement Program (TAP) and Get On Track (GOT) program that were implemented in response to a high school's failure to meet state expectations. Teacher Advisement Programs or Advisor-Advisee Programs originated in middle schools and focused on major developmental tasks such as academic success, career exploration, decision-making, and personal efficacy (Jervis & Rapp, 2007). The programs included mentoring, guidance lessons, graduation requirements, grade, and transcript reviews. The school counselor was required to complete all preparation for the meetings including the development of lessons for the 24 advisers for their 18-25 students. Since the implementation of the program, graduation rates have increased and drop-out rates have decreased. Some survey results were inconclusive, but most faculty and students agreed that the programs were beneficial. Student motivation to achieve more academically was increased while building relationships between students and staff with emphasis on future careers and goal-setting. Counselors assuming leadership roles and collaborating with staff contributes to positive student outcomes.

Alabama State Board of Education Plan 2020

Plan 2020 is the strategic plan for education in Alabama with the goal to prepare all students to be successful in college and/or career upon graduation from high school. The Alabama State Board of Education's plan for the year 2020 aspires to "improve student growth and achievement, close the achievement gap, increase the graduation rate, and increase the number of students graduating high school that are college- and career- ready and prepared to be successful in our global society" (ALSDE, 2014, p. 1). Alabama's College & Career Ready Standards (CCRS) provide high-quality resources and instructional materials to assist educators in implementation. The Alabama Insight online curriculum tool is available to each district for educators to explore and map the standards (ALSDE, 2010). Components of the plan endorse integration of school counseling. For example, Plan 2020 Strategies for Support Systems propose to:

- Implement an early warning system for student absences and build a community-based support and intervention system.
- Implement a Positive Behavior Support or other related student and school culture program to support student ownership of their actions that includes alternatives to traditional disciplinary sanctions.
- Implement Alabama's Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance Plan (which is closely aligned with the ASCA National Model, 2003).
- Develop and implement a Coordinated School Health and Support Program (ALSDE, 2014, p. 17).

This research study aimed to reveal the current status of the implementation of the ASCA National Model in Alabama schools, while providing insight to facilitate the 2020 school

counseling goals in Alabama. According to Gysbers (2006), “strong leadership at the state level is a key to developing effective and accountable comprehensive guidance and counseling programs at the local level” (p. 247).

The objectives of Alabama’s 2020 Support Systems are similar to the school counseling goals of academic, career, and personal-social development in the ASCA National Model.

#1: All students will attend school daily and be engaged in rigorous and relevant learning environments.

#2: All students will develop a sense of personal and civic responsibility to ensure a learning environment that is safe and civil.

#3: All students will be provided with individual and group counseling services.

#4: All students will enter 9th grade prepared and with a 4-year plan that addresses their individual academic and career interest needs.

#5: All students will be provided with healthy meals, physical education, and health instruction supported with needed medical and related services (ALSDE, 2014, p.16).

Plan 2020 Strategies for Learners propose to “develop and implement a unified PreK through college and career readiness plan” (p. 6). Plan 2020 for professionals recommends to review the admission and certification criteria for Alabama’s teacher preparation programs (p. 22).

Presently 13 of the 15 counselor education programs in Alabama are CACREP approved (CACREP, 2015). However, two programs continue to provide school counseling certification in Alabama with requirements significantly below CACREP accreditation standards.

In summary, all the topics explored in this chapter influenced the evolution of school counseling and its progression toward increased intentionality and impact for positive student outcomes. The development of the comprehensive school counseling program began with

dispersal of occupation and career information to only high school students. Later, school counseling programs evolved into a data-driven program for all students that is comprehensive in scope, preventive in design, and developmental in nature to promote student achievement (ASCA, 2012).

Accountability and data use transformed from counting the number of counselor meetings to demonstrating how students are different because of what school counselors do. Accountability's prominence has been illustrated in its designation as one of the four integral components in the framework of the ASCA National Model. Data use now permeates all components of the ASCA National Model. School counselors are now strategically positioned to be accountability leaders. Additionally, collaboration with stakeholders and advocacy for positive student outcomes through systemic change are possible.

The research studies in Alabama, described in this chapter, set the stage for the proposed study. These studies revealed strengths and weaknesses in the efforts to increase student learning through the implementation of ASCA's National Model. With an informed understanding of the past, we can better proceed with our present study to investigate current implementation of features of the ASCA National Model in Alabama.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

The main purpose of the study was to survey Alabama school counselors to explore the implementation of features of the ASCA National Model (2005) in Alabama elementary schools (Grades Pre-K - 5), middle schools (Grades 6 - 8), and high schools (Grades 9 -12). The survey contained descriptive and demographic items (Appendix B), as well as items from the School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS; Appendix A; Elsner & Carey, 2005; Clemens et al., 2010). Additional survey items (Appendix B) included student-to-school-counselor ratio, counselor time use, length of time that a comprehensive school counseling program has been implemented, and whether the system counseling coordinator has a school counseling background, and so forth, as detailed in Appendix B.

Research Design

Results of the study were examined by SCPIS (Elsner & Carey, 2005; Clemens et al., 2010) total and factor subscales of program orientation, school counseling services, and computerized data use. The differences of implementation of features of the ASCA National Model were studied between school grade levels of elementary, middle, and high school. Furthermore, the overall emphasis on use of data in relation to the school grade levels of elementary, middle, and high school was reviewed based on the data terminology in the SCPIS items. A portion of the present research design replicated recent studies in Nebraska and Utah schools by the use of the SCPIS. However, the present study omitted correlational comparisons

of student outcome data that were examined in the Nebraska and Utah studies. The research design and data analysis of those studies followed the recommendations of the National Leadership Cadre (2007), a national group of state-level guidance leaders dedicated to improving school counseling practice (Carey, Harrington, Martin, & Stevenson, 2012). The current study's stratified random selection of participants in proportion to the 2013-2014 free-reduced lunch quartiles across Alabama public schools strengthened its representation of Alabama.

The researcher applied a variety of research methods to analyze the data and to respond to the research questions. The analyses utilized descriptive data comparisons, use of analysis of variance (ANOVA) between school levels (i.e., elementary, middle, and high school), individual SCPIS item level analysis as well as factor subscales, and descriptive data at individual item level and across school levels. All were examined in relation to the extent of implementation of features of the ASCA National Model (2005). Inferential non-parametric analysis (Kruskal-Wallis [2014] nonparametric test) was conducted between school levels (elementary, middle, and high school) to explore the extent that Alabama school counseling programs used data to make decisions in implementing features of the ASCA National Model.

Participants

The elementary, middle, and high schools for this study were randomly selected using an internet random selection number service (cf. www.random.org). Additionally, schools were proportionally chosen in quartiles parallel to the 2013-2014 Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) Free-Reduced Lunch School Summary (ALSDE, 2013). Schools were selected in quartiles to create a stratified random sampling of Alabama public schools (see Table 1). The total number of all 2013-2014 free-reduced lunch schools was divided into quartiles (Q) of Q1: $\leq 25\%$, Q2: 26-50%, Q3: 51-75%, and Q4: 76-100%. The proportional number of schools

was calculated for each quartile, revealing Quartile 1 (Q1) = 7%, Q2 = 19%, Q3 = 42%, Q4 = 32% in all Alabama public schools. The total proportional number of subjects required for the study (156 total subjects) was calculated for representative quartiles, resulting in an estimate of Q1 = 11, Q2 = 30, Q3 = 66, Q4 = 50 subjects, with a total of 157. To ensure equity across grade levels, the subject number was equalized across grade levels, resulting in Q1 = 12 (3 per level), Q2 = 30 (10 per level), Q3 = 66 (22 per level), Q4 = 51 (17 per level.), and a total of 159 subjects. When multiple counselors were identified within a school, a single counselor within each school was selected alphabetically by last name, applying the same random process. When a counselor was replaced, the same stratified selection process was applied to a school in the same school level and quartile. Following selection, participants were emailed a letter of invitation (Appendix D) through a *Qualtrics* (2015) survey panel distribution list.

A sample size of $N = 159$ school counselors in Alabama, (i.e., $n = 53$ elementary, $n = 53$ middle, and $n = 53$ high school counselors) were emailed to participate in the proposed study. Effect size (ES) was calculated based on $\alpha = .05$ or power of .80 with three groups and a medium effect size; therefore, a minimum of 52 participants per group were recommended with a total of a minimum of 156 participants for all groups combined (Cohen, 1992). This projected number was sufficient to support the ANOVA analyses for Research Questions 2 and 3, according to Cohen (1992). In order to equally and proportionally represent all grade levels and quartiles, a total of $N = 159$ participants, with $n = 53$ subjects in each school level (elementary, middle, high), was determined, fulfilling minimum requirements by Cohen (1992). A graphic representation of the survey population parameters is located in Appendix F, Figure 1.

Table 1

Survey Population Parameters for Response Rates

2013 - 2014 Free-Reduced Lunch Schools (ALSDE, 2013) by Quartiles

All Alabama Schools	Elementary PK-5	Middle 6-8	High School 9-12	Excluded Out of Range	Total Schools
Q1 = ≤ 25%	57	16	18	3	94 (7%)
Q2 = 26-50%	115	44	85	13	257 (19%)
Q3 = 51-75%	241	106	126	85	558 (42%)
Q4 = 76-100%	229	74	67	48	418 (32%)
Totals	642	240	296	149	1,327

Proportional Percent of Minimum Subjects (N=156) Required for Study (Cohen, 1992)	Approximate Numbers			Total # Minimum Required	Total # Minimum Equal by Grade Level
Q1 = ≤ 25% (7%)	~4	~4	~4	11	12
Q2 = 26-50% (19%)	~10	~10	~10	30	30
Q3 = 51-75% (42%)	~22	~22	~22	66	66
Q4 = 76-100% (32%)	~17	~17	~17	50	51
Totals	53	53	53	157	159*

*Minimum subjects for study: equal numbers at each grade level, proportional in quartiles (Q)

According to Table 2, most school counselors had Master's level degree/ certification. That is $n = 125$ (79%) in the total survey as well as in school levels: $n = 42$ (34%) elementary, $n = 39$ (31%) middle school, and $n = 44$ (35%) high school. The AA/Ed.S ranking was held by $n = 26$ (16%) total, ranging from $n = 5$ (19%) high school, $n = 10$ (38%) elementary, and $n = 11$ (42%) middle school counselors. There were four (3%) participants with a doctoral degree, none (0%) in the elementary school level, one (2%) middle school, and three (6%) high school. Open-

ended responses for “other” highest degree in counseling responses were listed as National Board Certified teacher/counselor, ALC, and Master’s and Licensed Professional Counselor.

According to Table 2 with $N = 157$, only $n = 22$ (14%) of all school counselors held non-degree school counseling certification with $n = 8$ (5%) elementary, $n = 9$ (6%) middle school, and $n = 5$ (3%) high school. Overall, three (2%) participants were Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC), while most indicated “other” areas of training. There were 0 (0%) LPCs at the elementary level, two (1%) at the middle school, and one (1%) at the high school level. “Other” responses in non-degree certification in school counseling revealed that LPC school counselors were certified as Agency; and Family, Marriage and Children. Other areas of non-degree certification included Associate Licensed Counselor (ALC), clinical psychology, community counseling, MEd Agency training, National Certified Counselor (NCC), speech language pathology, therapeutic recreation, and special education. A graphic depiction of the data is presented in Appendix F, Figure 2.

Table 2

Degree/ Certification in School Counseling

	Elementary	Middle School	High School	Total
	<i>n</i> (%)	<i>n</i> (%)	<i>n</i> (%)	N (%)
Highest Degree	<i>n</i> = 53	<i>n</i> = 53	<i>n</i> = 53	N = 159
Masters	42 (34%)	39 (31%)	44 (35%)	125 (79%)
AA/Ed.S	10 (38%)	11 (42%)	5 (19%)	26 (16%)
Doctoral	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	3 (6%)	4 (3%)
Other	1 (2%)	2 (4%)	1 (2%)	4 (3%)
Non-Degree Certification	<i>n</i> = 53	<i>n</i> = 52	<i>n</i> = 52	N = 157
Yes	8 (5%)	9 (6%)	5 (3%)	22 (14%)
No	45 (29%)	43 (27%)	47 (30%)	135 (86%)
If Yes, What Kind?				<i>n</i> = 18; N = 159
LPC	0 (0%)	2 (1%)	1 (1%)	3 (2%)
Other	7 (4%)	6 (4%)	2 (1%)	15 (9%)

Table 3 indicated overall gender results with N = 158, as *n* = 146 (92%) female and *n* = 12 (8%) male. Similar patterns were found in elementary (female: *n* = 49 [94%] and male: *n* = 3 [6%]), middle school (female: *n* = 48 [91%] and male: *n* = 5 [9%]), and high school (female: *n* = 49 [92%] and male: *n* = 4 [8%]) study participants. A graphic representation of the results can be viewed in Appendix F, Figure 3.

Table 3

Gender

	Elementary School	Middle School	High School	Total
	<i>n</i> (%)	<i>n</i> (%)	<i>n</i> (%)	N (%)
Male	3 (6%)	5 (9%)	4 (8%)	12 (8%)
Female	49 (94%)	48 (91%)	49 (94%)	146 (92%)
	<i>n</i> = 52	<i>n</i> = 53	<i>n</i> = 53	N = 158

The ethnicity comparisons with N = 155, revealed an overall *n* = 92 (59%) Caucasian/White and *n* = 61 (39%) African American/Black (see Table 4). There was one (*n* = 1 [1%]) high school Asian American/Pacific Islander, one (*n* = 1 [1%]) middle school Multi-ethnic/Multi-racial, and none (*n* = 0 [0%]) Hispanic/Latina/o or Native American school counselors. School levels ranged from elementary (*n* = 37 [70%] Caucasian and *n* = 16 [30%] African American), middle school (*n* = 29 [58%] Caucasian and *n* = 20 [40%] African American), and high school (*n* = 26 [50%] Caucasian and *n* = 25 [48 %] African American). A graphic depiction of the results are available in Appendix F, Figure 4.

Table 4

Ethnicity

	Elementary School	Middle School	High School	Total
	<i>n</i> (%)	<i>n</i> (%)	<i>n</i> (%)	N (%)
Caucasian/White	37 (70%)	29 (58%)	26 (50%)	92 (59%)
African Am/Black	16 (30%)	20 (40%)	25 (48%)	61 (39%)
Asian Am/PI	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)
Multi-Ethnic	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)
Latina/o	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Native American	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	<i>n</i> = 53	<i>n</i> = 50	<i>n</i> = 52	N = 155

The geographic location of schools with $N = 155$ was overall $n = 63$ (41%) rural, $n = 51$ (33%) suburban, and $n = 41$ (26%) urban (see Table 5). All school levels followed a similar pattern in varying degrees. That is, elementary (rural $n = 20$ [39%], suburban $n = 18$ [35%], urban $n = 13$ [25%]), middle school ($n = 20$ [38%] rural, $n = 17$ [33%] suburban, $n = 15$ [29%] urban), and high school ($n = 23$ [44%] rural, $n = 16$ [31%] suburban, $n = 13$ [25%] urban). A graphic representation of data is located in Appendix F, Figure 5.

Table 5

Geographic Location of School

	Elementary School	Middle School	High School	Total
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	N (%)
Rural	20 (39%)	20 (38%)	23 (44%)	63 (41%)
Suburban	18 (35%)	17 (33%)	16 (31%)	51 (33%)
Urban	13 (25%)	15 (29%)	13 (25%)	41 (26%)
	$n = 51$	$n = 52$	$n = 52$	$N = 155$

Instrumentation

At the beginning of the survey, relevant demographic and descriptive data were obtained through a brief introductory section (Appendix B). The primary instrument was the School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS; Elsner & Carey, 2005; Clemens et al., 2010). See Appendix A for SCPIS. Permission for SCPIS use was obtained from one of the authors, Dr. John Carey, the lead researcher of the SCPIS (Appendix C). The SCPIS has adequate reliability and construct validity required for this study (Clemens et al., 2010; Elsner & Carey, 2005). Internal consistency reliability estimates (Cronbach's alpha coefficient) for SCPIS subscales ranged from .79 to .83, using Heppner, Wampold, and Kivlighan's (2008) standards for research. All factors meet Fabrigar, Wegener, MacCallum, & Strahan's (1999) criteria for a

stable subscale: a minimum of three items that load at .5 or greater (Clemens et al., 2010). Based on this research, three subscales were used for the proposed research: program orientation, school counseling services, and computerized data use.

Additional analyses regarding school counselors' use of data were included for several reasons, including the editions of ASCA's National Model (2003, 2005, 2012) have increasingly incorporated school counselor data use with numerous guidelines and templates. To add, a Delphi study was conducted to identify important research questions in school counseling (Dimmitt et al., 2005). The National Panel for Evidence-Based School Counseling Practice facilitated these discussions. After three rounds of email queries, an expert panel of 21 school counselor educators and practitioners identified the goals of school counseling research resulting in 42 research questions. These questions were intended to assist counselor educators, graduate students, and practitioners develop research projects that most effectively met the needs of the school counseling field. The third ranked priority question from the expert panel related to the goals of this dissertation research study. Specifically, the question related to exploring the effects of increased data use by counselors. The expert panel question, used in this study, was "What is the impact of enhancing school counselors' ability to use data in planning and accountability on student outcomes?" (Dimmitt et al., 2005, p. 22).

Participants were instructed to rate their current school counseling program characteristics according to a 4-point Likert scale. The choices on the SCPIS (Appendix A) were: *1 - Not Present, 2 - Development in Progress, 3 - Partly Implemented, and 4 - Fully Implemented*. Further comparisons were made in relation to the three subtest factors (programmatic orientation, school counselors' use of computer software, and school counseling services) identified by the SCPIS (Appendix A; Clemens et al., 2010; Elsner & Carey, 2005). In

addition, the research study explored the characteristics of the school counseling program (e.g., student-to-school-counselor ratio, counselor time use, length of time that a comprehensive school counseling program has been implemented, and whether the system counseling coordinator has a school counseling background; see Appendix B).

Procedures

The SCPIIS (Appendix A) was used to survey all PK-12 school levels (elementary, middle, and high school) in Alabama. The researcher initially sought a letter of support from the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) to encourage local school systems to participate, but was advised by an email from an ALSDE Education Specialist in Guidance and Counseling that the ALSDE does not write letters of support or endorse products, programs, or projects (C. Mills, personal communication, August 9, 2013).

The elementary, middle, and high schools for this study were randomly selected using an internet random selection number service (cf. www.random.org). Initially, schools were proportionally chosen in quartiles parallel to the 2013-2014 Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) Free-Reduced Lunch School Summary (ALSDE, 2013). Schools were selected in quartiles to create a stratified random sampling of Alabama public schools (see Table 1). The total number of all 2013-2014 free-reduced lunch schools was divided into quartiles (Q) of Q1: $\leq 25\%$, Q2: 26-50%, Q3: 51-75%, and Q4: 76-100%. The proportional number of schools was calculated for each quartile, revealing Quartile 1 (Q1) = 7%, Q2 = 19%, Q3 = 42%, Q4 = 32% in all Alabama public schools. The total proportional number of subjects required for the study (156 total subjects) was calculated for representative quartiles, resulting in an estimate of Q1 = 11, Q2 = 30, Q3 = 66, Q4 = 50 subjects. To ensure equity across grade levels, subject numbers were equalized at the elementary school, middle school, and high school levels,

resulting in Q1 = 12 (3 per level), Q2 = 30 (10 per level), Q3 = 66 (22 per level), Q4 = 51 (17 per level.), and a total of $n = 53$ subjects per school level and $N = 159$ subjects overall. When multiple counselors were identified within a school, a single counselor within each school was selected alphabetically by last name, applying the same random process. When a counselor was replaced, the same random selection process was applied to a school in the same school level and quartile. Following selection, participants were emailed a letter of invitation (Appendix D) through a *Qualtrics* (2015) survey panel distribution list. A sample size of $N = 159$ school counselors in Alabama, (i.e., $n = 53$ elementary, $n = 53$ middle, and $n = 53$ high school counselors) were emailed to participate in the proposed study.

Participants were a Pre-kindergarten (PK)-12 stratified sample of school counselors in Alabama public schools, randomly selected based on proportional 2013-2014 ALSDE Free-Reduced Lunch (2013) quartiles. The researcher received initial Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval in June, 2014 and amended approval in October, 2014 (Appendix E). After approval had been obtained, participants were emailed a letter of invitation (Appendix D) through a *Qualtrics* (2015) survey distribution panel list beginning on November 6, 2014. Additionally, all randomly selected PK-12 school grade levels (elementary, middle, and high school) were given an opportunity to complete the SCPIS (Appendix A; Elsner & Carey, 2005; Clemens et al., 2010) along with demographic and related information (Appendix B). *Qualtrics* panel email reminders were sent on November 20, 2014 and December 6, 2014. Schools not responding after three emails were replaced in the same stratified method described earlier, until the total of 159 participants was attained. When a counselor was replaced, the same stratified selection process was applied to a school in the same school level and quartile. Responses were collected using an online survey software solution, *Qualtrics* (2015).

This study explored the implementation of features of the ASCA National Model (2005) in Alabama public schools as a whole and across grade levels (i.e., elementary, middle, high school). The descriptive and demographic items (Appendix B) included questions to verify the school in which they worked, requested number of years as a school counselor, and total number of counselors in their school. Identities of schools and school counselors were confidential and only accessible to the researcher and select committee members to assure participant anonymity in subsequent publications and presentations.

Data Analysis

The following research questions guided the instrumentation of the research project. This research sought to answer the following research questions using the given data analysis:

1. What is the extent of implementation of features of the American School Counselor Association's (ASCA) National Model (2005) in Alabama school counseling programs as measured by total score and subscale factor scores of programmatic orientation, school counselors' use of computer software, and school counseling services identified by the School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS; Appendix A)? For Research Question 1, descriptive data were collected (Appendix B). Data collection included school counselor-to-student ratio, counselor time use, length of time that a comprehensive school counseling program has been implemented, and whether counseling coordinator has school counseling background, as well as other related demographic information detailed in Appendix B.

2. Is there a difference in the extent of implementation of features of the ASCA National Model (2005) in Alabama school counseling programs between school grade levels of elementary, middle school, and high school using total score and subscale factor scores identified by the SCPIS (Appendix A)?

For Research Question 2, three one-way analyses of variances (ANOVAs) were completed for school grade levels (elementary, middle, and high school) to determine differences between grade levels of school counselors in implementation of features of the ASCA National Model (2005) as measured by their responses on SCPIS items.

3. Is there a difference in the extent that Alabama school counseling programs use data to make decisions in implementing features of ASCA's National Model (2005) as measured by SCPIS (Appendix A) items with data terminology, overall and across school grade levels (elementary, middle school, and high school)?

For Research Question 3, SCPIS data item assessment was used. The SCPIS data items were identified based on evidence of data terminology (i.e., #4: measurable goals; #5: assessment; #7: testing; #12: 80% of counselor time; #14: annual review; #9, #10, #15, #16, #17: data, #20: feedback). For Research Question 3, inferential non-parametric analysis (Kruskal-Wallis [2014] nonparametric test) between grade levels of elementary, middle, and high school was also conducted to determine differences between grade levels of school counselors in their data use as measured by SCPIS items with data terminology.

The two primary tools for data analysis were *Qualtrics* (2015) and *SPSS* (2014). Microsoft *Excel* (2013) software was also utilized in some aspects of descriptive data analysis. *Qualtrics* is an online survey software solution. In August 2013, the University of Alabama obtained an enterprise agreement with *Qualtrics* providing license use for academic and administrative purposes. *Qualtrics* users can track participation, send invitations and reminders, display survey results graphically and statistically in real time, and export raw data in a variety of formats (e.g., CSV, *SPSS*). For this study, *Qualtrics* distribution sent surveys and reminders to a randomly selected panel of email recipients. *Qualtrics* cross-tabulation examined significance

between two variables and produced pertinent results, such as percentiles and average scores for school levels and total schools. For this study, *Qualtrics* data were exported to *Excel* (2013) and *SPSS* (2014) for further analyses, as described in relation to the research questions.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The population sample for this study was comprised of $N = 159$ Alabama public school counselors, equally represented with $n = 53$ subjects in three school level groups: elementary (Grades PreK-5), middle school (Grades 6-8), and high school (Grades 9-12). Schools were randomly selected from the 2013-2014 Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) Free-Reduced Lunch School Summary (ALSDE, 2013) proportionally in quartiles to create a stratified random sampling of Alabama public school counselors.

Research Question One

The first research question was: What is the extent of implementation of features of the American School Counselor Association's (ASCA) National Model (2005) in Alabama school counseling programs as measured by total score and subscale factor scores of programmatic orientation, school counselors' use of computer software, and school counseling services identified by the School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS; Appendix A)?

For this research question, descriptive data were analyzed (Appendix B). Data collection included school counselor-to-student ratio, counselor time use, length of time that a comprehensive school counseling program has been implemented, and whether the counseling coordinator has school counseling background, as well as related demographic information detailed in Appendix B.

Descriptive statistics delineated multiple aspects of the participants in this study. The *Qualtrics* (2015) cross tabulation survey results provided extensive analysis in

Degree/Certification in School Counseling (see Table 2), Gender (see Table 3), Ethnicity (see Table 4), and Geographic Location (see Table 5), as presented formerly in Chapter 3.

Qualtrics question response rates revealed a high percent of participation with the vast majority of responses in the 90-100% range across all school levels (see Table 6). A graphic depiction of results can be found in Appendix F, Figure 6.

Table 6

Qualtrics Question Response Rates

	100%	90-99%	80-89%	Below 20% (Exception Items)	Total # of Items
Elementary School	18	22	1	3	44
Middle School	22	18	1	3	44
High School	21	17	3	3	44
All Levels	11	29	1	3	44

Background information on Counseling Coordinator (see Table 7), Training in CACREP Programs (see Table 8), ASCA National Model Implementation (see Table 9), and Use of Data (Table 10) follow subsequently. Across all participants surveyed, Table 7 showed the number of system counseling coordinators/directors having a school counseling background as $n = 83$ (54%) overall, but the school levels varied from $n = 32$ (63%) elementary, $n = 24$ (48%) middle, and $n = 27$ (51%) high schools. A graphic display of results is available in Appendix F, Figure 7.

Table 7

School Counselor Coordinator/Director with School Counseling Background

	Elementary School $n = 51$	Middle School $n = 51$	High School $n = 51$	Total N = 153
Yes	32 (63%)	24 (48%)	27 (51%)	83 (54%)
No	19 (27%)	26 (52%)	26 (49%)	71 (46%)

In Table 8, most school counselors $n = 142$ (93%) received degrees from CACREP-accredited programs with similar rankings across school levels: $n = 47$ (92%) elementary, $n = 49$ (96%) middle, and $n = 46$ (90%) high schools. A graphic representation of data can be viewed in Appendix F, Figure 8.

Table 8

Counseling Degree from CACREP-accredited Program

	Elementary School $n = 51$	Middle School $n = 51$	High School $n = 51$	Total N=153
Yes	47 (92%)	49 (96%)	46 (90%)	142 (93%)
No	4 (8%)	2 (4%)	5 (10%)	11 (7%)

Table 9 indicated school counselors that participated in training on Implementation of the ASCA National Model or the Alabama State Plan. For the participants, majority received their training at local workshops/training (i.e., $n = 96$ [64%], then $n = 86$ [58%] at the ALCA Conference, $n = 63$ [42%] at a university/college, and lastly $n = 7$ [5%] “Other”). Note that participants selected “All That Apply” with up to four choices, so the total exceeded 100%. A similar arrangement was evidenced across school levels. However, high schools participated considerably more at local training/workshops at $n = 38$ (78%) and at the ALCA conference at $n = 33$ (67%), compared to elementary ($n = 29$ [58%] local and $n = 27$ [54%] ALCA) and middle school (local $n = 29$ [58%] local and $n = 26$ [52%] ALCA). Open-ended responses described training in the ASCA National Model as other training at the state department, in Georgia, during internship, through National Board certification class, and the Mega Conference by the Alabama State Department of Education. A graphic depiction of results can be located in Appendix F, Figure 9.

Table 9

Training Participation on Implementation of ASCA National Model

Number of Counselors Participating	Elementary School <i>n</i> = 50	Middle School <i>n</i> = 50	High School <i>n</i> = 49	Total N = 149
Local Training	29 (58%)	29 (58%)	38 (78%)	96 (64%)
ALCA Conference	27 (54%)	26 (52%)	33 (67%)	86 (58%)
University/College	19 (38%)	22 (35%)	22 (35%)	63 (42%)
Other	1 (2%)	4 (8%)	2 (4%)	7 (5%)

A parallel arrangement emerged in Table 10 for participation in training on using data in implementing the ASCA National Model or State Plan with overall $n = 94$ (63%) at local workshops, $n = 56$ (38%) at the ALCA Conference, $n = 46$ (31%) at a university/college, and $n = 11$ (7%) “Other.” The “Other” responses described training in using data as other resources such as Alabama State Department of Education training, Education Trust training, National Board certification classes, Mega Conference by the Alabama State Department of Education professional development, an online webinar, and a national conference. Again, since four responses were possible, the total exceeded 100%. School levels reported a similar ranking of local, ALCA, University, and Other, with two exceptions. The elementary and middle school tied the second and third choices as ALCA Conference and university/college ($n = 17$ [35%] elementary, $n = 16$ [32%] middle). A graphic display of results is available in Appendix F, Figure 10.

Table 10

Training Participation on Data Use in Implementation of ASCA National Model

Number of Counselors Participating	Elementary School <i>n</i> = 49	Middle School <i>n</i> = 50	High School <i>n</i> = 48	Total N = 147
Local Training	31 (63%)	27 (54%)	36 (75%)	94 (63%)
ALCA Conference	17 (35%)	16 (32%)	23 (48%)	56 (38%)
University/College	17 (35%)	16 (32%)	13 (28%)	46 (31%)
Other	1 (2%)	5 (10%)	5 (10%)	11 (7%)

Additional descriptive statistical data were utilized to explore the number of schools served, counselor age, number of years as a school counselor, counselor-to-student ratio, counselor time use, number of years Comprehensive School Counseling Program (CSCP) implemented, and total number of counselor units in same school. The vast majority of schools (*n* = 50 [94%] middle, *n* = 51 [96%] elementary, *n* = 52 [98%] high) served by the school counselor was one school, regardless of school level (see Table 11). A graphic depiction of the data is included in Appendix F, Figure 11.

Table 11

Number of Schools Served by Counselor

	One School		Two Schools	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Elementary School	51	96%	2	4%
Middle School	50	94%	3	6%
High School	52	98%	1	2%

The age of the survey participants were examined across school levels in age ranges and average counselor ages (see Table 12). School counselor ages ranged from 26 to 63 years with an

overall mean of 44 years. The school level averages presented relatively similar ages for the participants (i.e., 46 years [elementary], 44 years [middle], and 42 years [high school]). The distribution continued relatively similar across age ranges with the exception of $n = 0$ (0%) school counselors 26-29 years in the elementary range and $n = 0$ (0%) in the 60-63 years high school range. A graphic representation of the data is available in Appendix F, Figure 12.

Table 12

Counselor Age

		26-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-63	Total	Average
		yrs.	yrs.	yrs.	yrs.	yrs.	Counselors	
Elementary	<i>n</i>	0	15	19	14	3	51	46 yrs.
	%	0%	29%	37%	27%	6%		
Middle School	<i>n</i>	1	18	16	10	4	49	44 yrs.
	%	2%	37%	33%	20%	8%		
High School	<i>n</i>	2	15	20	10	0	47	42 yrs.
	%	4%	32%	43%	21%	0%		
Total	<i>n</i>	3	48	55	34	7	147	44 yrs.

The number of years as a school counselor was investigated in ranges of years and average number of years (see Table 13). From lowest to highest, the average number of years as a school counselor ranged from the lowest at middle schools (9 years), high schools (11 years), and elementary schools (11 years). The highest number of years fluctuated across the school levels. The elementary schools indicated the highest number of years as a school counselor as multimodal ($n = 11$ counselors in 1-3 years and 16-20 years, each at 21%). The middle schools revealed $n = 26$ counselors with 6-10 years (49%) as a distinct highest number. The high schools exhibited another multimodal distribution of $n = 15$ counselors with the highest number of years at 6-10 years and 11-15 years, each at 29%. All school levels showed the lowest number of years

as 26-28 years, from $n = 0$ (0%) middle schools, $n = 1$ (2%) high schools, and $n = 3$ (6%) elementary schools. School counselors with 1-5 years' experience ranged from $n = 11$ (21%) high school, $n = 13$ (25%) middle school, and $n = 17$ (33%) elementary school level. In contrast, school counselors with > 5 years' experience ranged from $n = 35$ (67%) elementary, $n = 40$ (75%) middle, and $n = 41$ (79%) high school level, indicating that high school counselors have the most experience, closely followed by middle school, and least experienced school counselors at the elementary level. A graphic representation of the data is provided in Appendix F, Figures 13-14.

Table 13

Number of Years as School Counselor

		1-3 yrs.	4-5 yrs.	6-10 yrs.	11-15 yrs.	16-20 yrs.	21-25 yrs.	26-28 yrs.	Total Counselors	Avg # of Years
Elementary	<i>n</i>	11	6	8	10	11	3	3	52	11
	%	21%	12%	15%	19%	21%	6%	6%		
Middle School	<i>n</i>	9	4	26	9	3	2	0	53	9
	%	17%	7%	49%	17%	6%	4%	0%		
High School	<i>n</i>	7	4	15	15	7	3	1	52	11
	%	13%	8%	29%	29%	13%	6%	2%		

The school counselor-to-student ratio for total participants spanned an immense range of 1:140-930 students (see Table 14). An expansive range was repeated in all school levels: elementary (1:195-930) as largest, followed by middle (1:140-800), and high (1:250-755). The overall average school counselor-to-student ratio was 1:447 students. Across school levels, the counselor-to-student ratio was 1:504 elementary students, 1:410 middle school students, and

1:427 high school students. The ASCA National Model (2003, 2005, 2012) recommends a school counselor-to-student ratio of 1:250 students.

The highest percent student range across all school levels was the 351- 400: $n = 9$ (17%) elementary schools, $n = 9$ (18%) middle schools, $n = 12$ (23%) high schools, and $n = 30$ (19%) total counselors at this level. Conversely, when applying the ASCA criteria for counselor-to-student ratio (1:250), $n = 3$ (6%) elementary schools, $n = 4$ (8%) middle schools, $n = 1$ (2%) high school, and $n = 8$ (5%) total schools were within the ASCA guidelines (ASCA, 2003; 2005; 2012). In contrast, $n = 49$ (94%) elementary schools, $n = 46$ (92%) middle schools, $n = 51$ (98%) high schools, and $n = 146$ (95%) total schools had counselor-to-student ratios that were above recommended ASCA guidelines. A graphic representation of this data is presented in Appendix F, Figures 15-16.

Table 14

Counselor-to-Student Ratio

		Elementary School $n = 52$	Middle School $n = 50$	High School $n = 52$	Totals N = 154	
Students:	Range	195-930	140-800	250-755	140-930	
	Average	504	410	427	447	
Counselors:	≤ 250	n	3	4	1	8
		%	6%	8%	2%	5%
	>250	n	49	46	51	146
		%	94%	92%	98%	95%

Note. ASCA recommends a School Counselor-to-Student Ratio 1:250.

Counselor time use was examined in the four ASCA program delivery components of guidance curriculum, individual student planning, responsive services, and system support (ASCA, 2005), as well as duties not related to the counselor role. Survey participants were asked to enter a percentage of time they spent in each of the five categories with a combined total of

100%. Only entries with a total of 100% were used in the data analysis. The current research survey compared school counselor responses according to the counselor time use guidelines recommended by ASCA (2005), which vary for each school levels (elementary, middle, high school) due to developmental differences. The elementary level typically designates more time in school-wide guidance curriculum delivery, while secondary levels devote an increasing amount of time for individual student planning.

The ASCA (2005) guidelines for counselor time use in the category of guidance curriculum are as follows: 35-45% elementary, 25-35% middle, and 15-25% high school counseling programs (see Table 15). The overall survey average of guidance curriculum time use showed 36% for elementary schools, 21% middle schools, and 20% for high schools, which were close to the ASCA criteria. However, because averages alone do not properly represent an accurate analysis of guidance curriculum implementation, further examination was indicated. After closer scrutiny, the middle schools emerged with the highest performance with the most school counseling programs of $n = 28$ (57%) within the recommended guidance curriculum guidelines, closely followed by the high schools with $n = 25$ (56%), and the elementary schools with $n = 16$ (31%). The middle schools revealed $n = 18$ (37%) school counseling programs functioning below the recommended guidance curriculum counselor time use guidelines, while $n = 3$ (6%) middle schools spent above ASCA recommended time in guidance curriculum activities. The high schools indicated $n = 11$ (24%) of the school counseling programs were below ASCA time use guidelines in guidance curriculum activities and $n = 9$ (20%) were above ASCA time recommendations for guidance curriculum. The elementary schools showed $n = 23$ (45%) school counseling programs with below ASCA time use in guidance curriculum activities

and $n = 12$ (24%) with above ASCA recommended guidance curriculum time use. A graphic depiction of the results can be viewed in Appendix F, Figure 17.

Table 15

Counselor Time Use: Guidance Curriculum

		Elementary School $n = 51$	Middle School $n = 49$	High School $n = 45$	Total Counselors N = 145
ASCA Guidelines		35-45%	25-35%	15-25%	
Average Rating		36%	21%	20%	
Meet ASCA Guidelines	n %	16 31%	28 57%	25 56%	69 48%
Below ASCA Guidelines	n %	23 45%	18 37%	11 24%	52 36%
Above ASCA Guidelines	n %	12 24%	3 6%	9 20%	24 17%

In counselor time use of individual student planning, the ASCA (2005) guidelines recommend the following: 5-10% elementary, 15-25% middle, and 25-35% high school counseling programs. The survey results indicated an average survey result of 36% for the elementary schools, 21% for the middle schools, and 20% for the high schools (see Table 16). Overall, the elementary schools were dramatically above recommended ASCA percentages and high schools were below guidelines, with only middle schools in compliance. Further scrutiny of results revealed that $n = 33$ (67%) of the middle schools programs and $n = 30$ (67%) of the high school programs tied at approximately two-thirds, as highest performing school counseling programs within ASCA guidelines for counselor time use in individual student planning. The

elementary schools presented again as lowest with $n = 24$ (47%) programs or approximately one-half within the ASCA recommended guidelines. However, all school levels revealed school counseling programs that lacked ASCA compliance in this area. For the middle schools, $n = 5$ (10%) of the school counseling programs demonstrated below ASCA guidelines time use and $n = 11$ (23%) had above ASCA time use for individual student planning. For the high schools, $n = 10$ (22%) of the school counseling programs demonstrated below ASCA time use in individual student planning and $n = 5$ (11%) had above ASCA recommended guidelines for individual student planning. The elementary level exhibited no counseling programs with below ASCA recommended individual student planning services, but $n = 27$ (53%) schools or approximately one-half surveyed were functioning with above ASCA guidelines for individual student planning services. A graphic representation of these results is available in Appendix F, Figure 18.

Table 16

Counselor Time Use: Individual Student Planning

		Elementary School $n = 51$	Middle School $n = 49$	High School $n = 45$	Total Counselors N = 145
ASCA Guidelines		5-10%	15-25%	25-35%	
Average Rating		15%	23%	29%	
Meet ASCA Guidelines	n %	24 47%	33 67%	30 67%	87 60%
Below ASCA Guidelines	n %	0 0%	5 10%	10 22%	15 36%
Above ASCA Guidelines	n %	27 53%	11 23%	5 11%	43 30%

In counselor time use of responsive services, the ASCA (2005) guidelines recommend the following: 30-40% elementary, 30-40% middle, and 25-35% high school for counseling programs (see Table 17). The average survey results were as follows: 20% elementary, 28% middle, and 23% high. All averages were below ASCA guidelines. Closer examination of data indicated that middle schools had the highest ranking in appropriate counselor time use with $n = 19$ (36%) school counseling programs in compliance with ASCA guidelines for responsive services. The elementary schools ranked second with $n = 13$ (25%) school counseling programs within ASCA guidelines for responsive services, while high schools followed with $n = 10$ (22%) programs in compliance with ASCA guidelines.

The middle schools presented a majority of $n = 26$ (53%) school counseling programs showing below ASCA recommended counselor time use of responsive services and $n = 4$ (8%) programs with above ASCA guidelines time use. The elementary schools had $n = 37$ (73%) programs with below ASCA guidelines for counselor time use of responsive services and one school ($n = 1$ [2%]) with above ASCA guidelines time use. The high schools indicated a majority of counseling programs surveyed $n = 23$ (51%) with below ASCA guidelines for responsive services time use and $n = 12$ (27%) programs with above ASCA guidelines services. A graphic depiction of these results is included in Appendix F, Figure 19.

Table 17

Counselor Time Use: Responsive Services

		Elementary School <i>n</i> = 51	Middle School <i>n</i> = 49	High School <i>n</i> = 45	Total Counselors N = 145
ASCA Guidelines		30-40%	30-40%	25-35%	
Average Rating		20%	28%	23%	
Meet ASCA Guidelines	<i>n</i>	13	19	10	42
	%	25%	39%	22%	29%
Below ASCA Guidelines	<i>n</i>	37	26	23	86
	%	73%	53%	51%	59%
Above ASCA Guidelines	<i>n</i>	1	4	12	17
	%	2%	8%	27%	12%

In counselor time use of system support services, the ASCA (2005) guidelines recommended the following: 10-15% elementary, 10-15% middle, and 15-20% high school counseling programs (see Table 18). The survey resulted in a school level averages of 16% elementary, 14% middle school, and 17% high school, which appeared close to guidelines. However, this data presented a limited analysis perspective. In further examination, the middle school continued with the highest appropriate counselor time use with $n = 28$ (57%) or a majority of the middle school counseling programs surveyed for system support services. The high school ranked second with $n = 22$ (49%) or approximately one-half of the survey participants. Although there were $n = 24$ elementary schools in compliance, the larger number of elementary participants with this question resulted in a ranking of 47%, which is the lowest percentage for participants. The middle schools indicated $n = 5$ (10%) of its participants had below ASCA

counselor time use in system support and $n = 16$ (33%) demonstrated above recommended time use. The high schools showed that $n = 15$ (33%) participants displayed below ASCA guidelines counselor time use and $n = 8$ (18%) with above ASCA recommended time use guidelines in system support services. The elementary schools had $n = 24$ (47%) or approximately one-half of the participants indicating below ASCA counselor time use in system support and $n = 22$ (43%) revealing above ASCA recommended time use. A graphic representation of the results can be examined in Appendix F, Figure 20.

Table 18

Counselor Time Use: System Support

		Elementary School $n = 51$	Middle School $n = 49$	High School $n = 45$	Total Counselors N= 145
ASCA Guidelines		10-15%	10-15%	15-20%	
Average Rating		16%	14%	17%	
Meet ASCA Guidelines	n	24	28	22	74
	%	47%	57%	49%	51%
Below ASCA Guidelines	n	5	5	15	25
	%	10%	10%	33%	17%
Above ASCA Guidelines	n	22	16	8	46
	%	43%	33%	11%	32%

In duties not related to the counselor role, only those participants indicating 0% would be in compliance with ASCA standards. Duties not related to the counselor role are considered inappropriate, with the exception of some fair share and miscellaneous activities included in

system support. In this category, the survey average indicating the lowest and best average rating emerged at 10% for the high schools, 13% for the middle schools, and 14% for the elementary schools (the highest average rating) (see Table 19). The middle schools had the most participants with $n = 8$ (16%) school counseling programs indicating ASCA compliance with a 0% choice. The high school level was $n = 5$ (11%) and the elementary level at $n = 5$ (10%). The study indicated that non-compliance for the middle schools was at $n = 41$ (84%), for the high schools $n = 40$ (89%), and for the elementary schools $n = 46$ (96%). A graphic depiction of the results is available in Appendix F, Figure 21.

Table 19

Counselor Time Use: Duties Not Related

		Elementary School $n = 51$	Middle School $n = 49$	High School $n = 45$	Total Counselors $N = 145$
ASCA Guidelines		0%	0%	0%	
Average Rating		14%	13%	10%	
Meet ASCA Guidelines	n %	5 10%	8 16%	5 11%	18 12%
Below ASCA Guidelines	n %	n/a n/a	n/a n/a	n/a n/a	n/a n/a
Above ASCA Guidelines	n %	46 90%	41 84%	40 89%	127 88%

Several specific survey questions were also analyzed. The survey question, “The number of years a comprehensive school counseling program was implemented” received one of the lower response rates (i.e., $n = 47$ [89%] elementary school responses, $n = 44$ [83%] middle

schools, $n = 47$ [89%] high schools, and $n = 138$ [87%] total). The responses related to this question were further confounded with non-numerical text responses such as “?” and “dk” meaning “don’t know.” At the elementary schools there were $n = 6$ (13%) such responses, while middle schools had $n = 4$ (9%), high schools had $n = 6$ (13%), and the total was at $n = 16$ (12%) (see Table 20). Therefore, scorable responses resulted in an even lower response rate: $n = 41$ (77%) elementary schools, $n = 40$ (76%) middle schools, $n = 41$ (77%) high schools, and $n = 122$ (77%) total. Two responses of “since its inception” were included in the 26+ year category.

For the question regarding the overall CSCP implementation, the elementary schools ranged from a response of 2 years to 25 years, the middle schools ranged 0 years to 36 years, and the high schools ranged 0 years to 50 years, including “since its inception.” The rating of “0 years” indicates that no CSCP is presently or has ever been in place. For this choice, the elementary schools showed $n = 0$ (0%) participants, while middle schools had $n = 2$ (5%) responses, high schools had $n = 1$ response (3%), and total was $n = 3$ (3%).

In comparing the “year ranges,” the highest number of participant programs revealed $n = 15$ (38%) at 6-10 years at the middle school level, $n = 14$ (34%) at 1-5 years at elementary school level, $n = 13$ (31%) at 6-10 years at the high school level, and $n = 40$ (33%) at the 6-10 years. The lowest number of participants in the year ranges indicated $n = 0$ (0%) both at the elementary (26+ years) range and at the high school (21-25 year) range. CSCP implementation was examined for schools 0-5 years, revealing $n = 14$ (34%) elementary, $n = 11$ (28%) middle, and $n = 10$ (24%) high school. More established CSCPs were > 5 years with $n = 27$ (66%) elementary, $n = 29$ (73%) middle, and $n = 31$ (76%) high school level. A graphic representation is included in Appendix F, Figures 22-23.

Table 20

Years Comprehensive School Counseling Program (CSCP) Implemented

		0 yrs	1-3 yrs	4-5 yrs	1-5 yrs.	6 – 10 yrs.	11- 15 yrs.	16-20 yrs.	21-25 yrs.	26+ yrs.	Tot. w/ yrs.	?	Tot. No.
ES	<i>n</i>	0	7	7	14	12	4	6	5	0	41	6	47
	%	0	17	17	34	29	10	15	12	0		13	
MS	<i>n</i>	2	5	4	9	15	9	2	1	2	40	4	44
	%	5	13	10	22	38	23	5	2	5		9	
HS	<i>n</i>	1	2	7	9	13	10	4	0	4	41	6	47
	%	3	4	17	22	31	24	10	0	10		13	
Total	<i>n</i>	3	14	18	32	40	23	12	6	6	122	16	138
	%	3	11	15	26	33	19	9	5	5		12	

Elementary School (ES), Middle School (MS), High School (HS)

Note:

(19 yrs. ago) 1996: Alabama Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance State Model (State Plan);

(12 yrs. ago) 2003: Second Alabama State Plan Adoption aligning 2003 ASCA National Model,

ASCA National Models launched in 2003, 2005, 2012

The number of counselor units in schools ranged from an average of: 1.09 units at the elementary level, 1.5 units at the middle school level, 2.27 units at the high school level, and 1.62 units total (see Table 21). The counselor units in a school spanned from 0.5 to 2.0 units at the elementary level, 0.5 to 4 units at the middle school level, and 1.0 to 7.0 units at the high school level. The highest number of counselor units in a school was indicated as 1.0 units at $n = 46$ (87%) at the elementary level, 1.0 units at $n = 29$ (55%) at the middle school level, and 2.0 units at $n = 17$ (32%) at the high school level. A graphic representation of the data can be examined in Appendix F, Figures 24-25.

Table 21

Counselor Units

		0.5	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	4	5	7	Total	Average # of Units
Elementary	<i>n</i>	1	46	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	53	1.09
School	%	2%	87%	2%	9%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%		
Middle School	<i>n</i>	3	29	2	13	1	4	1	0	0	53	1.5
	%	5%	55%	4%	24%	2%	8%	2%	0%	0%		
High School	<i>n</i>	0	15	2	17	1	11	4	2	1	53	2.27
	%	0%	28%	4%	32%	2%	20%	8%	4%	2%		
Total	<i>n</i>	4	90	5	35	2	15	5	2	1	159	1.62
	%	3%	57%	3%	22%	1%	9	3%	1%	1%		

Examining the School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS)

The School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS; Clemens et al., 2010; Elsner & Carey, 2005; Appendix A) was the survey instrument utilized in this study. SCPIS was endorsed by CSCORE (2013) of the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and the National Panel for Evidence-Based School Counseling to review outcome data and evidence-based practice, identify needed research studies, and document school counseling practice.

The current research survey results were analyzed across school levels by obtaining average or mean scores for each SCPIS question through *Qualtrics* cross tabulation, examining items with data terminology, and investigating the three SCPIS factors. The three identified subscales or factors on the SCPIS are designated as programmatic orientation, school counselors' use of computer software, and school counseling services. Programmatic orientation implied a level of intentionality as opposed to reactive services by administering a proactive program. Computer software use was paired with accessing, analyzing, and using data. School counselor services related to how the services are provided within the program (Clemens et al., 2010).

The School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS) was composed of 20 items with multiple choice options of *1-not present*, *2-development in progress*, *3-partly implemented*, and *4-fully implemented*. The SCPIS average or mean scores from *Qualtrics* cross tabulation were similar across school levels with overall mean scores of: 3.25 for elementary schools, 3.3 for middle schools, and 3.25 for high schools (see Table 20). All questions, regardless of school level, resulted in an average or mean score of *3-partly implemented* or *4-fully implemented*. However, it is imperative to caution that averages are the result of numerous varied responses.

Across all school levels, three questions exhibited an average rating of *4-fully implemented*: Question 2 - “Services are organized so students are well served,” Question 8 - “Effective crises referral and follow-up,” and Question 15 - “Counselors use computer software to access student data.” Each question depicted one of the three SCPIS Factors (I: Program Orientation, II: School Counselor Use of Computer Software, or III: School Counseling Services). Question 2 - “Student service availability and access” represented Factor III: School Counseling Services. Question 8 - “Crises referral and follow-up” was one of three questions not designated as a factor in item analysis (Clemens et al., 2010). Question 15 affirmed increased integration of computer software to access student data by school counselors in all school levels and personified the universality of essential computer data use in our profession. Question 15 also illustrated Factor II: School Counselor Use of Computer Software and this question was a data use item. Two questions presented a rating of *4-fully implemented* in two levels: Question 1 – “A written mission statement exists and is used by school counselor,” and Question 6 – “All students receive classroom guidance lessons to promote academic, career, and personal-social development.” Question 1 – “Mission statement use” was rated as *4-fully implemented* by the

middle school and high school levels, while the elementary and middle school levels selected Question 6 – “Classroom guidance” as *4-fully implemented*. Question 1 - “Mission statement use” was included in Factor I: Program Orientation, while Question 6 – “Classroom guidance” was uncategorized. Two other questions showed a rating of *4-fully implemented* by only a single school level. They were Question 4 and Question 20. Question 4 – “Clear, measurable student program goals,” was designated as *4-fully implemented* by the elementary school level only. The item was representative of Factor I: Program Orientation as well as exemplifying data use. In addition, Question 20 – “School counselor communicates with parents regarding student achievement and gaining feedback” was scored as *4-fully implemented* only by the middle school level. Question 20 – “School counselor communicates with parents regarding student achievement and gaining feedback” embodied Factor III: School Counseling Services, as well as signifying data use.

Research Question One was descriptive in nature, examining the extent of implementation of features of the ASCA National Model (2005). The overall scoring average of all SCPIS (Appendix A) questions, regardless of school level, resulted in an average or mean SCPIS score of *3-partly implemented* or *4-fully implemented*.

The SCPIS average or mean scores from the *Qualtrics* cross tabulation were similar across school levels with overall mean scores of: 3.25 for elementary schools, 3.3 for middle schools, and 3.25 for high schools (see Table 22). Items rated as *4-fully implemented* represented all SCPIS Factors (Factor I and III-twice, Factor II once) and three data use items. This indicated a variety of representation of counseling program implementation including all school levels. However, Factor I revealed only $n = 2$ (29%) of the seven items were rated *4-fully implemented*, while Factor II had $n = 1$ (33%) of three items, and Factor III had $n = 2$ (29%) of the seven items.

As a whole, only $n = 4$ (36%) of 11 data items were rated as *4-fully implemented*. A graphic depiction of the data is presented in Appendix F, Figure 26.

Table 22

School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS) Average Scores

Rating Scale:	Average or Mean Scores:			
1-Not present				
2-Development in progress				
3-Partly implemented				
4-Fully Implemented	D F			
		ES	MS	HS
Q1- Written mission statement exists and is used by SC	I	3	4	4
Q2- Services organized so students well served, have access	III	4	4	4
Q3- Program operates from plan for closing achievement gap	I	3	3	3
Q4- Program has clear, measurable student goals-A/C/PS	D I	4	3	3
Q5- Needs assessments regularly completed/guide program	D I	3	3	3
Q6- All students receive classroom guidance lessons A/C/PS		4	4	3
Q7- Program ensures that all students have academic plans	D	3	3	4
Q8- Program has effective crises referral and follow-up		4	4	4
Q9- SC use performance data-decide how meet student needs	D I	3	3	3
Q10-SC analyze student data- identify close gap interventions	D I	3	3	3
Q11-SC job descriptions match actual duties	III	3	3	3
Q12-SC spend at least 80% time in direct student service	D III	3	3	3
Q13-SC program-interventions educate student to high levels	III	3	3	3
Q14-Annual review conducted for improving programs	D I	3	3	3
Q15-SC use computer software to access student data	D II	4	4	4
Q16-SC use computer software to analyze student data	D II	3	3	3
Q17-SC use computer software data for school improvement	D II	3	3	3
Q18-SC has resources-appropriate professional development	III	3	3	3

Q19-SC priorities represented on curriculum/ed. committees	III	3	3	3
Q20-SC communicate w/parents re: students, gain feedback	D III	3	4	3
Total :		65	66	65
Average:		3.25	3.3	3.25

Scores rated 4:				
DATA (D) Items: #4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20		2	2	2
(All School Levels' Total 4 scores: 4 of 11 -36%)		18%	18%	18%

All SCPIS Factors (F):

(All School Levels' Overall 4 scores: Factor I-2, II-1, III-2)

I: Program Orientation : #1, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 14		1	1	1
(All School Levels' Overall 4 scores: 2 of 7- 29%)		14%	14%	14%
II: School Counselor Use of Computer Software: #15, 16, 17		1	1	1
(All School Levels' Overall 4 scores: 1 of 3 -33%)		33%	33%	33%
III: School Counseling Services: #2, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20		1	2	1
(All School Levels' Overall 4 scores: 2 of 7 -29%)		14%	29%	14%

Elementary School (ES), Middle School (MS), High School (HS)
School Counselor (SC), Academic/Career/Personal-Social (A/C/PS)
See Appendix A for complete SCPIS survey

Research Question Two

The second research question was: Is there a difference in the extent of implementation of features of the ASCA National Model (2005) in Alabama school counseling programs between school grade levels of elementary, middle school, and high school using total score and subscale scores of Factors I (Program Orientation), II (School Counselor Use of Software), and III (School Counselor Services) identified by the SCPIS (Appendix A)?

For this research question, the use of three one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) procedures was completed between the SCPIS total, three subscale factor scores, and the school grade levels of elementary, middle, and high. The Factor levels of I (Program Orientation), II

(School Counselor Use of Computer Software), and III (School Counseling Services) were the dependent variables. Each factor subscale was analyzed by a one-way ANOVA.

Descriptive statistics indicated a varying number of participants in each factor, with Factor I – Program Orientation (N = 146). The mean ratings were presented for elementary schools (PK-5), middle schools (6-8), high schools (9-12) and total. The mean ratings were 22.59 (4.58), 23.56 (3.21), 22.30 (3.62), and 22.83 (3.86), respectively (see Table 23). The mean ratings for Factor II: School Counselor Use of Software (N = 154) at the school levels of elementary (PK-5), middle school (6-8), high school (9-12), and total were: 10.31 (2.01), 10.56 (2.28), 10.36 (1.56), and 10.41 (1.96), respectively (see Table 24). For Factor III: School Counseling Services (N = 151) at the school levels of elementary school (PK-5), middle school (6-8), high school (9-12), and total, the means were 23.00 (4.08), 23.04 (3.66), 22.72 (3.40), and 22.92 (3.71), respectively (see Table 25).

A review of the ANOVA results indicated that there were no significant differences between means at the different school levels for any of the factor subscales: Factor I: Program Orientation: $F(2, 146) = 1.45$ $p = .24$, $\eta^2 = .020$ (see Table 26); Factor II: School Counselor Use of Software: $F(2, 154) = .23$ $p = .80$, $\eta^2 = .003$ (see Table 27); and Factor III: School Counseling Services: $F(2, 151) = .11$ $p = .90$, $\eta^2 = .001$ (see Table 28). The effect size was low for all school levels for Factors I, II, and III ($\eta^2 = .020, .003, .001$), respectively, suggesting variance in SCPIS for Factors I, II, or III had no effect. The analysis indicated that the SCPIS Factor subscale scores I: Program Orientation, II: School Counselor Use of Software, III: School Counseling Services, and Total score were not statistically different, regardless of school level (elementary school, middle school, or high school). The statistical analysis concurs with the earlier descriptive

comparisons (see Table 23) that there are no significant differences between the SCPIS Factors and the school levels of elementary school, middle school, or high school.

Table 23

Descriptive Statistics

Dependent Variable: Program Orientation			
	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Elementary (PK-5)	22.59	4.58	49
Middle School (6-8)	23.56	3.21	50
High School (9-12)	22.30	3.62	47
Total	22.83	3.86	146

Table 24

Descriptive Statistics

Dependent Variable: School Counselor Use of Software			
	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Elementary (PK-5)	10.31	2.01	51
Middle School (6-8)	10.56	2.29	50
High School (9-12)	10.36	1.56	53
Total	10.41	1.96	154

Table 25

Descriptive Statistics

Dependent Variable: School Counseling Services			
	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Elementary (PK-5)	23.00	4.08	52
Middle School (6-8)	23.04	3.66	49
High School (9-12)	22.72	3.40	50
Total	22.92	3.71	151

Table 26

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Program Orientation

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Level	42.73	2	21.37	1.45	.24	.020
Error	2111.99	143	14.77			
Total	78243.00	146				

Table 27

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: School Counselor Use of Software

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Level	1.74	2	.87	.23	.80	.003
Error	583.49	151	3.86			
Total	17271.00	154				

Table 28

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: School Counseling Services

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Level	3.05	2	1.52	.11	.90	.001
Error	2058.00	148	13.91			
Total	81389.00	151				

Research Question Three

The third research question was: Is there a difference in the extent that Alabama school counseling programs use data to make decisions in implementing features of ASCA's National Model (2005) as measured by SCPIS (Appendix A) items with data terminology, overall and across school grade levels (elementary, middle school, and high school)?

For this research question SCPIS (Appendix A) data item assessment was used. SCPIS data items were identified based on evidence of data terminology (i.e., #4: measurable goals; #5: needs assessments; #7: testing; #12: 80% of counselor; #14: annual review; #9, #10, #15, #16, #17: data; #20: feedback). For this research question, inferential non-parametric analysis utilizing the Kruskal-Wallis (2014) nonparametric test between grade levels of elementary, middle, and high school was conducted. The Kruskal Wallis nonparametric test did not reveal a statistically significant difference in the SCPIS scores on items with data terminology as a function of school level. For Question 4: ($\chi^2 = 4.05, p > .05$); Question 5: ($\chi^2 = 6.25, p < .05$); Question 7: ($\chi^2 = 14.24, p < .05$), Question 9: ($\chi^2 = 2.04, p > .05$); Question 10: ($\chi^2 = 1.78, p > .05$); Question 12: ($\chi^2 = 1.80, p > .05$); Question 14: ($\chi^2 = .17, p > .05$); Question 15 ($\chi^2 = .13, p > .05$); Question 16: ($\chi^2 = 2.02, p > .05$); Question 17: ($\chi^2 = 5.07, p > .05$); and Question 20: ($\chi^2 = 3.11, p > .05$). Therefore, there was no statistically significant difference in the extent that the school levels (elementary, middle, high) of Alabama school counseling programs use data based on evidence of question response to SCPIS items with data terminology (questions #4, #5, #7, #9, #10, #12, #14, #15, #16, #17, and #20).

The number of participants ranged from $N = 154$ to 159 overall, and $n = 50$ to 53 at the school levels. The majority of the data questions did not indicate significant differences. The Kruskal-Wallis resulted in means, standard deviations, a median, and mean ranks for each of the data questions analyzed (see Table 27). The mean ratings for questions #4, #5, #7, #9, #10,

#12, #14, #15, #16, #17, #20, and Grade Level of School were 3.44 (.69), 3.24 (.78), 3.48 (.71), 3.36 (.75), 2.96 (.92), 3.33 (.82), 3.11 (.89), 3.71 (.60), 3.41 (.80), 3.29 (.80), 3.37 (.67) and 2.00 (.82), respectively (see Table 29). The Chi square assumption for significance score was $< .05$ on two (18%) of the 11 questions indicating significant differences overall at .001 (question #7 - all students have academic plans) and .044 (question #5 - Needs Assessments conducted regularly). The Chi square assumption for significance score was $> .05$ on nine of the 11 questions (82%) indicating that overall a majority of data use questions were not significantly different in ratings. The mean rank comparisons exhibited the highest ratings at 86.64 (#4 - clear measurable goals) for elementary schools, 87.56 (#20 - communicate with parents for feedback) for middle schools, and 93.88 (#7 - all students have academic plans) for high schools. The lowest mean rank comparisons were at 64.46 (#7 - all students have academic plans) for elementary school, 76.71 (#15 - use computer software to access student data) for middle schools, and 70.73 (#4 - clear measurable student learning objectives) for high schools.

Table 29

Descriptive Statistics

Sample Sizes, Means, Standard Deviations, and Median for the SCPIS Items with Data Terminology and Grade Level of School

	N	Mean	SD	Median
Q4- Program has clear, measurable student goals- A/C/PS	157	3.44	.69	3.345
Q5- Needs assessments regularly completed/ guide program	156	3.24	.78	3.345
Q7- Program ensures that all students have academic plans	157	3.48	.71	3.345
Q9- SC use performance data- decide how to meet student needs	154	3.36	.75	3.345
Q10- SC analyze student data- identify close gap interventions	157	2.96	.92	3.345
Q12- SC spend at least 80% time in direct student service	159	3.33	.82	3.345
Q14- Annual review conducted for improving programs	158	3.11	.89	3.345
Q15- SC use computer software to access student data	155	3.71	.60	3.345
Q16- SC use computer software to analyze student data	158	3.41	.80	3.345
Q17- SC use computer software data for school improvement	156	3.29	.80	3.345
Q20- SC communicates w/parents re: students, gain feedback	158	3.37	.67	3.345
Grade Level of School	159	2.00	.82	3.345

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Introduction

Several objectives provided the framework for this research. First, the study was created to investigate successful implementation of features of the ASCA National Model (2005) in school counseling programs to identify, address, and assess salient services to improve student learning. A focus on intentional practice and impact on student outcome also guided the investigation. To add, this research affiliated Alabama with the leaders of one of the cutting-edge research institutions in school counseling (CSCORE, 2013) at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst (Carey & Dimmitt, 2006). These given aims, affiliations, and influences converged, resulting in the replicated use of the School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS; Clemens et al., 2010; Elsner & Carey, 2005; Appendix A) as a part of this investigation.

Research findings from studies previously described (Burkard et al., 2012; Carey & Dimmitt, 2012; Carey, Harrington, Martin, & Hoffman, 2012; Carey, Harrington, Martin, & Stevenson, 2012; Dimmitt & Wilkerson, 2012; Lapan, 2012) supported the argument that “when highly trained, professional school counselors deliver ASCA National Model comprehensive school counseling program services, students receive measurable benefits...” (Lapan, 2012, p. 88). Therefore, this study examined in the extent of implementation of features of the ASCA National Model (2003, 2005) in Alabama school counseling programs between school grade levels of elementary, middle, and high school. The stratified random sampling procedures for

participants in proportion to the 2013 -2014 free-reduced lunch quartiles across Alabama public schools enhanced the current representation of Alabama.

Second, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of outcome data in school counseling (Carey & Dimmitt, 2008; Whiston, 2002; Whiston & Sexton, 1998). Outcome data in school counseling has been linked with a growing push for accountability in counseling interventions and programs (Dahir & Stone, 2003; Fairchild & Seeley, 1995; Isaacs, 2003). These merging forces have led to an increased interest in the relationship between research and practice in school counseling (Bauman, 2004; Brown & Trusty, 2005b) and the perspective that "...school counselor data use is a hallmark of the ASCA National Model" (Carey & Dimmitt, 2012, p. 147). In the latest edition of the ASCA National Model (2012), basic ideals from previous editions were put forth, including: school counseling programs were to be data-driven, comprehensive in scope, preventive in design, and developmental in nature to promote student achievement. Within education as a whole, "high stakes" (Isaacs, 2003, p. 290) testing was advocated to verify or improve student achievement.

Over the past two decades, parallel to general education, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of outcome data in school counseling (Carey & Dimmitt, 2008; Whiston, 2002; Whiston & Sexton, 1998), as well as distinct calls for rigorous research that evaluate the impact of school counseling on student outcomes (Bodenhorn et al., 2010; Clemens et al., 2010; Dimmitt et al., 2005; Wilkerson et al., 2013). For these reasons, this research study included the close examination of 11 of the 20 items in the SCPIS survey (i.e., Questions #4, #5, #7, #9, #10, #12, #14, #15, #16, #17, and #20). These given items on the SCPIS incorporated data terminology to explore the extent of implementation of data use across school grade levels of elementary, middle, and high schools.

Third, this study potentially offered pertinent evidence regarding the current implementation of the ASCA National Model (2005) in Alabama schools to facilitate the ongoing Alabama State Board initiative for the year 2020 (i.e., Plan 2020). Plan 2020 is the strategic plan for education in Alabama with the goal to prepare all students to be successful in college and/or career upon graduation from high school. Plan 2020 Strategies for Support Systems propose to “implement Alabama’s Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance Plan” (ALSDE, 2014, p. 17), which is closely aligned with the ASCA National Model (2003). Alabama’s College and Career Ready Standards (CCRS; ALSDE, 2010) provide high-quality resources and instructional materials to assist educators in implementation. The Alabama Insight online curriculum tool is available to each district for educators to explore and map the standards (ALSDE, 2010). Communicating progress in school counseling in Alabama, and the concerns through this research, will hopefully encourage future support for school counseling.

Salient issues and history were also investigated in relation to the implementation of the ASCA National Model (2003, 2005, 2012), nationally and within the state of Alabama. The emerging profession of school counseling developed from the Comprehensive School Counseling Program (CSCP, Campbell & Dahir, 1997, p. 1; Dahir et al., 1998). Key components, such as accountability and data use in school counseling, continued as foundational elements of the ASCA National Model (2003, 2005, 2012). Within the state, Alabama’s past and present school counseling research (Anderson, 1983; Barron, 2002; Burnham & Jackson, 2000; Carrington, 1977; Cecil & Cecil, 1984; Cecil & Cobia, 1991; Cecil & Comas, 1985; Childress et al., 1986; Cooley et al., 1986; Jarrell, 1980; Johnson, 1977; King, 2003; Manning, 1984; Mason et al., 1999; Parker, 1977) has revealed challenges and opportunities for school counseling in Alabama. These three given objectives support the overarching aims of this study.

Three research questions guided this research study, each will be discussed subsequently noting important results. Limitations, future directions, and recommendations will then follow the discussion of the results.

Research Question One

The analysis of descriptive data through demographic and related information listed in Appendix B provided a wealth of information to explore the extent of implementation of features of the ASCA National Model (2003, 2005), as discussed in Chapter 3 and illustrated in Appendix F, Figures 1- 26. Comparisons with ASCA National Model standards between survey results and school counselor-to-student ratio and counselor time use, were particularly noteworthy and remain problematic at the state level. The following illustrate some areas that need improvement.

The school counselor-to-student ratio was reported at 1:419 for Alabama in 2010–2011 (ASCA, 2011). However, the counselor-to-student ratios have increased since 2011. This study revealed an overall school counselor-to-student ratio as 1:447 in 2014-2015, with ratios of 1:504 for elementary schools, 1:410 for middle schools, and 1:427 for high schools. In closer scrutiny of school counseling programs meeting ASCA National Standards, the results are particularly disturbing. Further, the immense range of counselor-to-student population is alarming: (i.e., elementary 1:140-930, middle school 1:140-800, and high school 1:250-755). Applying the ASCA criteria to Alabama school counselor-to-student ratio, only 3 (6%) of elementary schools, 4 (8%) of middle schools, 1 (2%) of high schools, and 8 (5%) of total schools met the ASCA guidelines (ASCA, 2003, 2005, 2012). In contrast, 49 (94%) elementary schools, 46 (92%) middle schools, 51 (98%) high schools, and 146 (95%) total schools had school counselor-to-student ratios that inappropriately exceeded ASCA guidelines of 1:250 (see Appendix F, Figures 15-16). Prior to the ASCA National Model (2003) in Alabama, Barron (2002) found 68% of

school counselors provided services at the recommended counselor-to-student ratio of 1:500 (p. 88).

Counselor time use has been discussed in numerous studies in Alabama (Burnham et al., 2008; Chandler et al., 2008; Edwards et al., 2010). Based on this study, time use remains an issue, similar in regard to the findings of previous researchers. The ALSDE (2003) explicitly stated, “Non-guidance responsibilities assigned to school counselors should not be above and beyond those of other certified staff members, and should not interfere with the delivery of guidance services” (p. 9). While the ALSDE (2003) supported the implementation of the ASCA National Model (2003) by its legislation, overuse of non-counseling duties are prevalent, and changes appear to be received poorly by some school systems.

This study confirmed a continuation of shortcomings in the program delivery components in the ASCA National Model (2005). The components are Guidance Curriculum, Individual Student Services, Responsive Services, and System Support (see Appendix B - demographic and related information for further details). This study asked participants to list the percent of time spent in each component as well as “Duties Not Related to Counselor Role,” with the total to equal 100%. ASCA (2005) has recommended guidelines for each component, differing across elementary, middle, and high school levels because of developmental differences in children. The comparisons of survey results to ASCA (2005) guidelines again revealed major discrepancies (see Tables 15 - 19 and Appendix F, Figures 17 – 21 for full details).

In the counselor time use component of Guidance Curriculum, 16 (31%) elementary schools, 28 (57%) middle schools, 25 (56%) high schools, and 69 (48%) total schools in Alabama currently meet ASCA (2005) guidelines. In the counselor time use component of Individual Student Planning (ASCA, 2005), only 24 (47%) elementary schools, 33 (67%) middle

schools, 30 (67%) high schools, and 87 (60%) total schools in Alabama currently meet ASCA guidelines. In the counselor time use component of Responsive Services (ASCA, 2005), only 13 (25%) elementary schools, 19 (39%) middle schools, 10 (22%) high schools, and 42 (29%) total schools in Alabama currently meet ASCA guidelines. In the counselor time use component of System Support (ASCA, 2005), only 24 (47%) elementary schools, 28 (57%) middle schools, 22 (49%) high schools, and 74 (51%) total schools in Alabama currently meet ASCA guidelines. In the additional rating for counselor time use of “Duties Not Related to Counselor Role,” ASCA (2005) listed 0% as the recommended guideline. Only 5 (10%) elementary schools, 8 (16%) middle schools, 5 (11%) high schools, and 18 (12%) total schools in Alabama currently meet ASCA guidelines. In summary, the following met ASCA (2005) guidelines: 69 (48%) total schools in Guidance Curriculum, 87 (60%) total schools in Individual Student Planning, 42 (29%) total schools in Responsive Services, 71 (51%) total schools in System Support, and 18 (12%) total schools in “Duties Not Related to Counselor Role.” Similarly, Barron (2002) found 44% of school counselors implemented standard two (100% counselor time spent in four guidance components of Guidance Curriculum, Individual Planning, Responsive Services, and System Support) (p. 87). However, other data indicated implementation of primarily responsive services (p. 86), which differed from this research.

The counselor time use comparisons between ASCA (2005) and the survey results indicate that middle schools achieved higher rates of ASCA compliance than elementary or high schools. In relation to ASCA (2005) guidelines, middle schools ranked highest in compliance in delivery components of Guidance Curriculum, Responsive Services, System Support, and Duties Not Related to Counselor Role, while tying with the high school level for highest in Individual Student Planning. High schools ranked second in compliance with ASCA (2005) guidelines in

Guidance Curriculum, Duties Not Related to Counselor Role, tied for first with middle school level in Individual Student Planning, and ranked last in Responsive Services. The elementary level ranked last overall in compliance with ASCA (2005) guidelines in Guidance Curriculum, Individual Student Planning, System Support, Duties Not Related to Counselor Role, and second in Responsive Services. Dahir et al. (2009) found middle school counselors had significantly higher scores on the delivery of school personal-social development-related counseling services than did the elementary or high school counselors, inferring a stronger alignment with the goals of the State Plan. However, this study was in contrast to Dahir et al. (2009), who demonstrated that middle school counselors followed by elementary school counselors emerged as more closely aligned with the philosophy of the State Plan and the ASCA National Model, while high school counselors conveyed a philosophy with more traditional program priorities. These survey results ranked middle schools as most closely aligned with the ASCA Model (2005), with high schools ranking second, and elementary school ranking as last.

Not all findings from this study were areas of need, rather some were improvements over time. For example, most school counselors, 142 (93%), received degrees from CACREP-accredited programs with similar rankings across school levels: 47 (92%) elementary, 49 (96%) middle, and 46 (90%) high (see Table 8), which was an encouraging outcome. The highest percent was at the middle school level (96%), while the lowest was at the high school (90%). The middle schools had more counselors with a higher number of years in education/certification as a school counselor as well. These factors (i.e., had the highest school level rating of 96% CACREP-accredited degrees and 21% Ed.S./AA degree/certification) likely contributed to the higher ratings received by middle school level on questions such as counselor time use.

It is interesting to note that all school levels had a response rate of 0 (0%) for the rating scale score of *1-not present* on Question 6 (classroom guidance) and Question 8 (crises referral and follow-up), indicating all school levels unanimously considered these elements as a part of their school counseling programs to some degree. This appears to be promising, although implementation is not completely certain based on the response. All other items not previously mentioned presented an average scale rating of *3-partly implemented*, suggested focus is still needed in the future.

Even though the data were revealing in this study, there were no significant differences between the extent of implementation of the ASCA National Model between elementary, middle, or high school counselors based on average or mean SCPIS scores. SCPIS scores were 3.25 elementary, 3.3 middle, and 3.25 high, respectively. All average SCPIS scores for each of the 20 items revealed a score of either a *3- partly implemented* or *4- fully implemented*.

Research Question Two

A review of the ANOVA results indicated that there were no statistical differences between the means at the different school levels of elementary, middle, or high for any of the SCPIS factor subscales: Factor I: Program Orientation, Factor II: School Counselor Use of Software, and Factor III: School Counseling Services. All school levels had one item rated as *4- fully implemented* represented in each of the three factors.

However, some important trends were found. For example, the middle schools were the only level that rated two SCPIS items with a rating of *4 – fully implemented* in Factor III: School Counseling Services. Similarly, Dahir et al. (2009) found the middle school counselors appeared to be most closely aligned with the goals of the State Plan (2003) and the ASCA National Model (2003).

Research Question Three

For Research Question Three, the SCPIS data item assessment was used. The SCPIS data items were identified based on evidence of data terminology (i.e., #4: measurable goals; #5: assessment; #7: testing; #12: 80% of counselor time; #14: annual review; #9, #10, #15, #16, #17: data, #20: feedback). Inferential non-parametric analysis (Kruskal-Wallis [2014] nonparametric test) between grade levels of elementary, middle, and high school was also conducted to determine differences between grade levels of school counselors in their data use as measured by SCPIS items with data terminology. There were no significant differences reported.

Nonetheless, Paisley and McMahon (2001) would likely affirm the progress that Alabama school counselors have established with technology. Participants in this study scored an average SCPIS rating of 4 – *fully implemented* on the research survey across all grade levels (elementary, middle, and high schools) on the data and Factor II question “School counselors use computer software to access student data.” Using technology to support the school counseling program was listed as a challenge and opportunity for school counseling in the 21st century (Paisley & McMahon, 2001).

The mean rank comparisons exhibited the highest ratings at 86.64 (clear measurable goals) for elementary, 87.56 (communicates with parents for feedback) for middle, and 93.88 (all students have academic plans) for high schools. The lowest mean rank comparisons were at 64.46 (all students have academic plans) for elementary, 76.71 (use computer software to access student data) for middle school, and 70.73 (clear measurable student learning objectives) for high school. High school rated highest for “all students have academic plans,” while elementary schools rated the same item as lowest. The elementary school level typically designates more time in school-wide guidance curriculum delivery, while secondary levels devote an increasing

amount of time for individual student planning. Dahir et al. (2009) also found high school counselors placed an emphasis on career planning and setting future goals.

Statewide Status on Accountability and Data Use in School Counseling

Data use was examined in Question 3 in the item analysis of SCPIS items that contained data terminology. Although the ratings of data use items were not statistically significant, the rating of either *3-partly implemented* or *4-fully implemented* appeared to indicate that implementation is developing with other features of the ASCA National Model (2005). According to Perusse and Goodenough (2004), school counselors incorporated practical accountability skills into daily practice in order for school improvement leadership activities to be sustained. Outcome data in school counseling has become partnered with an increasing push for accountability in counseling interventions and programs (Dahir & Stone, 2003; Fairchild & Seeley, 1995; Isaacs, 2003). Convergent forces led to a stronger interest in the relationship between research and practice in school counseling (Bauman, 2004; Brown & Trusty, 2005b) and the view that "...school counselor data use is a hallmark of the ASCA National Model" (Carey & Dimmitt, 2012, p. 147). Accountability has moved to a "show me" attitude or from a "focus on teaching and inputs" to a "focus on learning and outcomes" (Isaacs, 2003, p. 288). Whiston (2002) explained that without strong evidence that school counseling programs "produce positive results for children" (p. 153), the profession of school counseling is at risk. In this accountability era, numerous studies have shown that school counselors will have more significant student outcomes when they incorporate effective data use as an integral part of their program implementation (Carey & Dimmitt, 2008; Dimmitt, 2009; House & Hayes, 2002; Lapan, 2012; Martens & Andreen, 2013; Steen & Kaffenberger, 2007; Studer et al., 2006; Ware & Galassi, 2006; Wilkerson et al., 2013; Young & Kaffenberger, 2011).

In Alabama, Edwards (2009) revealed a lack of school counselors practicing accountability (59%) through her doctoral research. This study reaffirmed the need for training with varying levels of participation in data use training from elementary (local 63% - ALCA 35%), middle (local 54% - ALCA 32%) and high school counselors (local 75% - ALCA 48%). Edwards (2009) listed barriers as amount of time involved, dislike of research, and concern about negative consequences if data showed interventions or programs not achieving results. In terms of training, 42% indicated they needed training through in-services, workshops or conferences to increase their likelihood of collecting, analyzing and sharing data about their school counseling program (Edwards, 2009). All school counselors would benefit from data use training. On this premise, this study revealed a local need for data use training at 37% elementary, 46% middle, and 25% high school. Barron (2002) explained that school counselors should develop a system of monitoring student data which is “vital in determining where the school counseling program is now, where it should be, and where it is going to go in the future” (p. 96).

Data use now permeates all components of the ASCA National Model. School counselors are now strategically positioned to be accountability leaders. Furthermore, producing and communicating positive student outcomes has the potential to promote more fully implemented comprehensive school counseling programs (CSCP), liberated from excessive and inappropriate non-counseling duties. The study revealed that 4 (36%) of 11 data use items received a rating of *4-fully implemented* (i.e., Question #4 [clear-measurable goals] by elementary only, Question #7 [student academic plans] by high school only, Question #20 [feedback from parents] by middle school only, and Question #15 [SC use computer software to access student data] by all levels – elementary, middle, and high school). All remaining items (7 [64%]) were rated *3-partly implemented*. Data use items with a rating of *4-fully implemented* were distributed evenly across

the school levels with two items at each school level, although, overall, the extent of *4-fully implemented* ratings was only 36%, indicating a low level of implementation and indicates the need for more emphasis and training across the state. Prior to the ASCA National Model (2003), Barron (2002) found standard 15 (utilizing test data that identified student interests, achievements and aptitudes) at 71% implementation (p. 89).

Statewide Status on Comprehensive School Counseling Programs (CSCP)

A comprehensive school counseling program (CSCP) has been described as a results-based system that outlines and directs the primary roles and functions of professional school counselors toward the promotion of students' academic, career, and personal/social developmental competencies (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006). This forerunner of the ASCA National Model began in the 1970s. School counseling was originally described as "developmental guidance and counseling" (Dinkmeyer & Caldwell, 1970, p. 2). Later in the 1970s, and early 1980s, the term "comprehensive guidance and counseling program" (Gysbers, 2001, p. 96; Sink, 2002) or "comprehensive school counseling program" (CSCP; Campbell & Dahir, 1997, p.1; Dahir et al., 1998) was developed.

On the SCPIS survey question regarding overall CSCP implementation in this study, all the school levels featured an expansive range of responses, with elementary from 2 years to 25 years, the middle schools from 0 years to 36 years, and the high schools from 0 years to 50 years, including "since its inception." The rating of "0 years" indicates that no CSCP is presently or has ever been in place. For this choice, the elementary schools showed 0 (0%) participants, while middle schools had 2 (5%) responses, high schools had 1 response (3%), and total 3 (3%). All have high numbers in the range, indicating prolonged implementation of CSCPs "to some degree" at all levels.

In comparisons of > 5 years implementation in the survey research, the number of CSCP participant programs revealed 27 (66%) > 5 years at the elementary school level, 29 (73%) > 5 years at the middle school level, and 31 (76%) > 5 years at the high school level. Therefore, the high school level has implemented the most CSCPs for a longer period of time, with middle school second, and elementary school last. The lowest number of participants in the year ranges indicated 0 (0%) both at the elementary 26+ years' range and at the high school 21-25 year range, indicating that CSCPs were implemented less years at the elementary level (for further details see Appendix F, Figures 22 – 23). However, it is disturbing to have 5% of middle school programs who have never (0%) had a CSCP. The *Qualtrics* (2015) question response rates were confounded with non-numerical text responses that were unscorable and resulted in a low response rate: total 122 (77%). The validity of this result is questionable with the large number uncertain of their school status. However, the two resounding responses “since its inception” showed the deep roots and rich history of school counseling in Alabama schools. Earlier in Alabama, Barron (2002) found the majority (72%) of school counselors indicated they were implementing the minimum standards of the *State Plan* (1996). However, as standard results were analyzed, responses ranged from 40% to 90% (p. 86).

The literature has supported the importance of CSCPs. When more fully engaged in implementing established work tasks in frameworks for CSCPs, school counselors are removed from marginalized positions and placed into roles that more effectively promote essential educational and career objectives for students (Lapan et al., 2001). Studies asserted that comprehensive curriculums about career, academic, and social/personal development can positively impact student knowledge in those domains (Bergin et al., 1990; Gerler & Anderson, 1986; Gerler & Drew, 1990; Gerler et al., 1985). Comprehensive school counseling programs

(CSCP) became the preferred way of organizing and managing guidance and counseling in schools, placing the position of counselor into an organized, sequential, structured, district-wide program for K-12 students (Gysbers et al., 2000; Johnson, 2000). It is interesting to note, that both of the two responses “since its inception” were at the high school level, where school counseling originated. Once more, this aspect of the study suggested effort and engagement are needed across the state to build and maintain CSCPs.

Statewide Status of the ASCA National Model (2003, 2005, 2012)

Ultimately, the primary goal of the research study was to explore the implementation of the ASCA Model (2005) in Alabama schools. The ASCA National Model has positively impacted school counselors and students (Bryant & Constantine, 2006). As teachers and school counselors have increased their comprehensive school counseling program (CSCP) collaboration, students have ultimately benefited from the more fully implemented program (Galassi & Akos, 2007; Sink, 2005, 2008; Sink et al., 2008; Whiston & Quimby, 2009). The ASCA National Model established an essential role for school counselors to improve the personal/social, academic, and career aspects of students’ lives as well as challenging system procedures and policies that are barriers to student success (ASCA, 2012). Unfortunately, even with the solid evidence of the positive impact of the ASCA National Model (2003, 2005), large implementation gaps existed between schools that deliver such comprehensive programs to all students (Lapan, 2012).

In review, this study investigated the extent of implementation of the ASCA Model in Alabama schools and revealed numerous results based on ASCA Standards. The present study affirmed continued shortcomings in school counselor-to-student ratios, (increasing from 1:419 1:447), only 2 of the 5 guidance components were above 50% level of ASCA compliance, and

some schools in Alabama that still do not have functional CSCPs. No doubt, these counseling-related matters need improvement.

The study also affirmed the universality of school counselor computer use to access student data with a rating of *4-fully implemented* for all school levels, elementary, middle and high school. This was encouraging, as well as the same rating for all school levels on Question 2 (services organized so students well served) and Question 8 (effective crises referral and follow-up). Furthermore, school counselors marked a unanimous 0% rating across school levels for the score of *1-Not Present* for Question 6 (classroom guidance) and Question 8 (effective crises and follow-up), signifying that these are considered standard elements in all school counseling programs to some degree.

Statewide Status for Alabama State Board of Education Plan 2020

The research study potentially offered pertinent evidence regarding the current implementation of the ASCA National Model (2005) in Alabama schools to facilitate the ongoing Alabama State Board initiative for the year 2020 (i.e., Plan 2020). The Alabama State Board of Education's plan for the year 2020 aspires to "improve student growth and achievement, close the achievement gap, increase the graduation rate, and increase the number of students graduating high school that are college- and career- ready and prepared to be successful in our global society" (ALSDE, 2014, p. 1).

The objectives of Alabama's 2020 Support Systems are similar to the school counseling goals of academic, career, and personal-social development in the ASCA National Model, promoting attendance, safe and productive learning environments, and a sense of personal and civic responsibility. All students will be provided with individual and group counseling services

and enter 9th grade with a 4-year plan that addresses their individual academic and career interest needs (ALSDE, 2014, p.16).

Plan 2020 Strategies for Learners propose to “develop and implement a unified PreK through college and career readiness plan” (p. 6). Plan 2020 for professionals recommended to review the admission and certification criteria for Alabama’s teacher preparation programs (p. 22). Currently, with 13 of the 15 counselor education programs in Alabama CACREP-accredited (CACREP, 2015) school counselor preparation seems to be moving forward with the endorsement of the most-recognized counseling accreditation body. However, two programs continue to provide school counseling certification in Alabama with minimal requirements.

This research study aimed to reveal the current status of the implementation of the ASCA National Model in Alabama schools, while providing insight to facilitate the 2020 school counseling goals in Alabama. Our ability as a profession to reach out and collaborate with multiple stakeholders and legislators is crucial to the continued growth of school counseling in Alabama.

Limitations

The limitations to the research study were: (1) the survey format of school counselors was a self-report instrument which presented the possibility of distortion or bias by the responder (Houser, 2009); and (2) the survey was completed by Alabama school counselors which may not be generalizable to other states. The survey format provided a convenient, efficient means of collecting data once a participant was contacted. The self-report nature of the survey can bias results and no cross-check was available to verify responses. However, the anonymity of the survey likely contributed to more open and honest responses. Since all participants were residents of one southern state, results may not be generalized to other states. However, the study

did include all school levels in the research, while the other previous SCPIS studies only included high schools in their investigations (Carey, Harrington, Martin, & Stevenson, 2012; Carey, Harrington, Martin, & Hoffman, 2012).

Future Directions in the School Counseling Profession

In the recent edition of the ASCA National Model (2012), foundations of previous versions continued, including that school counseling programs were data-driven, comprehensive in scope, preventive in design, and developmental in nature to promote student achievement. The new version retained multiple elements (e.g., framework components: foundation, management, delivery, and accountability; themes of leadership, advocacy, collaboration, and systemic change; alignment of other student state and district standards; to process and perception data). While in the third edition program, results data were renamed outcome data, the ASCA National Model (2012) described a clearer distinction between direct and indirect student services in use of time, with 80% or more counselor time with students, while program management and school support were at 20% or less.

This study focused on the ASCA National Models (2003, 2005) to use the four delivery components of Guidance Curriculum, Individual Student Planning, Responsive Services, System Support and “Duties Not Related to Counselor Role” to analyze counselor time use, as had been done in previous studies using the SCPIS (Carey, Harrington, Martin, & Hoffman, 2012; Carey, Harrington, Martin, & Stevenson, 2012). Furthermore, the currently mandated Alabama State Plan (2003) was aligned with the ASCA National Model (2003).

This study related goals of Alabama Plan 2020 (2014) for school counseling through its declaration of full implementation of the ASCA National Model in Alabama by 2020. Possible future directions included the following:

- The issue of University/College CACREP accreditation policies influence the level of training achieved by future Alabama counselors. Plan 2020 for professionals recommends to review the admission and certification criteria for Alabama’s teacher preparation programs (p. 22). Presently, 13 of the 15 counselor education programs in Alabama are CACREP-accredited (CACREP, 2015). However, two programs continue to provide school counseling certification in Alabama with requirements significantly below CACREP accreditation standards (ALSDE, 2014, p. 22). Minimally trained school counselors may lack tools to operate effectively. The present study investigated the levels of CACREP-accredited training of current Alabama counselors revealing that 142 (93%) overall received CACREP school counseling degrees. However, 11 (7%) did not receive school counseling degrees from a CACREP-accredited institution.
- The present study investigated the extent of implementation of the ASCA National Model (2003, 2005) to provide a snapshot of the current status of school counseling in Alabama through the SCPIS items and the demographic and related information questions (Appendix B). Hopefully, the results of the current study will provide further evidence of the concerns in Alabama school counseling, such as the 88% rating by counselors exceeding ASCA recommended guidelines for “Duties Not Related to Counselor Role.” On the other hand, all school levels had a response rate of 0 (0%) for the rating scale score of *1-not present* on Question #6 (classroom guidance) and Question #8 (crises referral and follow-up) indicating all school levels (elementary, middle, and high school) unanimously considered these elements as a part of their school counseling programs to some degree.

- Hopefully this research, along with other Alabama studies (Anderson, 1983; Barron, 2002; Burnham & Jackson, 2000; Burnham et al., 2008; Carrington, 1977; Cecil & Cecil, 1984; Cecil & Cobia, 1991; Cecil & Comas, 1985; Chandler et al, 2008; Childress et al., 1986; Cooley et al., 1986; Edwards et al., 2010; Jarrell, 1980; Johnson, 1977; King, 2003; Manning, 1984; Mason et al., 1999; Parker, 1977) will encourage stakeholders, including public officials, to collaborate and support Alabama school counseling to function as CSCPs to meet student, school, and community needs. The present study affirmed our shortcomings in school counselor-to-student ratios, and noted the extent of implementation according to counselor time use (only 2 of the 5 components investigated were above 50% level of ASCA compliance).
- The Alabama School Counseling Association (ALSCA) is in the process of drafting an initiative to reach out for legislative support for school counseling in Alabama. These data should offer some insight. The possibilities are encouraging for collaboration and growth regarding the future of school counseling in Alabama.
- Across all participants surveyed, Table 7 showed the number of system counseling coordinators/directors having a school counseling background as 83 (54%) overall, but the school levels varied from 32 (63%) elementary, 24 (48%) middle school, and 27 (51%) high school. The highest percent was at the elementary level (63%) with the lowest at the middle school level (48%). Hopefully, the trend will move toward more counseling coordinators having a school counseling background to foster implementation of the ASCA National Model (2003, 2005, 2012).
- According to Table 2, only 22 (14%) of all school counselors held non-degree school counseling certification with elementary 8 (15%), middle school 9 (17%), and high

school 5 (10%). Overall, three (2%) participants were Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC), while most indicated “other” areas of training. However, 14% is a significant number of school counselors with non-degree certification. Continued professional development as well as supervision and oversight by coordinators with a school counseling background could promote better integration of varied certifications into effective school counselors.

- Opportunities for further professional development is required to educate and enhance the skills to effectively implement the ASCA National Model (2003, 2005, 2012).

Professional school counselors are poised to embrace the future by creating collaborative partnerships for change with all stakeholders, providing opportunities for appropriate professional development, developing as culturally responsive counselors, using technology to enhance the school counseling program, pursuing leadership and advocacy roles, and incorporating accountability (Paisley & McMahon, 2001; Gysbers & Henderson, 2001; Herr, 2001).

- The research study revealed variations in the participation in training on Implementation of the ASCA National Model with elementary (local 58% - ALCA 54%), middle (local 58% - ALCA 52%), and high school (local 78% - ALCA 67%). The high school levels participated in more training, while elementary and middle school participated in less training on implementation of the ASCA National Model. All levels would benefit from ongoing local or regional professional development. In contrast, prior to the ASCA National Model (2003), Barron (2002) found that school counselors received information from the statewide bulletin (46%) and local in-service presentations (37%) (p. 92).

- Future research is recommended to explore relationships between school counseling program characteristics and student outcomes to provide support by linking benefits (e.g., attendance, academic achievement, decreased disciplinary incidents) to students with more complete implementation of a comprehensive school counseling program. Similar comparisons have been examined in previous research utilizing the SCPIS in high schools in Utah (Carey, Harrington, Martin, & Stevenson, 2012) and Nebraska (Carey, Harrington, Martin, & Hoffman, 2012).

Recommendations

There are four recommendations from this study. They are:

1. As mentioned previously, the degree of administrative support for school counseling impacts the effectiveness and appropriateness of school counselor programs. Administrator decisions influence counselor time use. As this study revealed, counselor time use in Alabama met ASCA guidelines for all school levels in ASCA delivery components: 69 (48%) Guidance Curriculum, 87 (60%) Individual Student Planning, 42 (29%) Responsive Services, and 74 (51%) System Support. Additionally, the counselor time use met ASCA guidelines for 18 schools (12%) Duties Not Related to Counselor Role, indicating that 127 schools (88%) were above ASCA guidelines. Increased education and training for administrators and school principals was recommended on appropriate roles for school counselor duties. As cited earlier, the support of school administrators was described as crucial to school counselor leadership development, school counseling program implementation, and program effectiveness (Brock & Ponec, 1998; Coll & Freeman, 1997; Stone & Clark, 2001). Barron (2002) explained that to ensure effective implementation of the school counseling program, support from state agencies as well as local administrators was critical, for without administrative endorsement, school

counseling programs may strive, but they are certainly less likely to thrive (p. 96). More initiatives similar to Kiser et al. (2011) at Jacksonville State exploring the integration of cross-curriculum training modules for school counseling and instructional leadership programs in higher education can lead to a better understanding of counseling and leadership roles. Improving a better understanding of counseling and leadership roles is essential for more effective implementation of the ASCA National Model.

2. More training and professional development is needed for all school counselors. Regional and local training should be provided for school counselors regarding the ASCA National Model (2003, 2005, 2012) and data use. The research survey revealed that local trainings seem to be the most attended by all school levels according to the survey results for training (National Model 64% - Data 63%), which indicates more than a third of counselors across all school levels have not participated in training on either topic at local locations. Professional development in both implementation of the ASCA National Model (2003, 2005, 2012) and the use of data would promote school counseling program development. School counselors need support, knowledge, and skills. In other words, they need opportunities to participate in professional development (Dimmitt et al., 2007; Isaacs, 2003; McGlothlin & Miller, 2008).

3. School counselors need to develop skills as accountability leaders. The research survey showed that data use items had an average rating as *4-fully implemented* an equal number of times (2) for each grade level. However, the total number of data use items was only 4 (36%) of 11 total items, indicating approximately a third were fully implemented, indicating that two-thirds were not. The majority of data items had an average rating as *3-partly implemented*. Barron (2002) asserted that it was crucial that school counselors collect data that support and link

the school counseling program to students' academic success (p. 97). According to Perusse and Goodenough (2004), school counselors must add a workable accountability skill set into their daily practice in order for their school improvement leadership activities to be sustainable over time. Furthermore, Wood and Winston's (2007) research asserted that accountability leaders are aware that "accountability leadership fundamentally involves taking responsibility for one's actions, exhibiting openness and sensitivity, and maintaining an attitude of answerability" (p. 167).

4. This study found an average rating of 88% across all grade levels of school counselors exceeding ASCA recommended guidelines for "Duties Not Related to Counselor Role" in counselor time use. Some "fair share" activities may be necessary, but should have been included in counselor time use: System Support. Duties not related to counselor role need to be delineated from the highest authority (system level and state level) to insure proper implementation. Training on the appropriate role of the school counselor and clear role descriptions are imperative. Barron (2002) identified the most frequently cited barrier to program implementation was time constraints (89%) due to other assigned duties (p. 93), similar to the 88% rating on "Duties Not Related to Counselor Role" from this research. Chandler et al. (2008) found that although 88.9% of school counselors reported implementing a comprehensive school counseling program based on the *Alabama State Plan* or the ASCA National Model, the counselors still reported high levels of non-counseling duties such as coordination of statewide testing programs (89.1%), record keeping (68.3%), and serving as building registrar (52.4%). Overwhelmingly, school counselors indicated that principals and other administrators (not counseling coordinators) viewed counseling traditionally and a high percentage of counselors were conflicted as to their priorities regarding non-guidance duties, especially testing" (Burnham et al., 2008, p. 8). Barron

(2002) asserted that “non-counseling duties should be eliminated or reassigned so that counselors can actively focus on evaluating the true needs of their program and delivering those services” (p. 96).

Summary Thoughts and Conclusions

Overall, the research study found no statistically significant results for any of the research questions. There were no significant differences in the extent of implementation of features of the ASCA National Model between school levels of elementary school, middle school, or high school as measured by the SCPIS survey. There were also no significant differences in the extent of use of data between school levels of elementary school, middle school, or high school as measured by the 11 SCPIS items with data terminology.

Despite the lack of significant differences, a wealth of information was obtained through demographic and related information derived from Appendix B. Further examination of questions in comparison to ASCA guidelines indicated numerous areas of interest. The comparison on Counselor Time Use in all five areas was particularly enlightening and concerning.

As professional school counselors, we must be cognizant of ASCA standards and strive to decrease counselor-to-student ratios to better address student needs and enable school counselors to effectively provide the services they so fervently work to deliver. In terms of school counseling in Alabama, the field has come a long way, but we also have a long way to go to meet the needs of our students, parents, schools and communities. The future is exciting, encouraging, yet challenging for school counseling in Alabama.

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APPENDIX A

School Counseling Program Implementation Survey

Please rate each statement below in terms of the degree to which it is currently implemented in your school's School Counseling program. Indicate your response using the following Rating Scale:

1= Not Present; 2= Development in Progress; 3= Partly Implemented; 4=Fully Implemented

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. A written mission statement exists and is used as a foundation by all counselors | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Services are organized so that all students are well served and have access to them. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. The program operates from a plan for closing the achievement gap for minority and lower income students. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. The program has a set of clear measurable student learning objectives and goals are established for academics, personal/social skills, and career development. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. Needs Assessments are completed regularly and guide program planning | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. All students receive classroom guidance lessons designed to promote academic, personal/social, and career development. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. The program ensures that all students have academic plans that include testing, individual advisement, long-term planning, and placement. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. The program has an effective referral and follow-up system for handling student crises. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. School counselors use student performance data to decide how to meet student needs. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 10. School counselors analyze student data by ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic level to identify interventions to close achievement gaps. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 11. School counselor job descriptions match actual duties. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 12. School counselors spend at least 80% of their time in activities that directly benefit students. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 13. The school counseling program includes interventions designed to improve the school's ability to educate all students to high standards. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 14. An annual review is conducted to get information for improving next year's programs. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 15. School counselors use computer software to access student data. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 16. School counselors use computer software to analyze student data. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 17. School counselors use computer software to use data for school improvement. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 18. The school counseling program has the resources to allow counselors to complete appropriate professional development activities. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 19. School counseling priorities are represented on curriculum and education committees. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 20. School counselors communicate with parents to coordinate student achievement and gain feedback for program improvement. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

APPENDIX B

Demographic and Related Information

School level:* Elementary (K-5) __, Middle School (6-8) __, High School (9-12) __, Other: __

(*range of years may vary: e.g., PK-4, K-3, 4-5, 6-7, 10-12; but school name designates elementary, middle, high school)

Actual grade range: _____

School Name (s):* _____

**Qualtrics* will compile data according to demographic and SCPIS items. No individual school data will be revealed. Can leave blank if do not want to be identified as participating.

Number of Counselor unit(s) in same school(s): ½ __, 1 __, 2 __, 3 __, 4 __, 5 __, Other __

Total number of schools served by your school counseling position: 1 __, 2 __, Other __

Gender: Male __, Female __ **Age:** _____

Ethnicity: Caucasian/White __, African American/Black __, Hispanic/Latina/o __,
Asian American/Pacific Islander __, Native American __, Multiethnic/Multiracial __

Number of years as school counselor: _____

Geographic Location: Urban __, Suburban __, Rural __

Student to School Counselor ratio: 1 to _____

Counselor Time Use: (total must equal 100%) Guidance Curriculum __%, Individual Student Planning __%, Responsive Services __%, System Support __%, Duties not related to school counselor role __% (Note: as in ASCA National Model [2003, 2005] and State Plan [2003])

Number of years Comprehensive School Counseling Program (CSCP) has been implemented in current school: 0 __, 1 __, 2 __, 3 __, 4 __, 5 __, 6 __, 7 __, 8 __, 9 __, 10+ __

System School Counseling Coordinator/Director has school counseling background:

yes __, no __

Received School Counseling Certification from a CACREP-accredited school: yes __, no __

Participated in training on implementation of ASCA National Model or Alabama State Plan: (check all that apply) at local training/workshop __, at ALCA Conference __,
at University/College __, other _____

Participated in training on Using Data in implementing ASCA National Model or Alabama State Plan: (check all that apply) at local training/workshop __, at ALCA Conference __,
at University/College __, other _____

APPENDIX C



UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS
AMHERST

School of Education

Department of Student Development and Pupil Personnel Services
Hills South
Amherst, MA 01003-4150

March 12, 2013

Celeste Neil
Counselor Education Program
University of Alabama

Dear Ms. Neil,

Please accept this letter as confirmation that you have my permission to use the School Counseling Program Implementation Survey in your doctoral dissertation research.

I wish you the best of luck in your research!

Sincerely,

John C. Carey
Director, Ronald H. Fredrickson Center for School
Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation

APPENDIX D

Appendix D

Letter of Invitation

ATTENTION: ALABAMA PUBLIC SCHOOL COUNSELORS!!!

Your school counseling program has been selected to participate in a stratified random sample survey to explore school counseling in Alabama public schools. Individual school responses are confidential. Results will be compiled according to elementary, middle and high school groups. Only the research team members will have access to the data and only summarized data will be presented in meetings or publications.

You are requested to participate in a research study entitled "Implementation of Features of the ASCA National Model in Alabama Public Schools" using the *School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS)* with permission of Dr. John Carey, director of the Center for School Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation (CSCORE) at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. Additional demographic and descriptive information such as age, ethnicity, number of years as a school counselor, if your system counseling coordinator has school counseling background, will also be requested.

The *Alabama State Board of Education Plan 2020* is a strategic plan with a goal to prepare all students to be successful in college and/or career upon graduation from high school. It also endorses implementation of the *Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance State Model for Alabama Public Schools (the State Plan, 2003)* which reflects the ASCA National Model.

To further support the implementation of the ASCA National Model and the *Alabama State Plan*, an online survey of Alabama public school counseling programs will be conducted through the Program in Counselor Education at the University of Alabama. This dissertation study is entitled "Implementation of Features of the ASCA National Model in Alabama Public Schools."

You are under no obligation to participate. If you choose to take part, there will be no direct benefit to you. However, know that your answers will contribute to the knowledge base of implementation of ASCA's National Model and assessing the extent of implementation of features of the model in Alabama public schools. With the current proposal of Alabama's 2020 Plan to fully implement the State Plan, research about our current implementation status statewide could provide valuable information for the future of school counseling in Alabama. The potential risk is you may experience negative emotions. Some questions may make you uncomfortable. You may skip questions you do not want to answer.

If you choose to participate, you will click on the link below to participate in an online survey using *Qualtrics* survey software. The research will be conducted by Celeste C. Neil, doctoral candidate in the Counselor Education program at the University of Alabama; Tuscaloosa, AL 35487; Phone: (205) 348-5174. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, contact Ms. Tanta Myles (the University Compliance Officer) at (205) 348-8461 or toll-free at 1-877-820-3066. If you have complaints or concerns about this study, file them through the UA IRB outreach website at http://osp.ua.edu/site/PRCO_Welcome.html. Celeste Neil will compile the results and provide the Alabama School Counseling Association (ALSCA) and the Alabama

UA IRB Approved Document
Approval date: 10-15-14
Expiration date: 6-19-15

APPENDIX D

Appendix D

State Department of Education with a copy of the results. If you respond to the survey, you will also receive a summary of the results.

Your participation is completely voluntary. You may choose to participate or not participate in this study. The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Consent to participate in this study as described will be indicated by your clicking on the "I Agree" button below.

I hope you will take this opportunity to support excellence in school counseling in Alabama.

If you understand the statements above, are at least 19 years old, and freely consent to be in this study, click on the "I Agree" button to begin.

I AGREE _____

UA IRB Approved Document
Approval date: 10-15-14
Expiration date: 6-19-15

APPENDIX E

APPENDIX E

Office for Research
Institutional Review Board for the
Protection of Human Subjects

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA
R E S E A R C H

October 15, 2014

Celeste Neil
Department of ESPRMC
College of Education
The University of Alabama
Box 870231

Re: IRB # 14-OR-236 (Revision) "Implementation of Features of the ASCA National Model in Alabama Public Schools"

Dear Ms. Neil:

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has reviewed the revision to your previously approved expedited protocol. The board has approved the change in your protocol.

Please remember that your approval period expires one year from the date of your original approval, June 20, 2014, not the date of this revision approval.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this proposal, please include the assigned IRB application number. Changes in this study cannot be initiated without IRB approval, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,

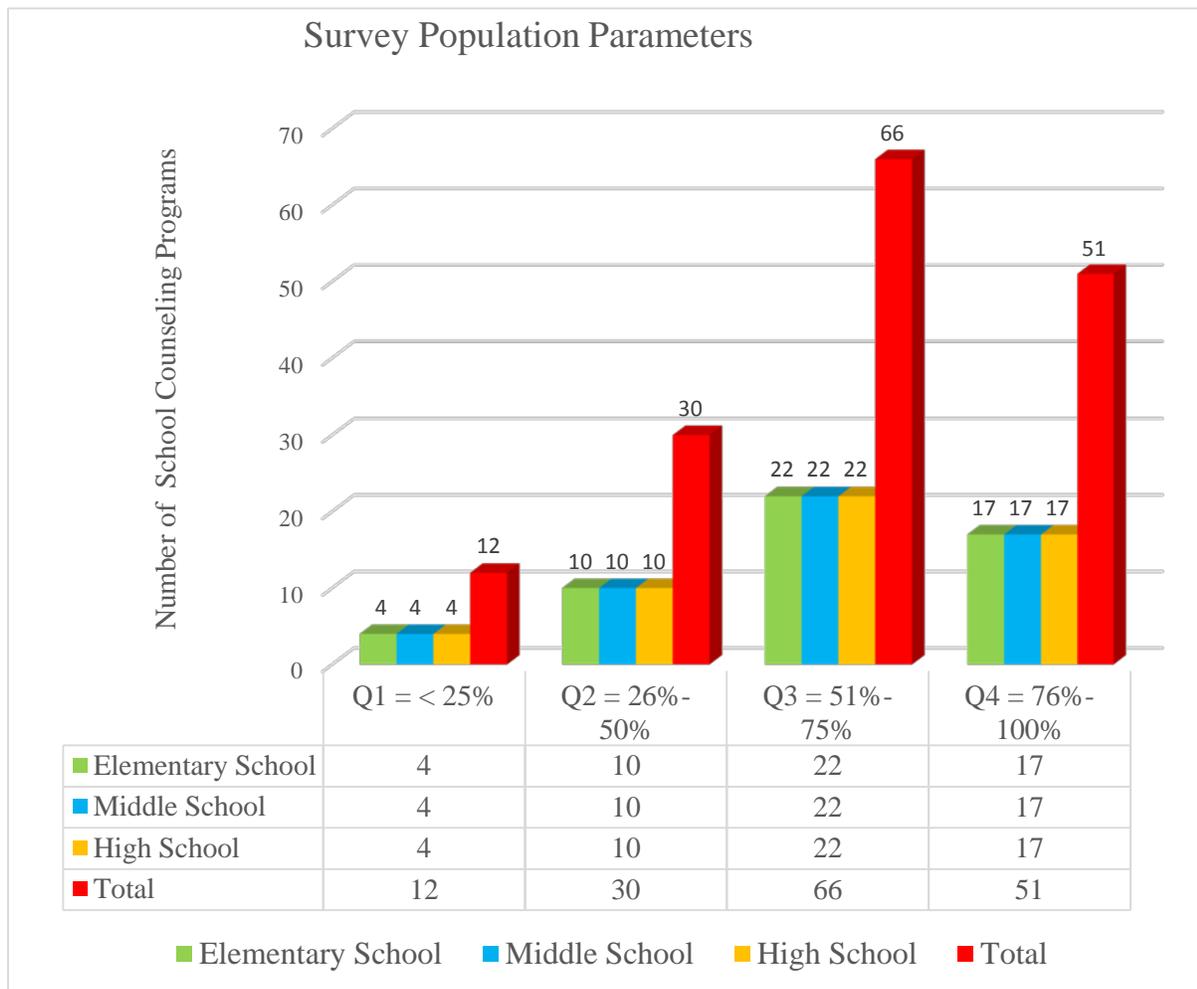
Carpantato T. Myles, MSM, CIM, CIP
Director & Research Compliance Officer
Office for Research Compliance



358 Rose Administration Building
Box 870127
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35487-0127
(205) 348-8461
FAX (205) 348-7189
TOLL FREE (877) 820-3066

APPENDIX F

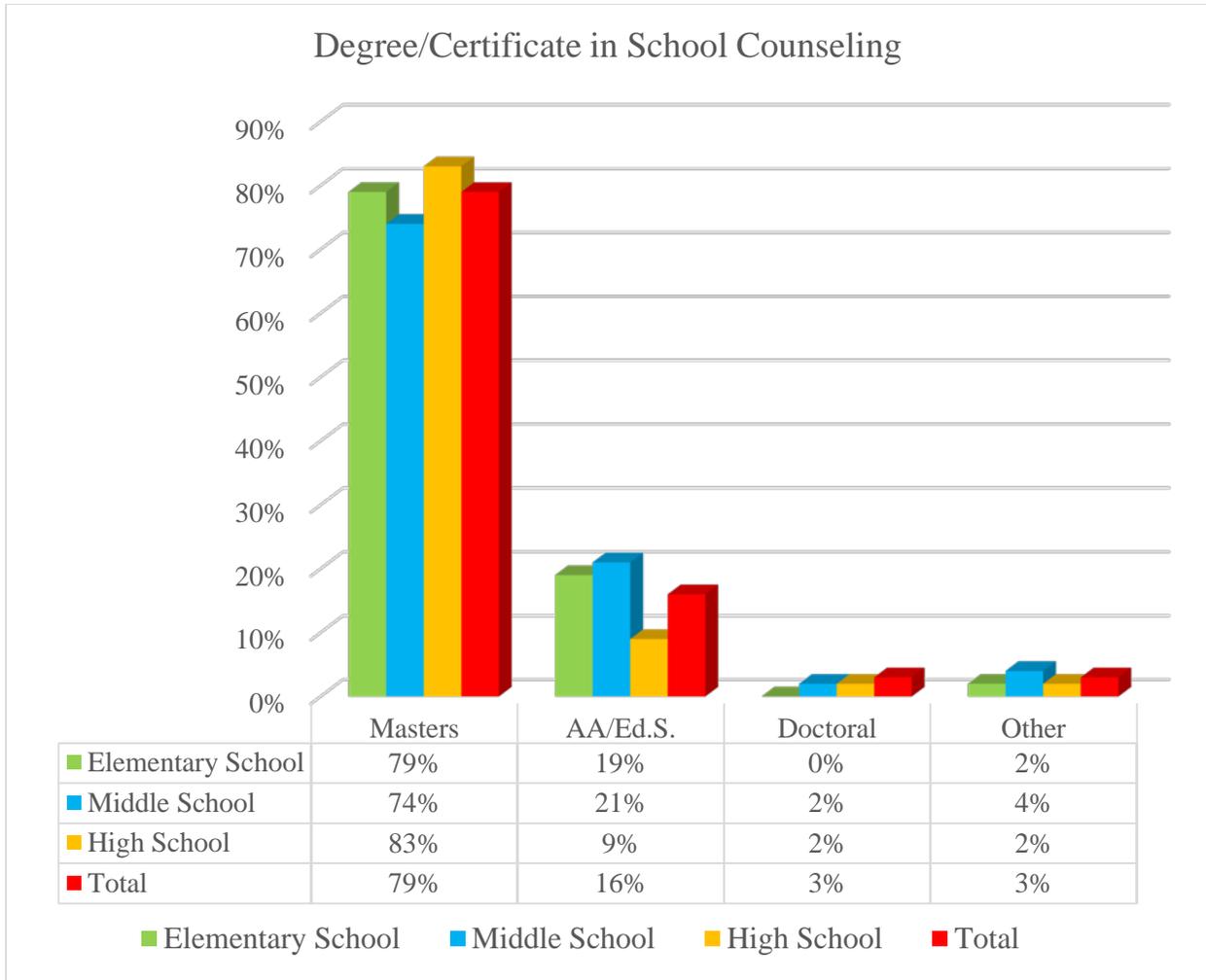
Figure 1. Survey Population Parameters



Note: Three School Level Groups of $n = 53$ in each; Total $N = 159$ School Counseling Programs

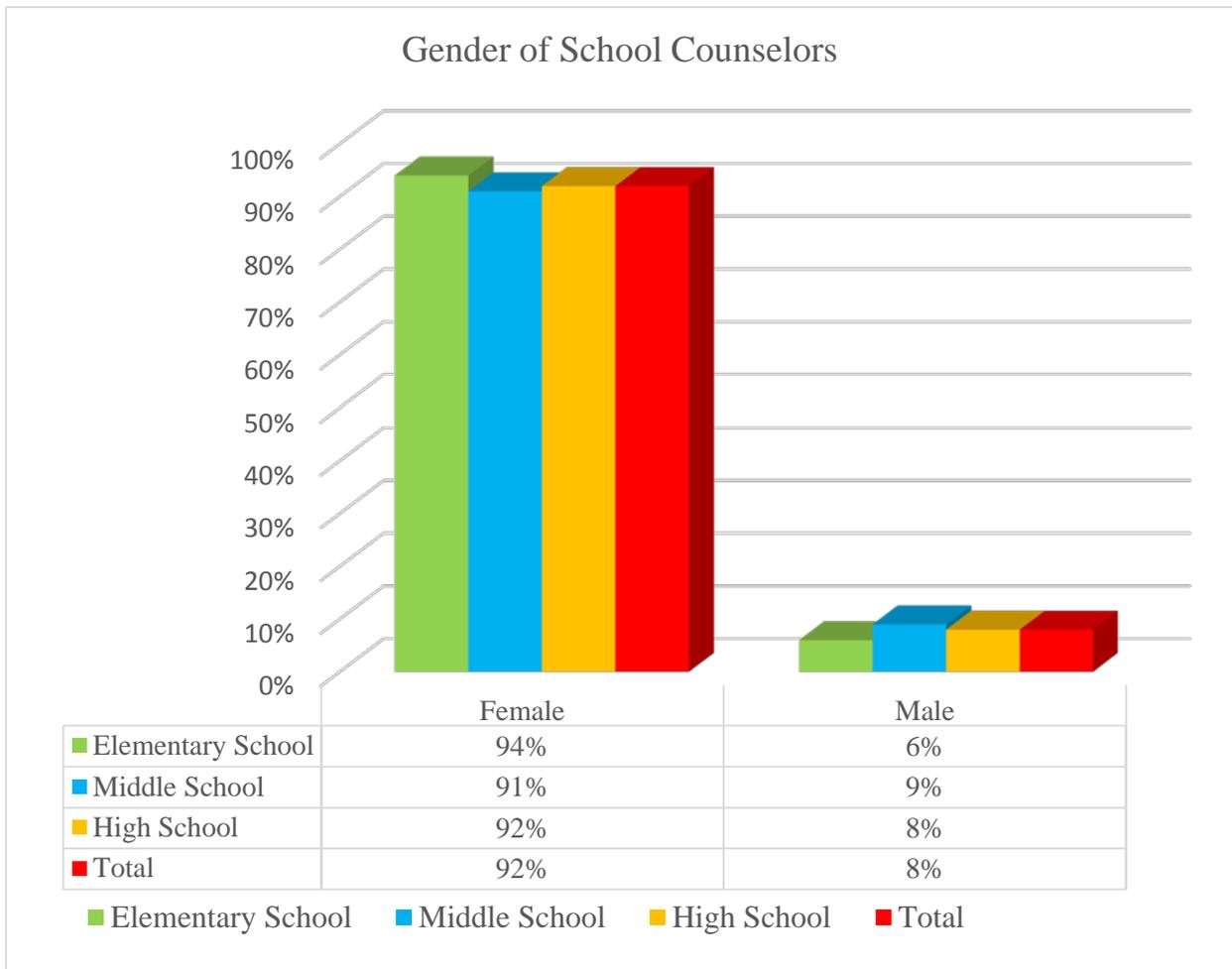
APPENDIX F

Figure 2. Counselor Level of Degree/Certification



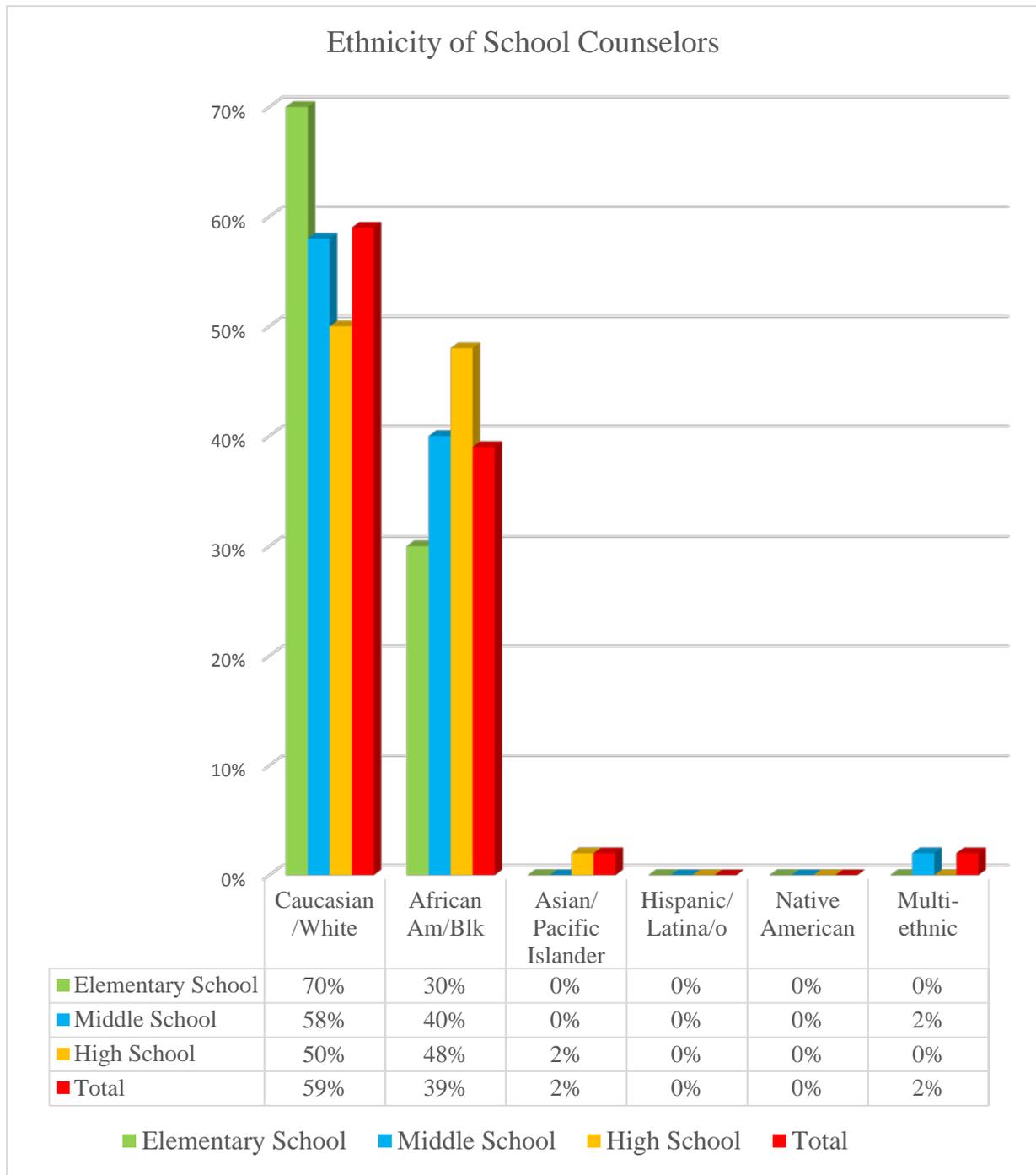
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Figure 3. Gender



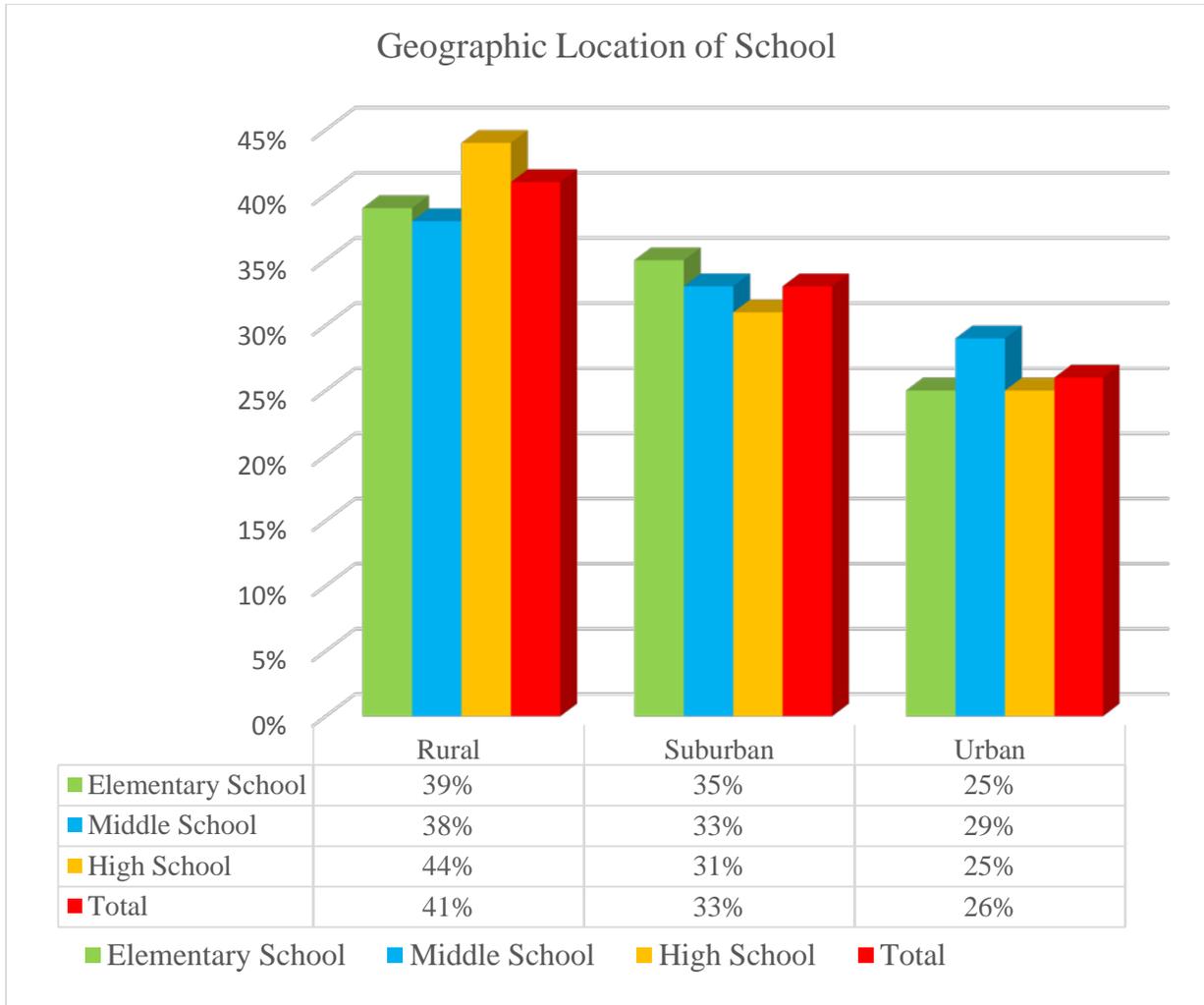
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Figure 4. Ethnicity



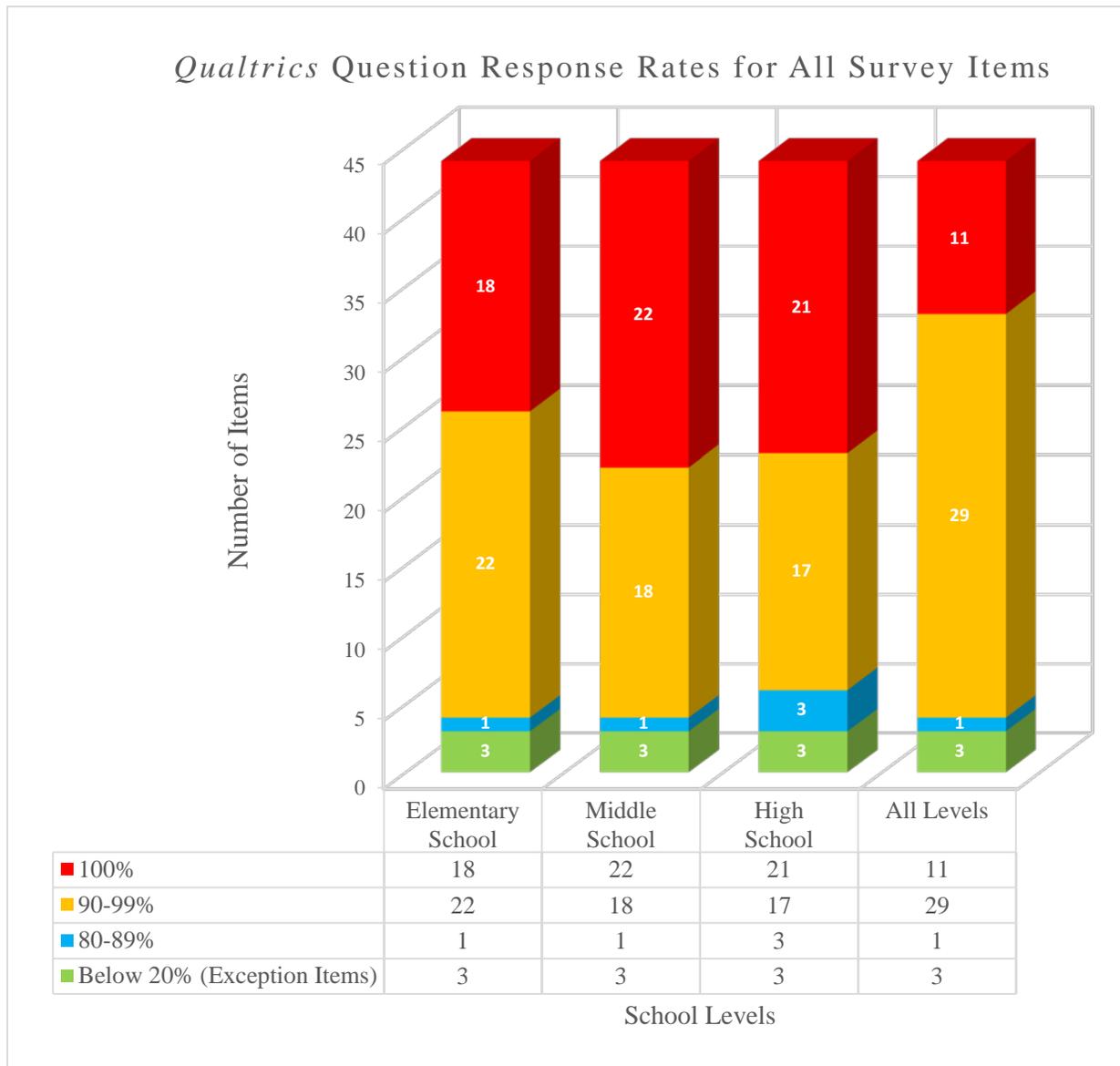
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Figure 5. Geographic Location of School



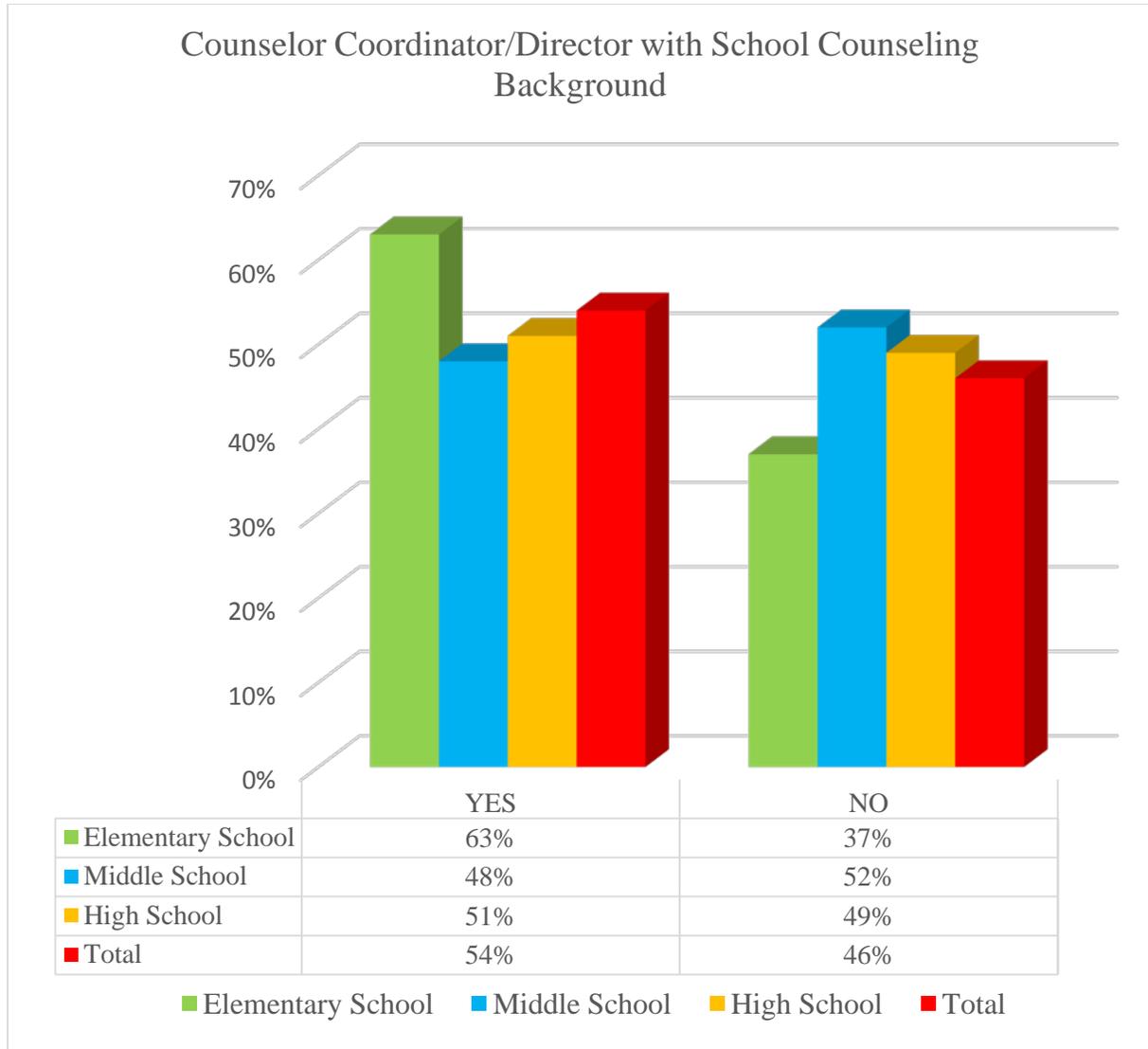
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Figure 6. Qualtrics Question Response Rates



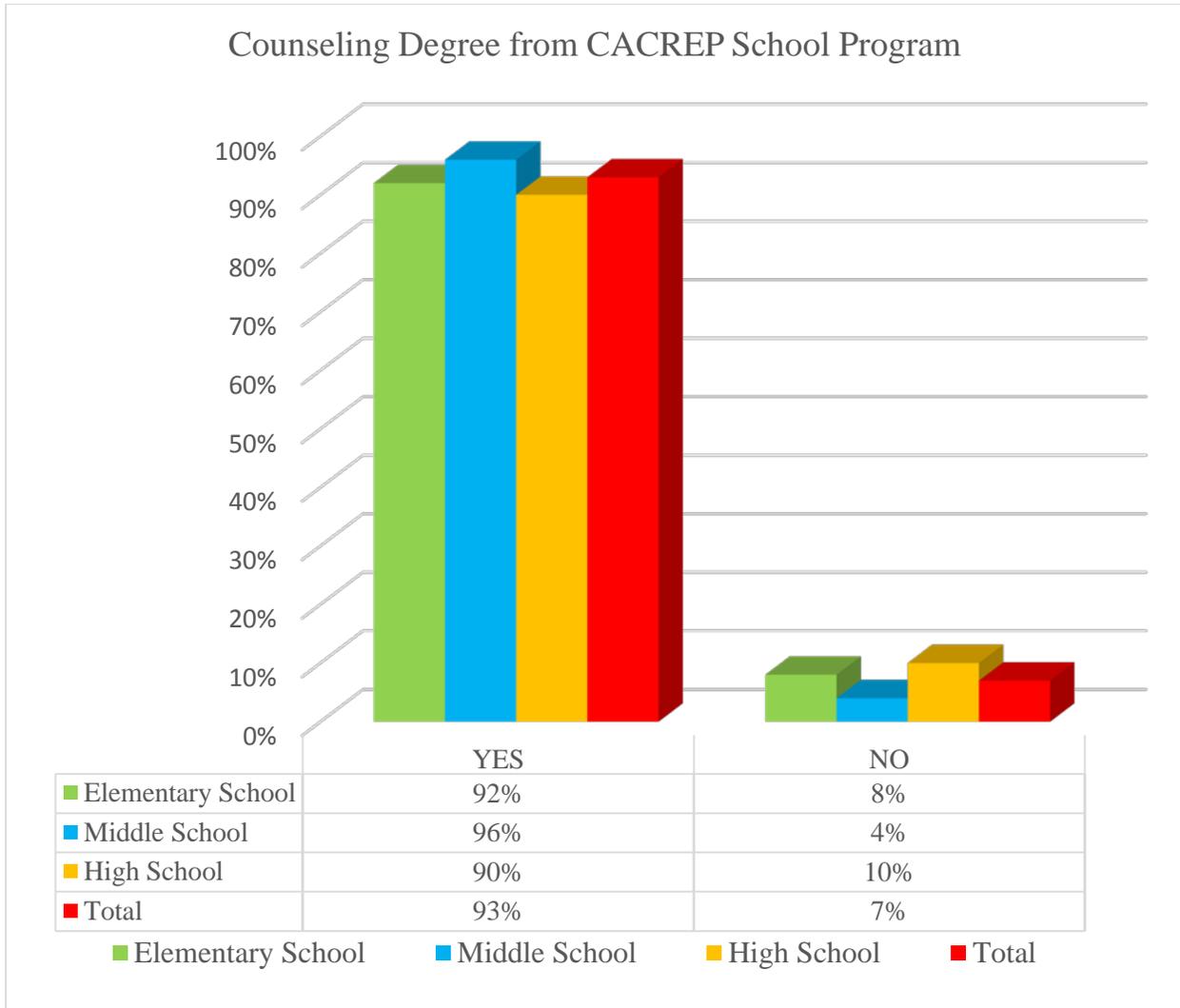
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Figure 7. School Counselor/ Coordinator/Director with School Counseling Background



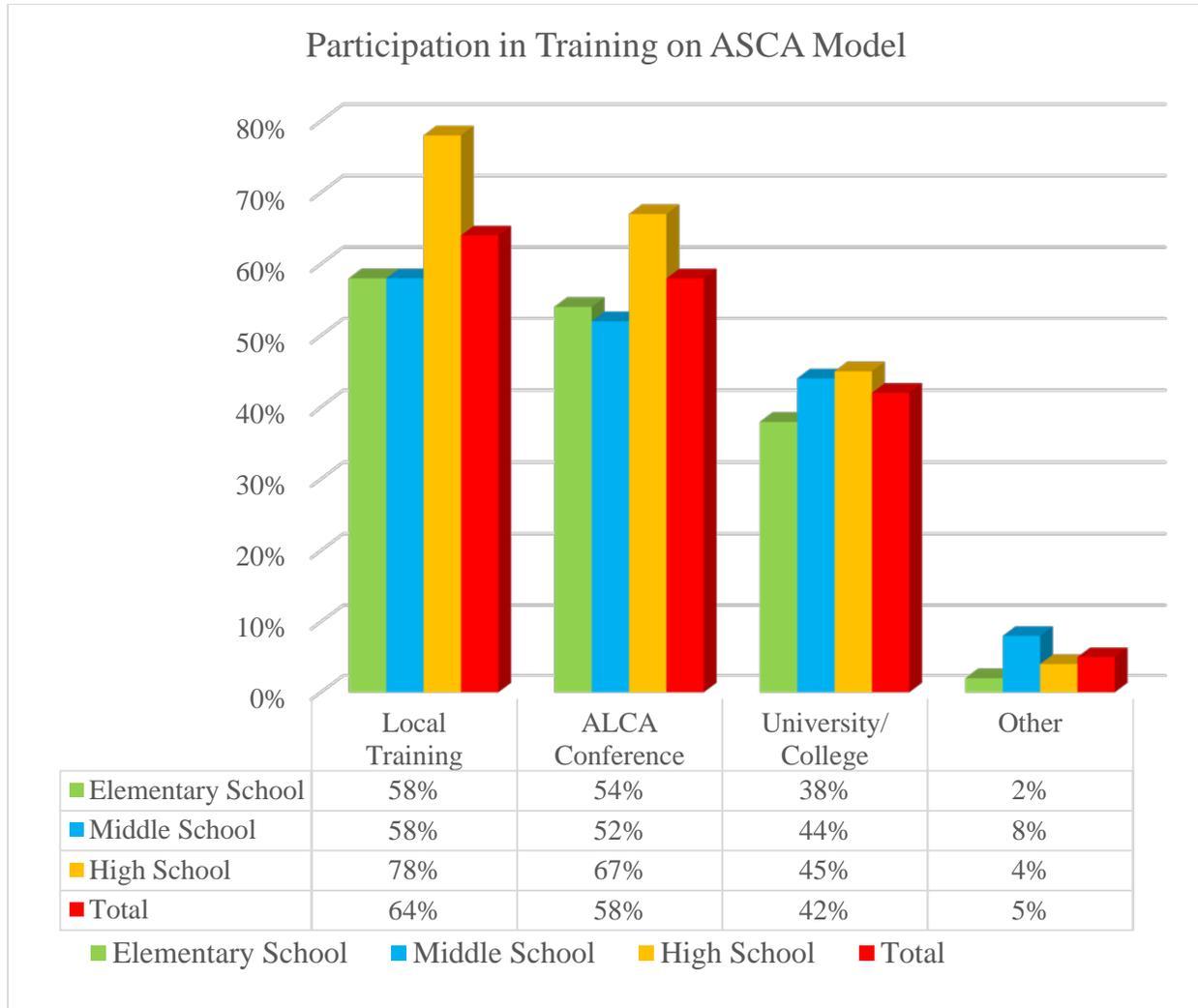
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Figure 8. Degree from CACREP-accredited Program



APPENDIX F

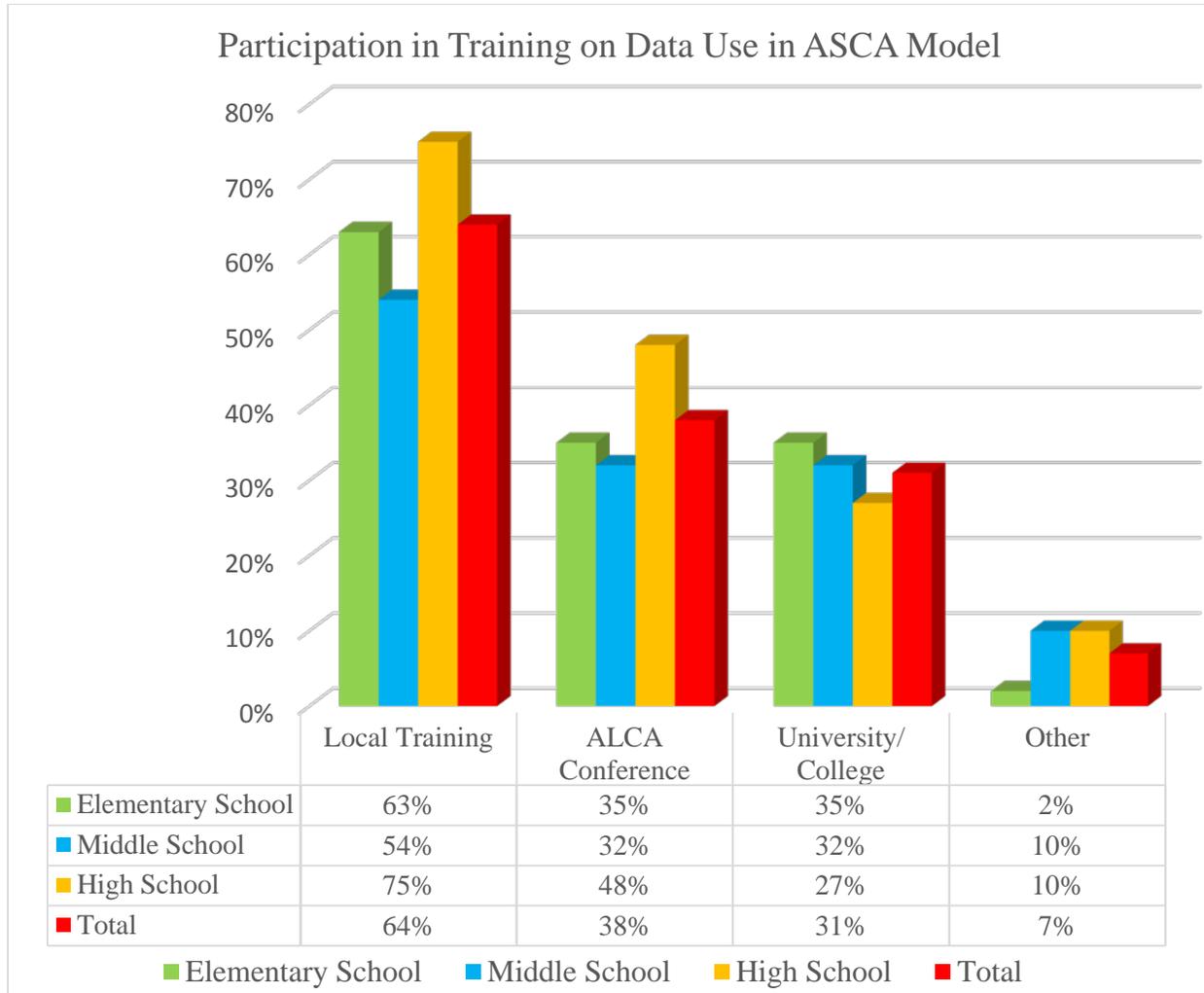
Figure 9. Training Participation on Implementation of ASCA National Model



NOTE: Participants checked “ALL THAT APPLY” so totals do not equal 100%

APPENDIX F

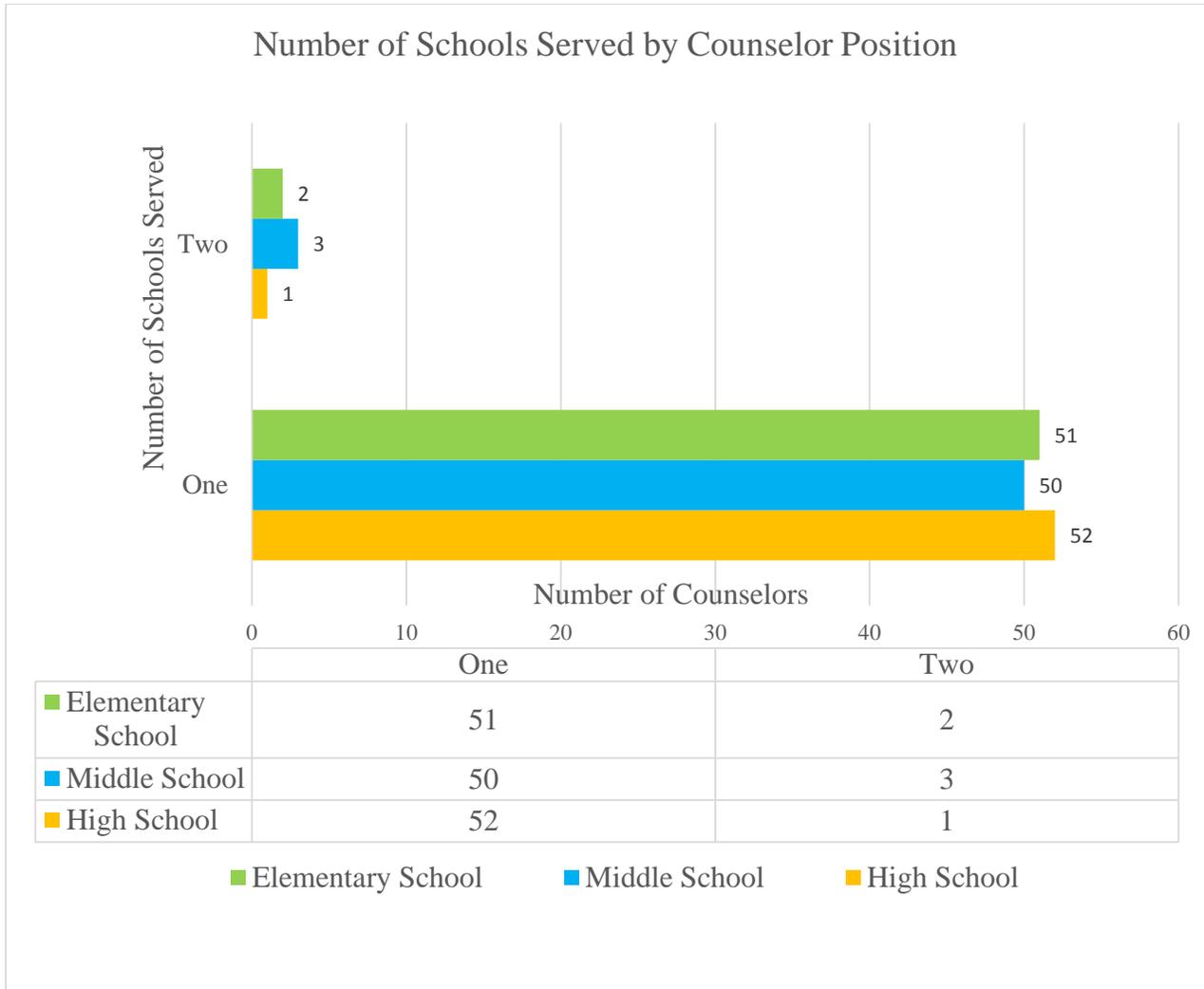
Figure 10. Training Participation on Data Use in Implementation of ASCA National Model



NOTE: Participants checked “ALL THAT APPLY” so totals do not equal 100%

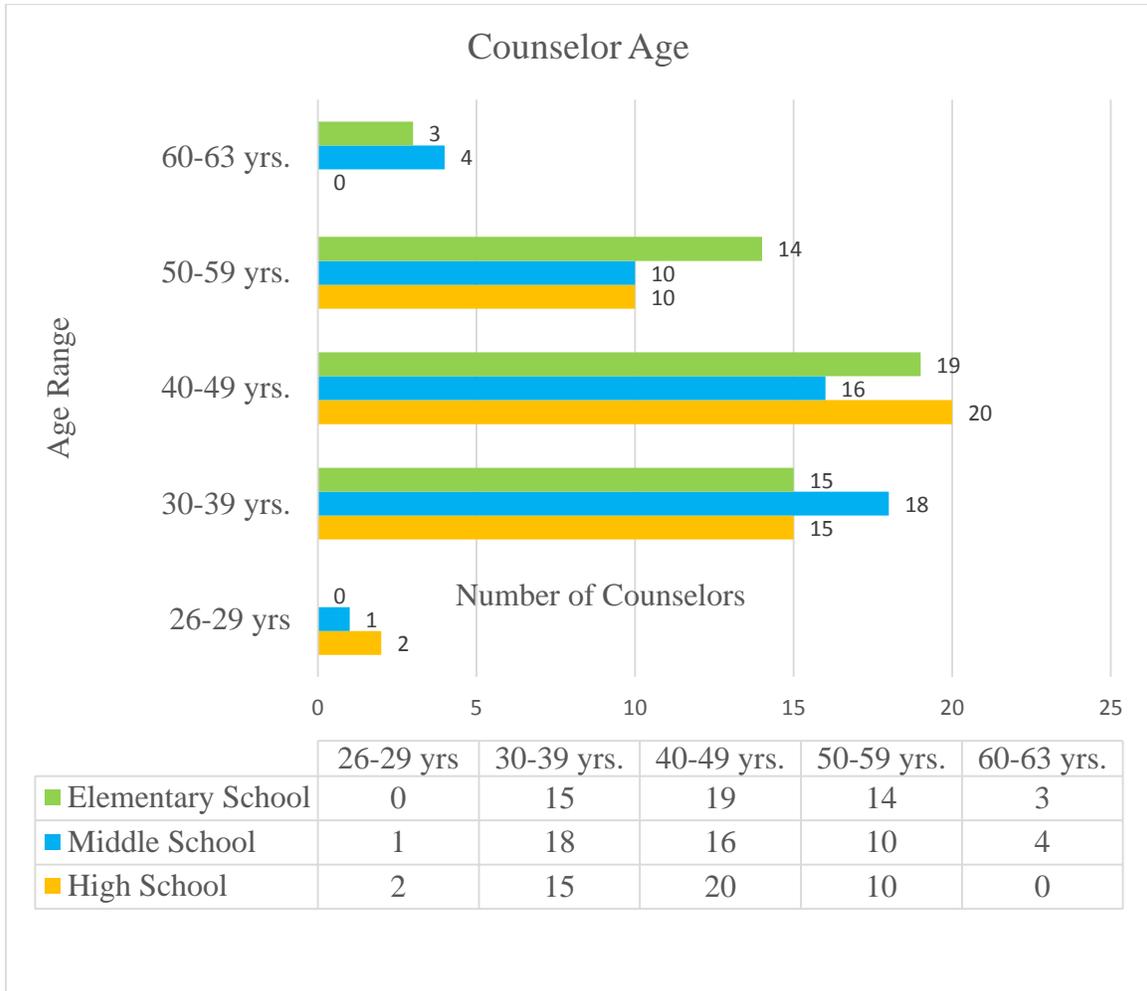
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Figure 11. Number of Schools Served by Counselor



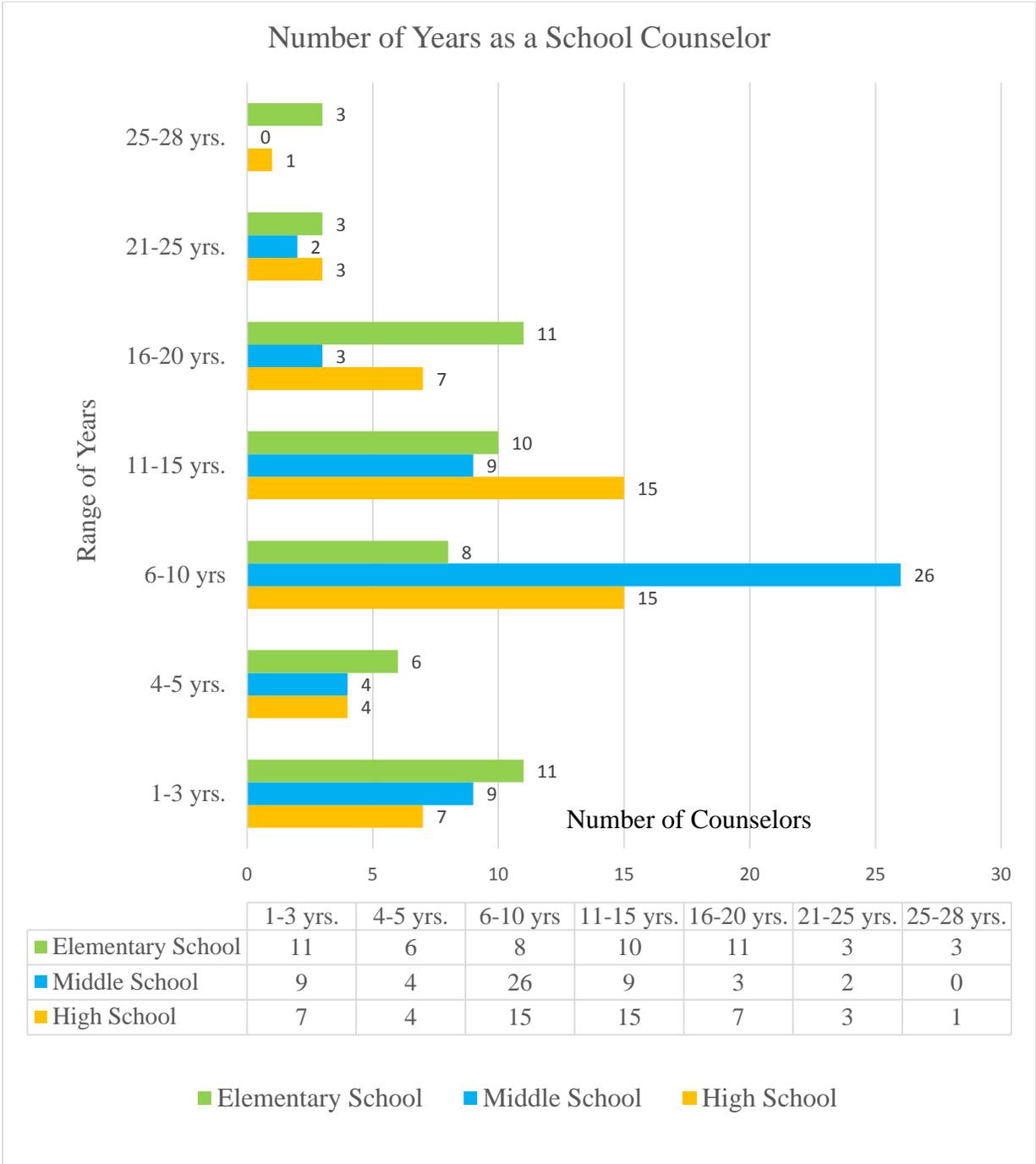
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Figure 12. Counselor Age



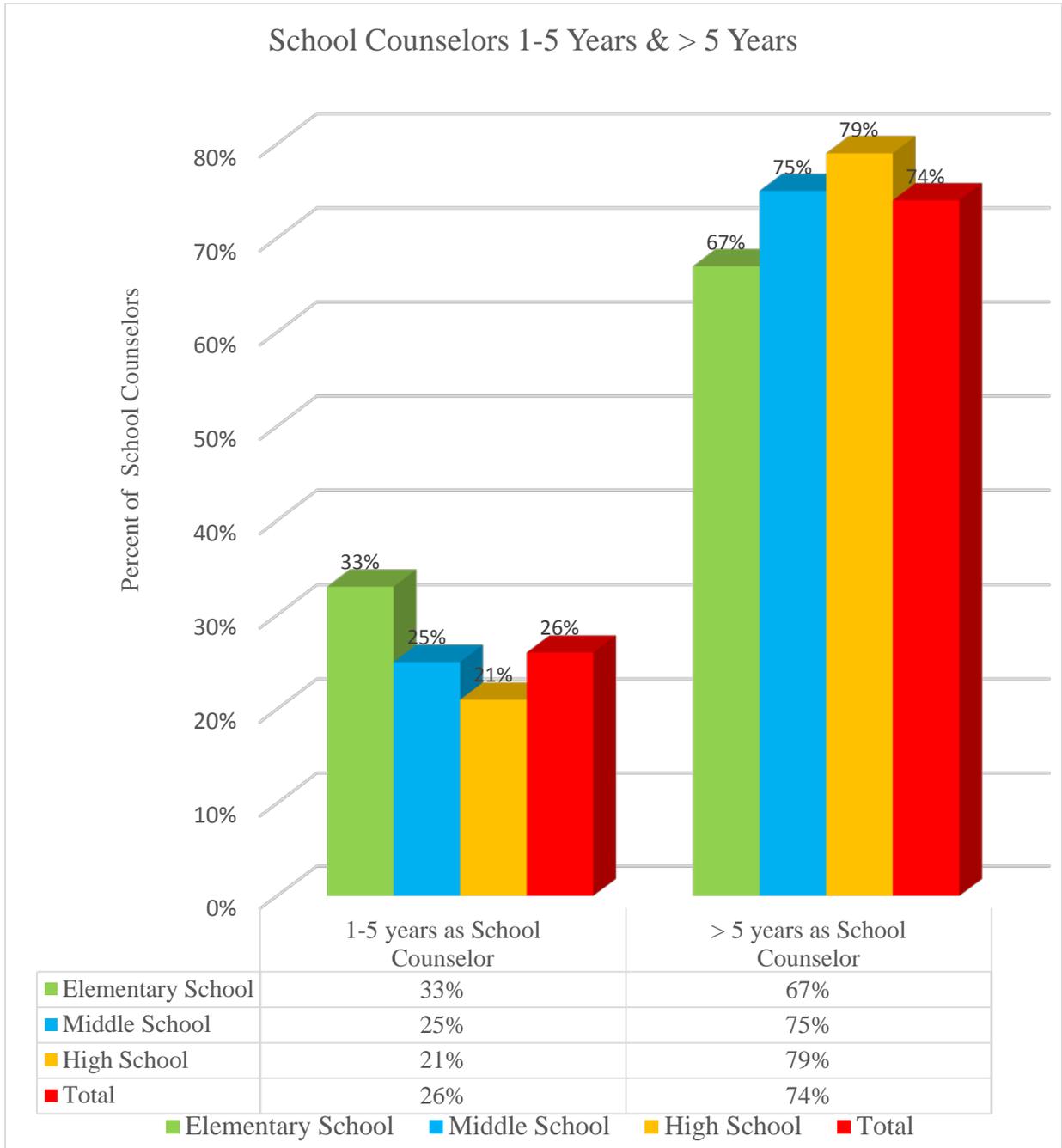
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Figure 13. Number of Years as School Counselor



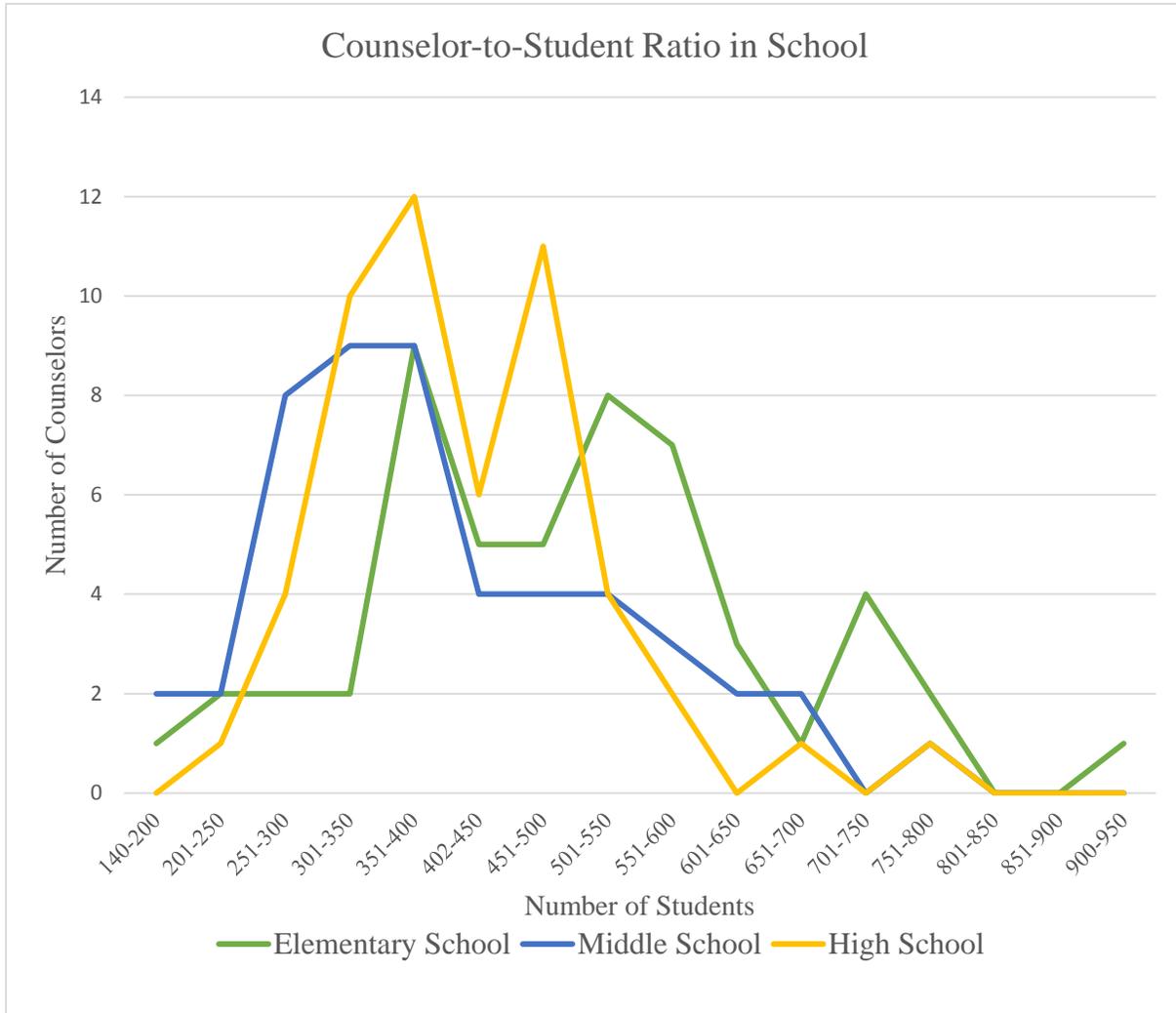
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Figure 14. School Counselors 1-5 Years & > 5 Years



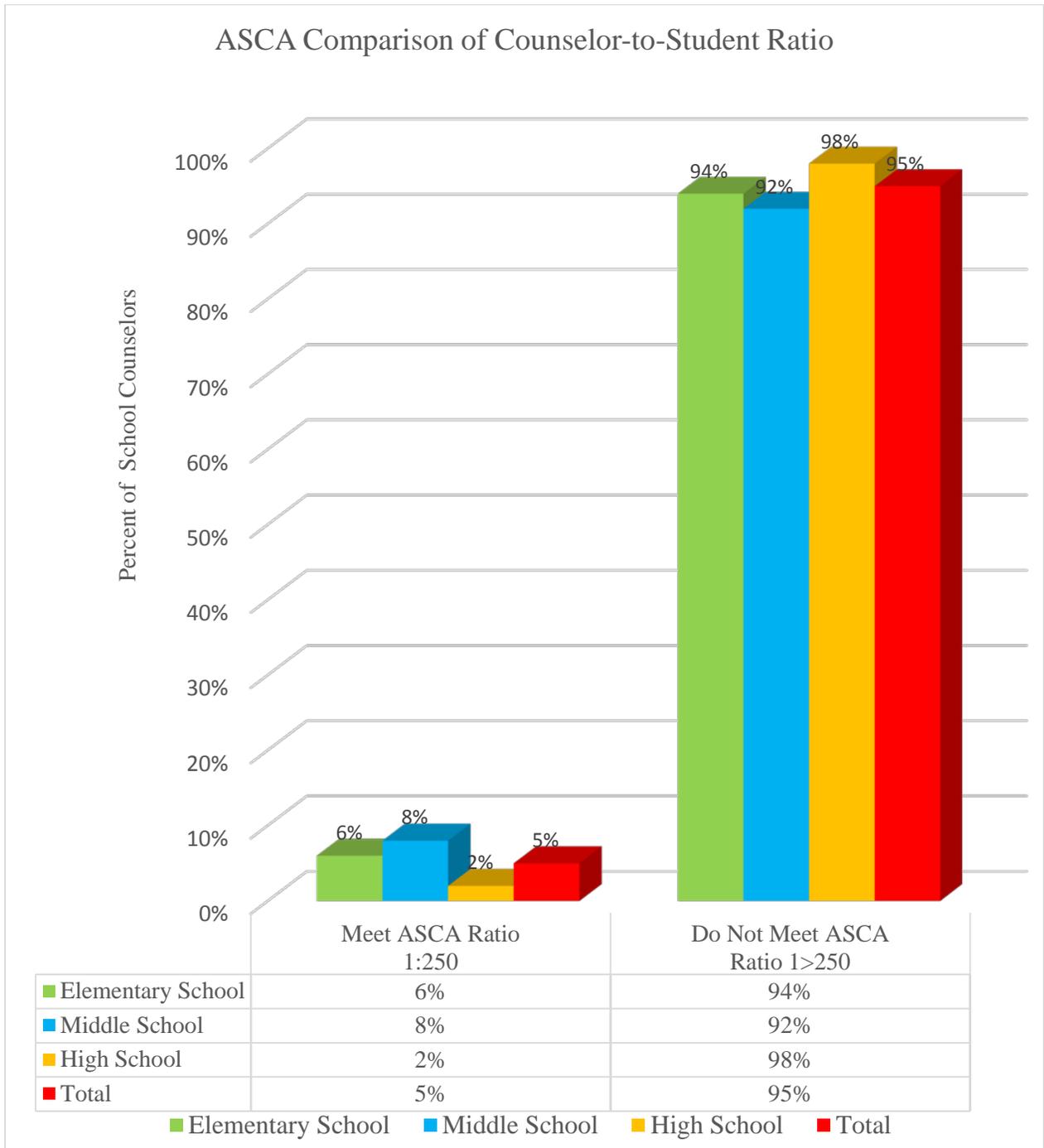
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Figure 15. Counselor-to-Student Ratio



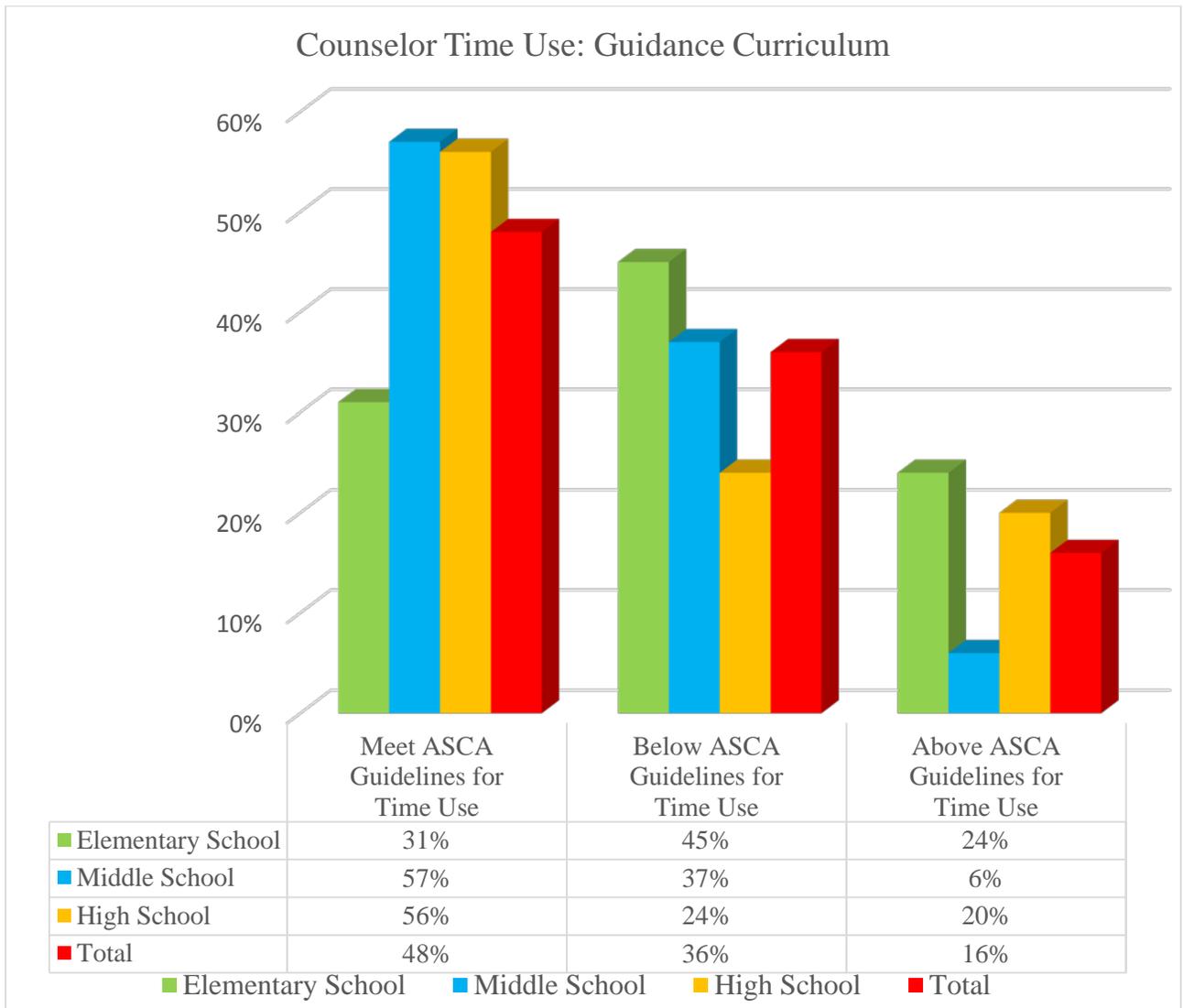
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Figure 16. ASCA Criteria Comparison of Counselor-to-Student Ratio



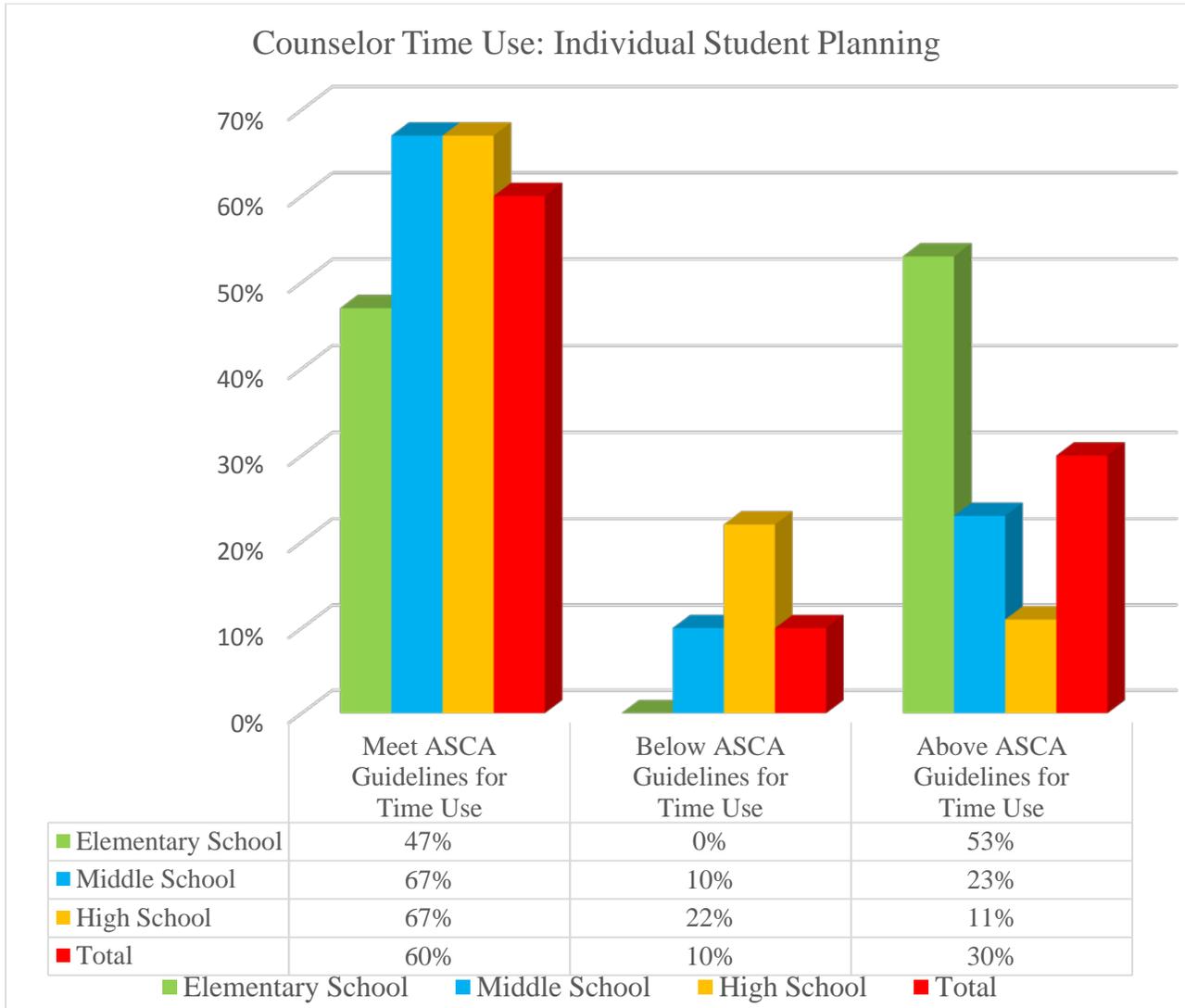
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Figure 17. Counselor Time Use: Guidance Curriculum



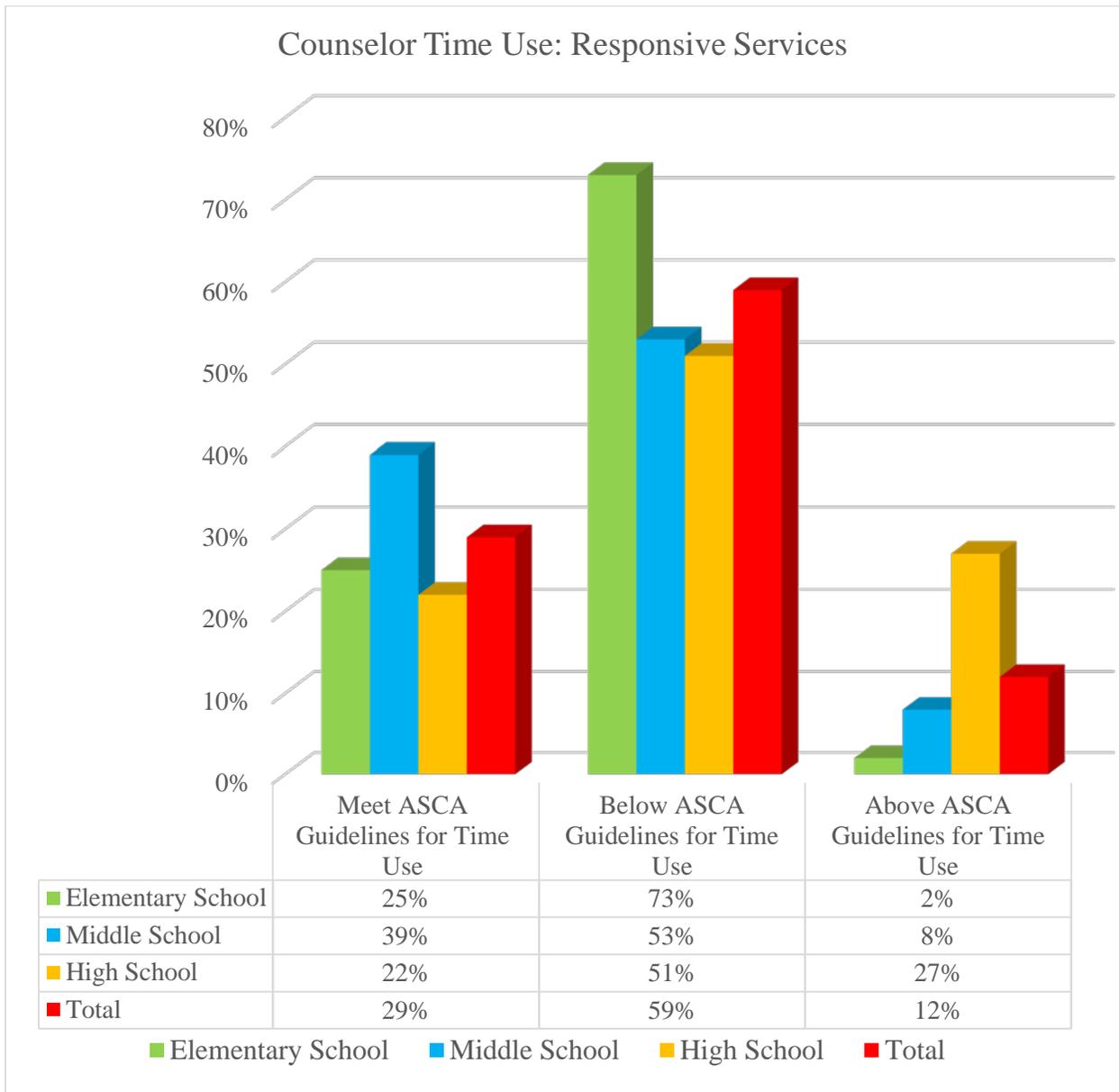
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Figure 18. Counselor Time Use: Individual Student Planning



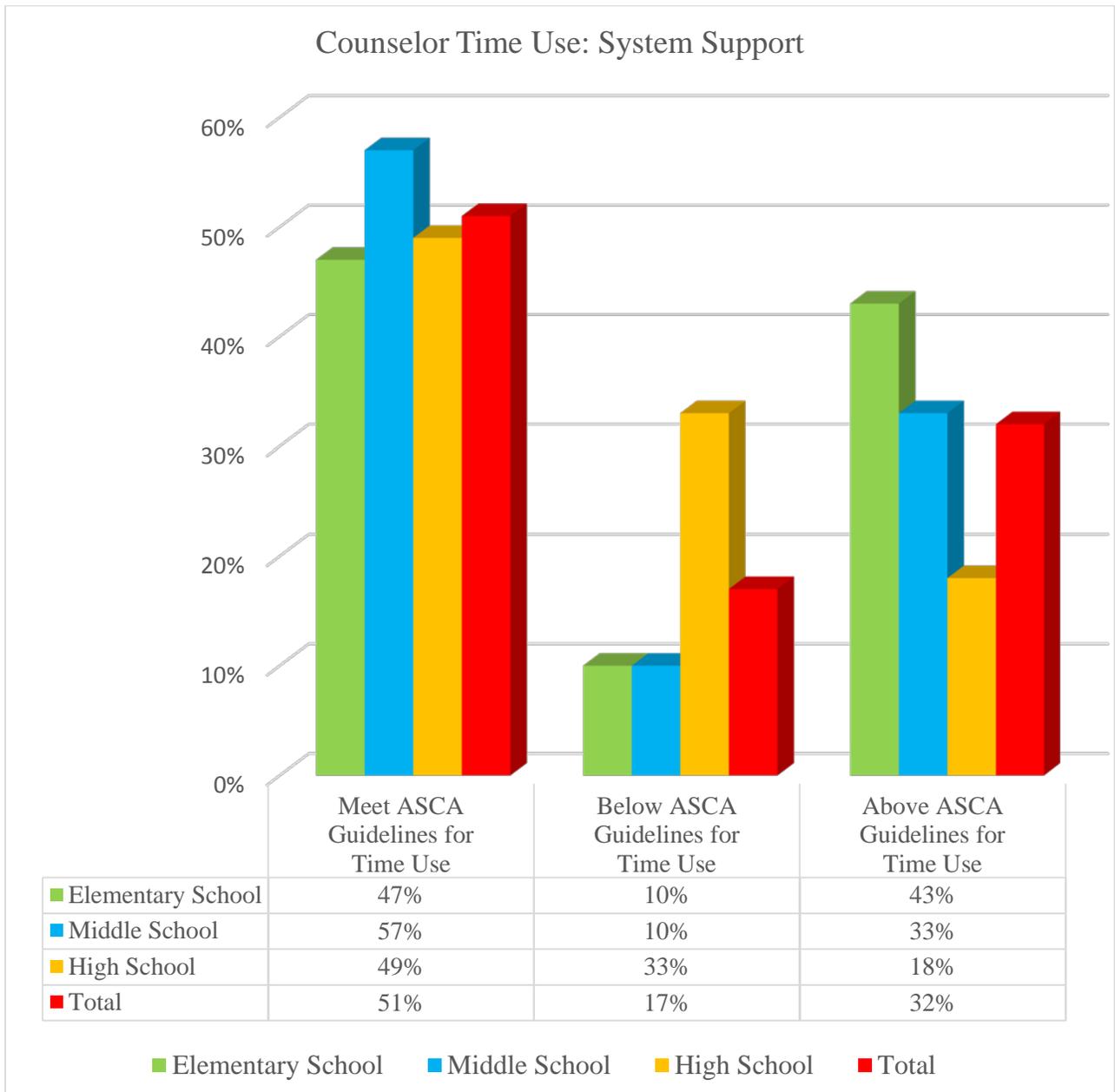
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Figure 19. Counselor Time Use: Responsive Services



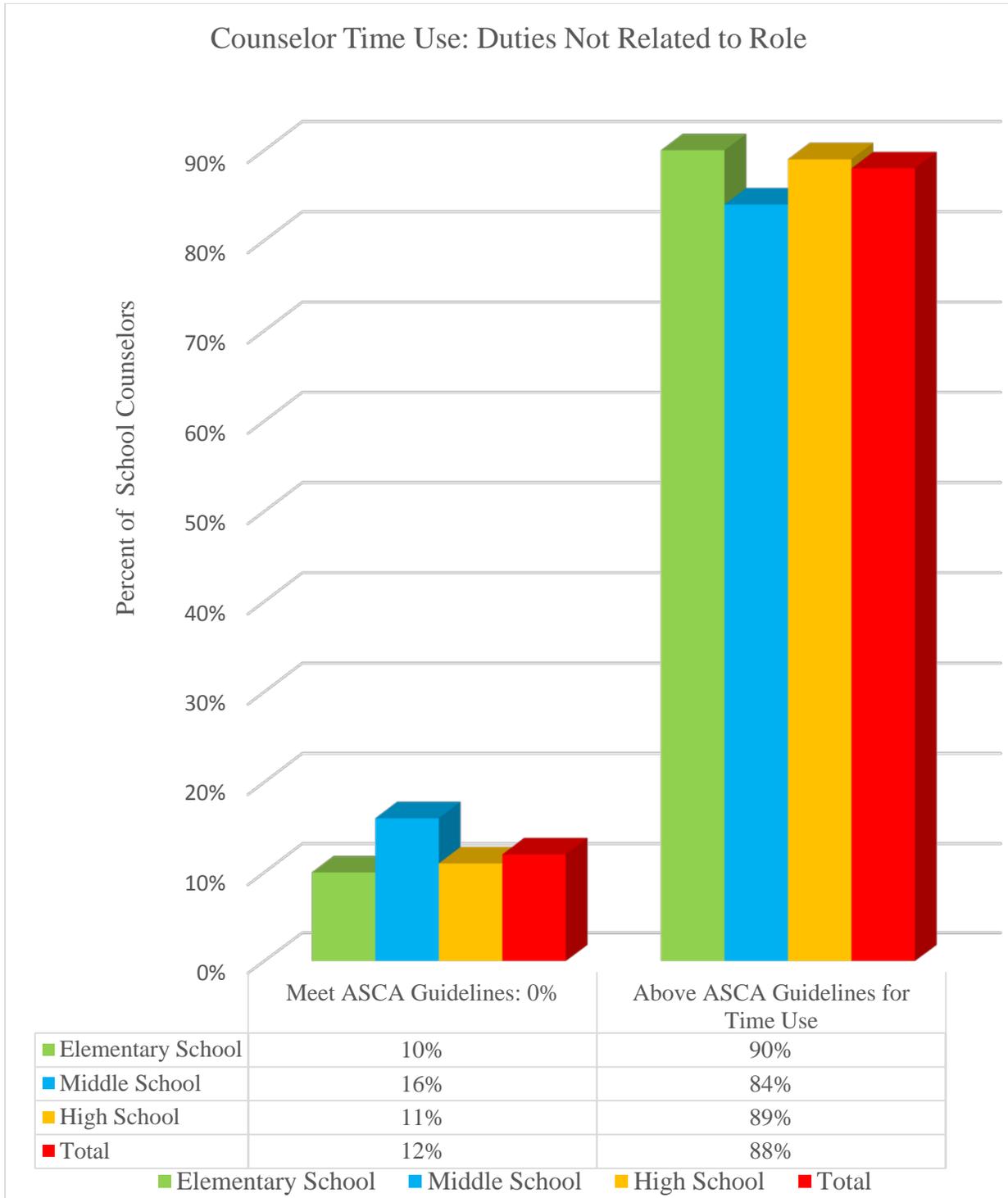
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Figure 20. Counselor Time Use: System Support



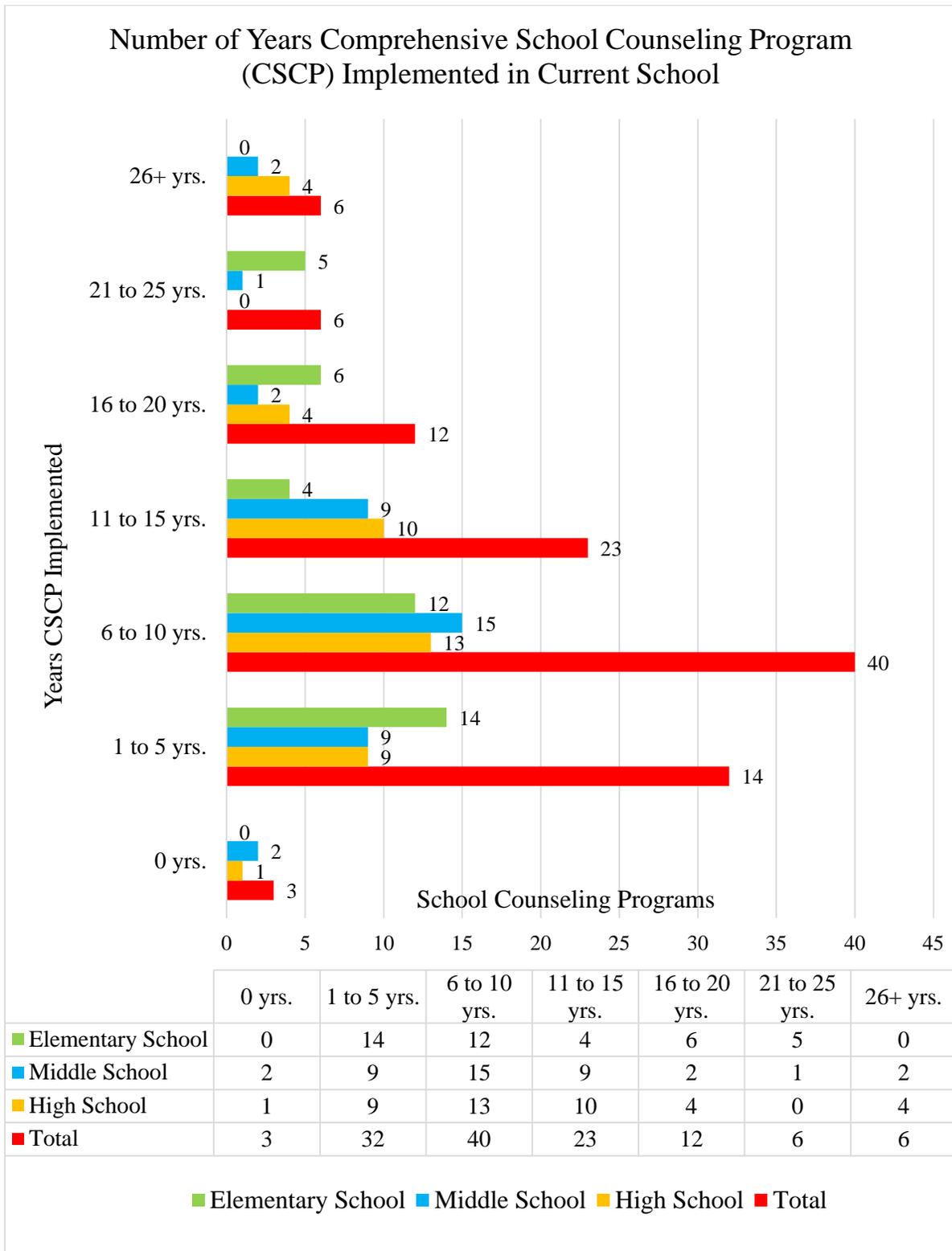
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Figure 21. Counselor Time Use: Duties Not Related



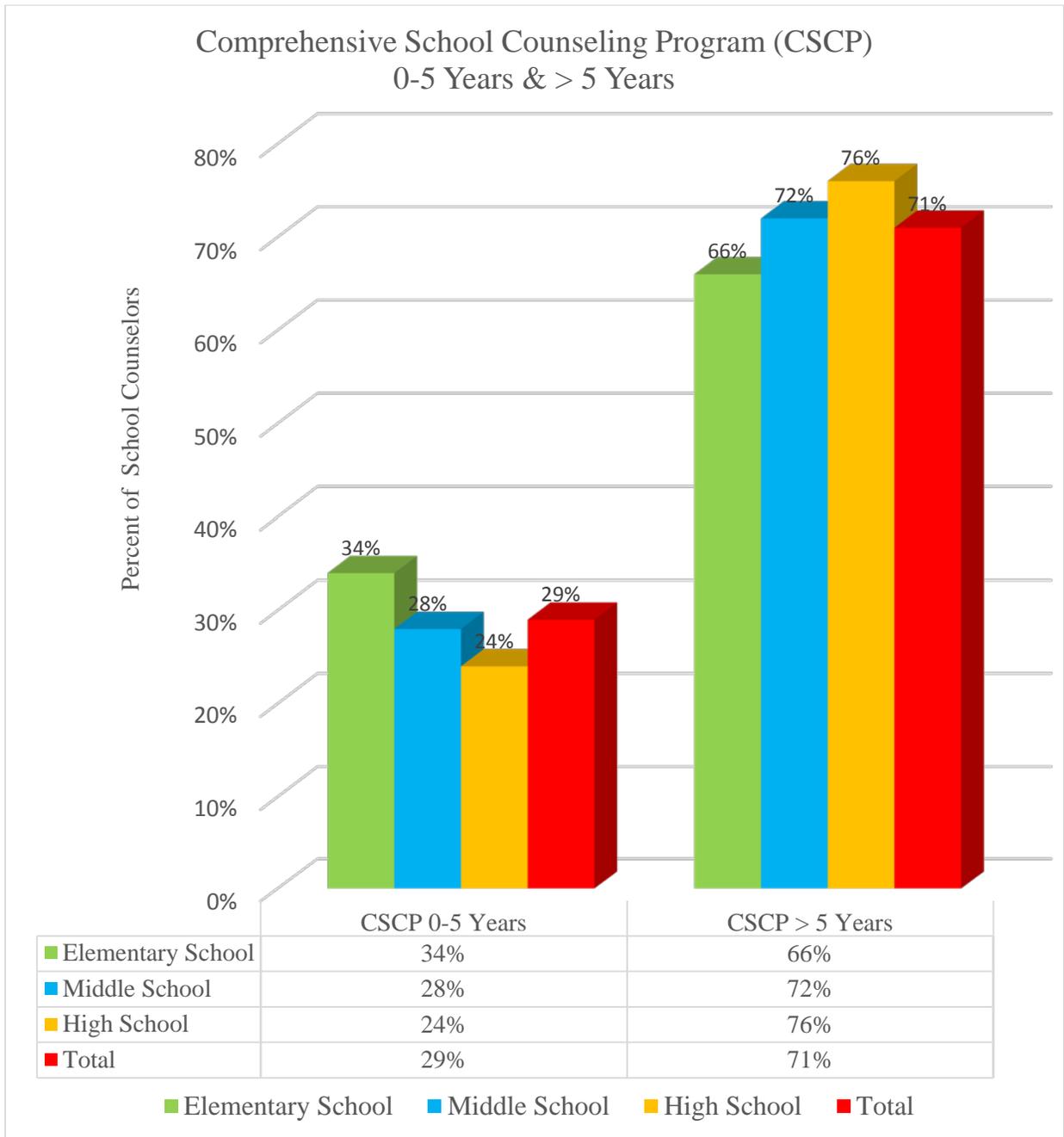
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Figure 22. Years Comprehensive School Counseling Program (CSCP) Implemented



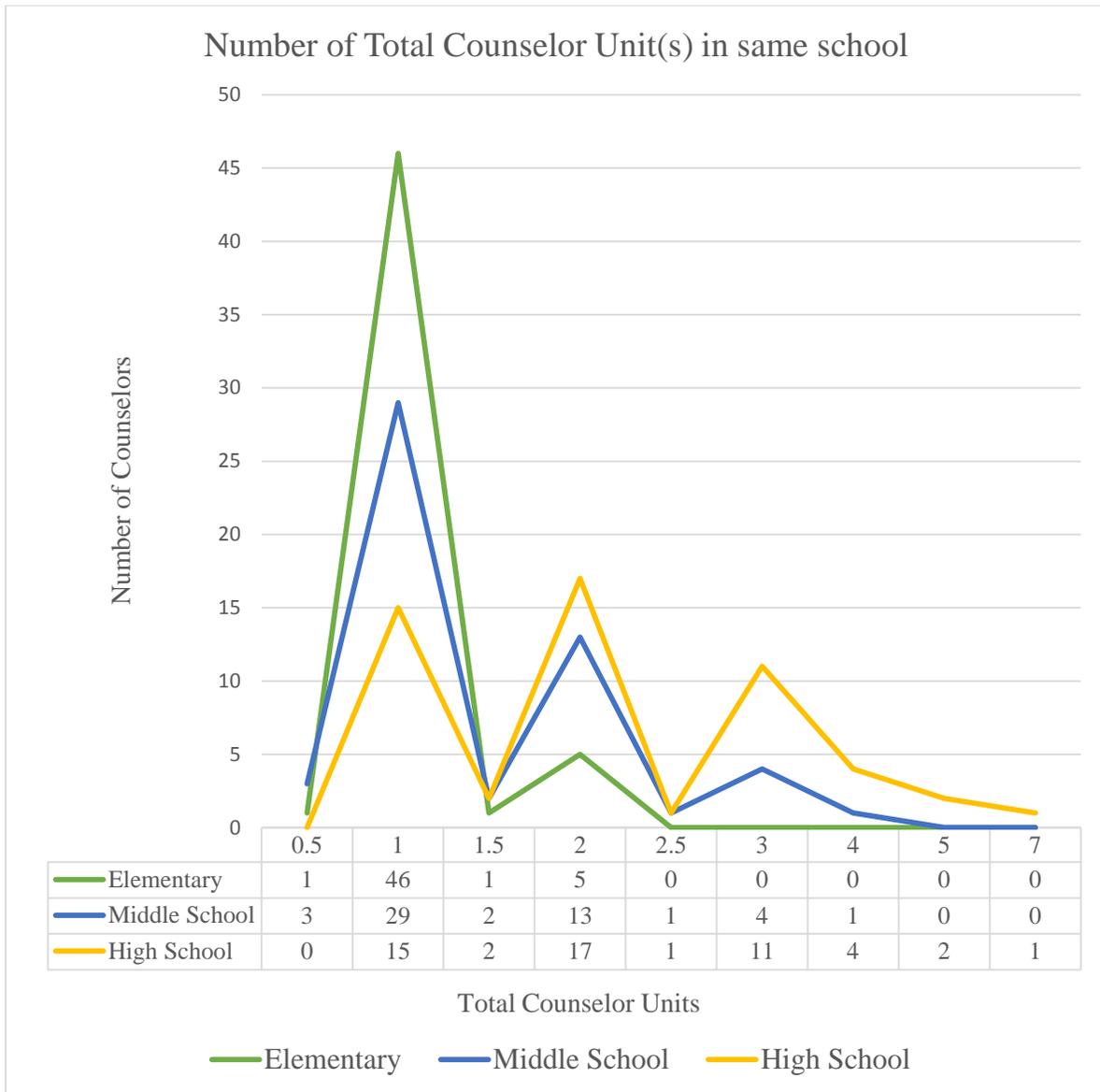
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Figure 23. CSCP Implemented 0-5 years & > 5 years



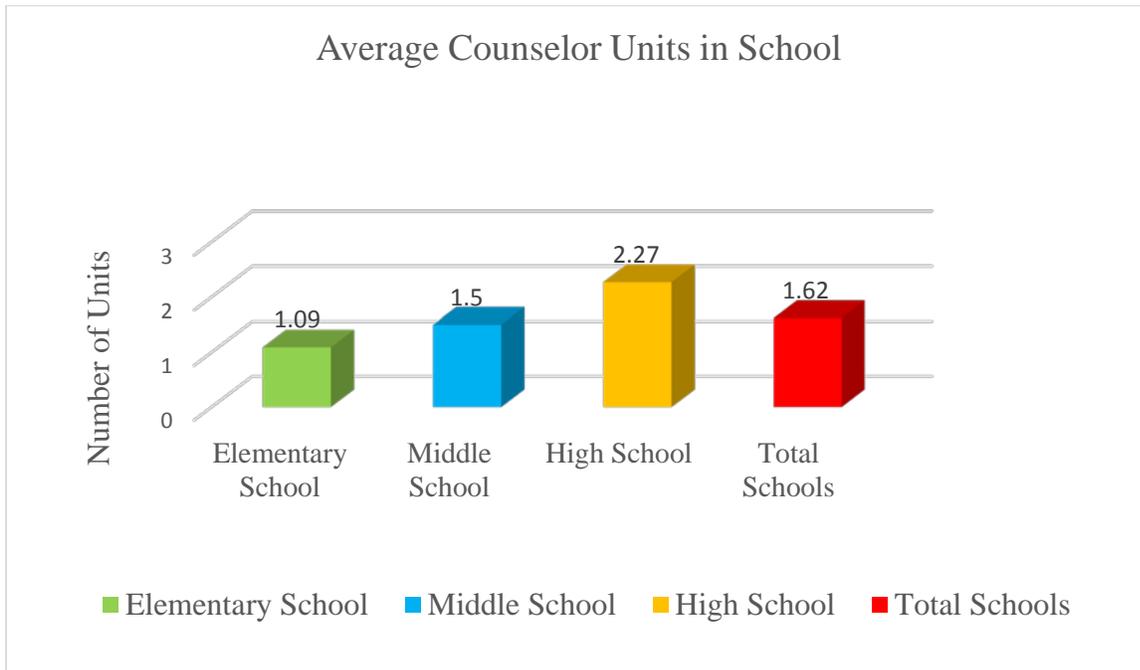
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Figure 24. Counselor Units



APPENDIX F

Figure 25. Average Counselor Units



APPENDIX F

Figure 26. School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS) Average Scores

