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School Counselor Social Advocacy Behaviors: Understanding, Relating, and Predicting Counselors' Attitudes, Supports, and Engagement

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School Counselor Social Advocacy Behaviors: Understanding, Relating, and Predicting
Counselors' Attitudes, Supports, and Engagement

Danielle Annett, PhD

University of Connecticut, 2015

The profession of school counseling has the charge of facilitating student success in the effort to break down barriers to achievement and opportunity toward college and career readiness. Leading professional associations such as the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) and the National Center for Transformed School Counseling strongly encourage counselor practice centered on leadership, advocacy, and accountability toward social justice centered practice, or school counselor social advocacy as defined by this study. This study assessed school counselor attitudes related to their belief in the importance, quality of support for, and level of actual engagement in school counselor social advocacy through the development of the School Counselor Social Advocacy Scale. Results of this study from a northeastern state with clear achievement disparities suggest that school counselors believe in the importance of social advocacy and are willing to engage in social advocacy behaviors even when support is moderate. Strong relationships exist between beliefs of importance and engagement as well as between support and engagement. A moderate relationship is clear between the quality of support a counselor feels and their belief in the importance of social advocacy suggesting the need for system wide shifts in practice and support. This study supports the need for development of operationalized models of practice in three phases as they relate to counselors; theoretical shift, cognitive process shift, and engagement in social advocacy practice.

School Counselor Social Advocacy Behaviors: Understanding, Relating, and Predicting
Counselors' Attitudes, Support, and Engagement

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APPROVAL PAGE

Doctor of Philosophy Dissertation

School Counselor Social Advocacy Behaviors: Understanding, Relating, and Predicting
Counselors' Attitudes, Supports, and Engagement

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Chapter I

Introduction

Statement of the Problem

The school counseling profession has attempted to address inequities head on with the development of redesigned practice and expectations of school counselors in order to respond to the need for equity based practice so that all students will succeed (ASCA, 2012; The Education Trust, n.d.). Though the profession of school counseling has been left out of achievement gap discussions historically (Bruce et al., 2012; Hart & Jacobi, 1992; Savitz-Romer, 2012), equity in attainment of education is tantamount to current school counseling practice reform (The Education Trust, n.d.; ASCA, 2012). It is up to school counselors to identify conditions that are preventing our youth from succeeding, "...and the counselors take action to change the environmental conditions that suppress the capacity of youth to fulfill their potential" (Lewis & Borunda, 2006, p. 408). With the launch of *Reach Higher*, First Lady Michelle Obama brought school counselors into reform action, "You're the ones planting the seeds about college...making it clear that higher education is the expectation, not the exception" (Office of the First Lady, 2014).

School counseling has its roots in vocational guidance and was often completed by teachers who were given some list of things to do for the students (Gysbers, 2002). By the 1920s and 1930s, the same period of time where people were beginning to bring suit against states for discrimination in educational settings, formal guidance counseling developed vocational, educational and personal-social practice features (Gysbers, 2002). However, as time progressed through the Civil Rights Movement and the Women's movement, school guidance began to embrace its programmatic definition as well as its positional definition with an emphasis on

accountability (Gysbers, 2002). Historical and present initiatives directly focused on changes in the school counseling profession include, “Comprehensive Developmental Guidance Programs National Standards for School Counseling Programs, the National Initiative for Transforming School Counseling, and the ASCA National Model” (Lewis & Borunda, 2006, p. 407) as well as the *Reach Higher* Initiative. All of these efforts are aimed at unifying counselor practice and creating a unique professional identity that is centered on closing the gap efforts.

It is necessary for the counseling community to rally around a shift in practice toward clear definition of practice in order to increase visibility and accountability of the profession thereby improving outcomes for students. Getting in the way of a shift in practice is confusion about of the role of a school counselor and impressions of school counselors’ work and attitudes. School counselors’ roles have been questioned in terms of their effectiveness and importance in addressing student achievement (Bemak & Chung, 2008; Dahir, 2004; Hart & Jacobi, 1992) and thus a paradigm shift for the school counseling profession in philosophy, activities and goals is urgently needed (Aluede et al., 2007) as students, school counselors, and educational leaders are unclear about the role of a school counselor (Lieberman, 2004). This shift will not only require a widening of the school counselor’s lens to include school-wide efforts (Colbert et al., 2006) but also a shift in the way counselors behave and are perceived in the school setting.

In order to address school reform with due diligence, counselors will be stepping into uncomfortable professional territory as they let go of the nice counselor syndrome and become leader and advocate (Bemak & Chung, 2005; Bemak & Chung, 2008). Bemak and Chung (2008) suggest sixteen steps to move toward losing the nice counselor syndrome and moving toward becoming an advocate for social justice. Following are examples of suggestions: “(1) Align multicultural/social justice advocacy and organizational change services with school

mission and goals; (2) Use strategies that are data driven;...(4) Remember that the work is toward a greater cause;... (12) Remember that conflict is part of the package;... and (15) Appreciate the necessity of dealing with uncertainty” (p. 378-379). Leading scholars in the field of school counseling have advocated for school counselors acting as leaders in order to address persistent problems related to racial achievement and opportunity gaps (Bemak, 2000; Bemak & Chung, 2005, Bemak & Chung, 2008; Bridgeland & Bruce, 2011; Colbert, Vernon-Jones & Pransky, 2006; Dahir, 2004; Dahir & Stone, 2009; Education Trust, n.d.; Hart & Jacobi, 1992; Herr, 2002; House & Hayes, 2002; House & Sears, 2002; Holcomb-McCoy, 2007; Sears, 1999).

In an attempt to unify counselors and provide a framework to focus professional duties in order to maximize effectiveness of counseling professionals, The American School Counseling Association (ASCA) created the ASCA National Model[®] (ASCA, 2012). Per the College Board report on current counseling practices, counselors are routinely engaged in duties ASCA specifically identifies as non-counselor duties (Bridgeland et al., 2011). ASCA recommends the counselor to student ratio not exceed 1:250; however, the national average in 2011 was reported to be 1:467 (NOSCA, 2011). In addition to recommending appropriate ratios, the ASCA Model (2012) provides a specific framework of standards and includes a model for practice with four domains: Foundation, Management, Delivery and Accountability with Delivery accounting for 80% or more of the activity of a school counselor. These core competencies are inclusive of specific areas of focus based on knowledge, abilities and skills and attitudes for each domain of the ASCA model. The Association has also created clear student standards, the ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success (ASCA, 2014), which guide the development and evaluation of counseling programs developed by counselors around the domains of academic, career and personal/social development (ASCA, 2014). Counselors are only encouraged, however, to

consider the interrelationships between ASCA standards and other standards set by State and local initiatives. In a move to include counselors in education reform policy, the NOSCA (2012) calls for counselors to be part of education reform and to align practice and accountability measures with state, district and school goals.

Alongside ASCA is the National Center for Transforming School Counseling (NCTSC), which has a clear social justice focus toward shifting practice to close the achievement gap. The mission of NCTSC is to transform school counselors into change agents for underserved students ensuring access to rigorous courses and academic success (The Education Trust, n.d.). The scope of work for a transformed school counselor as proposed by the National Center includes, “leadership; advocacy; team and collaboration; counseling and coordination; and assessment and use of data” (The Education Trust, n.d.). Largely driving the practice of transformed school counseling is the focus on social justice. The Education Trust (n.d.) has specified the following requirements of counselors working with the aim of social justice:

They can assess and interpret student needs, recognizing differences in culture, languages, values, and backgrounds; They can be liaisons between students and staff, setting high aspirations for all students and developing support to help them succeed; They can assess barriers that impede learning, inclusion, and academic success; They can coordinate school and community resources for students, families, and staff to improve academic achievement; And they can provide leadership for school officials to view data through an equity lens (p. 1, n.d.).

The need and professional support for shift in school counselor practice is clear. ASCA (2012) and the National Center for Transforming School Counseling (NCTSC) emphasize the necessity for counselors to act as leaders in order to help students access their rights and provide students

the opportunities they deserve. The general push in the literature emphasizes counselor practice with equity-driven behaviors to the end that school counselors will be better equipped to identify social power and oppression dynamics in order to take transformative action to define and close the gap through using achievement and achievement related data in the design and implementation of counseling programming and intervention.

In order to carry out the task of being instrumental in closing the gap, school counselors will need to function as leaders and advocates with high levels of accountability. Even with press from professional associations, unclear roles and inappropriate support persist, making it challenging for school counselors to navigate transformation in an organized systemic fashion with appropriate resources.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine school counselors' attitudes about whether they should engage in behaviors related to social advocacy including leadership, advocacy, and accountability; their impressions of the quality of support for engaging in social advocacy behaviors; and their reported levels of engagement in social advocacy behaviors. In addition, this study examined relationships between demographic factors and the constructs of advocacy based leadership and accountability that comprise the definition of school counselor social advocacy behaviors.

Research Questions

The questions addressed by this study include:

1. To what degree do school counselors believe that they should engage in behaviors related to social advocacy as outlined by the SCSAS?

2. To what degree do school counselors assess the quality of support in engaging in social advocacy behaviors?
3. To what degree do school counselors believe that they are engaging in social advocacy behaviors?
4. Are there relationships between the degree to which counselors believe they should engage in social advocacy behaviors; the quality of support for engaging in social advocacy behaviors; and the actual level of engagement in social advocacy behaviors?
5. Is there a relationship between demographic considerations such as type of school (urban, rural, suburban,); years of experience; professional association membership; number of students; number of counselors; RAMP status; PBIS status; and attitudes about clarity of role within their school/district and Importance in social advocacy behaviors?
6. Is there a relationship between demographic considerations such as type of school (urban, rural, suburban,); years of experience; professional association membership; number of students; number of counselors; RAMP status; PBIS status; and attitudes about clarity of role within their school/district and Engagement in social advocacy behaviors?

Chapter II

Literature Review

The school counseling profession has actively responded to social, political, and cultural conflicts that shape students' experiences. Professional counseling skill development and refinement is a continuous effort to most effectively facilitate student success (Gysbers, 2002 & Wingfield, Reese, & West-Olatunji, 2010). Shifts in practice foci have not been without persistent redevelopment of the professional scope of school counseling practice due to responsiveness to need for professional practice transformation. NCLB (2001) legislation demanded accountability in education and counselors are ideally situated to identify achievement gaps and implement equity-based practices to begin to close the identified gaps (ASCA, 2012; Education Trust, n.d.; Savitz-Romer, 2012). Since school counselors and the students with whom they work live and breathe are in a social, cultural, and political landscape, the effects of injustices on the development of minoritized students' identity and achievement should be considered.

This review will focus on salient professional school counseling practice orientations and behaviors developed to address inequities among student groups. As such, this review will present relevant historical context including exploration of the constructs contributing to the opportunity and achievement gaps. In addition, an understanding of counselor role shift will be established with hypothesized antecedents supporting or discouraging transformed practice will be developed. A literature review examining constructs believed to define transformed school counseling behaviors will follow.

Constructs of Minoritized Student Performance

“The colorblind public consensus that prevails in America today – i.e., the widespread belief that race no longer matters – has blinded us to the realities of race in our society and facilitated the emergence of a new caste system” (Alexander, 2012, p. 11-12). Though many Americans potentially feel proud embracing the idea of colorblindness, inequities that were once boldly broadcast across public venues are now filtered and obscured by an “invisible veil” (Sue & Sue, 2013, p. 123). In Western culture, a veil is thought to be, “a piece of fine material worn by women to protect or conceal the face” (Merriam – Webster, 2015b). In the case of inequities, the invisible veil protects or conceals the true intentions of the perpetrator who has been unwittingly socialized as an oppressor (Sue & Sue, 2013). The assumption could be made that educational institutions have operated behind an invisible veil unintentionally upholding institutional racism and inequities that the U.S. Supreme Court has declared as unconstitutional.

Historically, identification of institutional racism and subsequent pursuit of justice through the legal system has been overt and clear to those who were not minoritized. Supreme court cases as recent as the early 1900s clearly identify injustice based on race for which the court ruled in favor of the plaintiffs essentially forbidding discrimination in the pursuit of educational attainment (e.g. *Murray v. Maryland*, 1936; *Missouri ex rel. Gaines v. Canada*, 1938; *Sweatt v. Painter et. al*, 1950). The most significant case in upending overt institutional racism in schools was *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 1954, marking the end of lawful overt racism by physical division in education. Though overt segregation was outlawed, long held attitudes and stereotypes transformed into more dangerous kinds of segregation that is much less visible to those not afflicted by it. Restriction, stereotype, and oppression are evident across the sociocultural milieu in this country evidenced in interactions as simple as day-to-day experiences and complex as civil rights demonstrations and legislation. To set the stage for

understanding current school counseling reform efforts, a review of constructs growing from transformed segregation contributing to the opportunity and achievement gaps follows.

Over time, inequities have done harm to minoritized students:

Rather than educate or heal, rather than offer enlightenment and freedom, and rather than allow for equal access and opportunities, historical and current practices have restricted, stereotyped, damaged, and oppressed the culturally different...(Sue & Sue, 2013, p. 121).

Ethnocentric monoculturalism. Academic achievement is routinely in the spotlight; however, factors related to producing achievement outside of individualistic, personal attributes such as systemic failure and unfair practices are rarely discussed as part of the problem with achievement in the United States. Transformed segregation can be captured by examining ethnocentric monoculturalism. Ethnocentric monoculturalism (EM) is a concept that is little known outside of academia but carries immutable experiential meaning for students and families of minoritized status as behaviors associated with EM serve to impose standards of the majority and further oppress already marginalized groups (Sue & Sue, 2013); “It is power or the unequal status relationship between groups that defines ethnocentric monoculturalism”(Sue & Sue, 2013 p. 123). These behaviors related to status proliferate daily life for our students as evidenced by something seemingly as innocuous as majority compared with minority groups represented on magazine covers. The student-centered attitude that policy makers maintain on student performance is another example of oppressors doing what they do best. In his book, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Paulo Freire articulates the disparity in behavioral interpretation between the oppressor and the oppressed, “For the oppressors, however, it is always the oppressed (whom they obviously never call ‘the oppressed’ but –depending on whether they are fellow countrymen or not—‘those people’ or ‘the blind and envious masses’ or ‘savages’ or

‘natives’ or ‘subversives’) who are disaffected, who are ‘violent’ ‘barbaric,’ ‘wicked’ or ‘ferocious’ when they react to the violence of the oppressors”(Freire, 1970, p. 56). In many ways, what is happening in education for our minoritized students perpetuates the cycle of oppression through the very avenue available to stop it, education.

Racial identity. Our educational systems are failing with regard to providing appropriate education to our children. Educational systems are one of the institutions in which institutional racism is most blatant and in many ways most destructive as it greatly affects our young peoples’ abilities to successfully navigate what it means to be a particular race within a particular culture. When searched on PsycINFO, ERIC, and PD Collection a total of three hundred sixty nine resources are available with regard to white racial identity and education; however, only twenty three articles appear related to minority racial identity development and education. A more general search for topics of race and education yields 40,167 possibilities. A quick glance at the articles revealed that thousands of opportunities for the oppressed to be further marginalized by well-intentioned scholars are present. There were countless articles discussing “helping” ethnically different groups adjust or assimilate. In terms of studies that examined education of young children, one study points out that the preschool age children in the study were participating in diversity practices with or without some kind of adult intervention in an attempt to shape meaning and accomplish social goals (Park, 2011). The next logical question would be what happens next to help inform children of their racial identities and the resultant implications? A chapter written by Janet Helms (2003), *Racial Identity in the Social Environment*, is a resource that directly tackles the idea of educating and intervening in an attempt to help children progress through racial identity development as they mature through their school experiences. For example, in discussing the Immersion/Emersion status for People of Color, Helms provides

insight into how a sensitive teacher would work with students in a way to help students channel anger at this phase into some kind of positive, group-affirming activity rather than become frightened by their anger and thus uphold the impression that adults in their lives are racist (Helms, 2003). What she also offers is education for White students at this status with foci on educator's tasks related to becoming an ally and aiding in the identification process after realization of anger at White adults for potentially intentional deception around issues of race (Helms, 2003).

Racial identity is a concept that People of Color are acutely aware of, but when Whites are asked about their racial identity, they generally don't know how to answer the question, exemplifying the need to provide education to give shape and meaning to what it means to be a White (Sue & Sue, 2013). With the exception of Helms' chapter, it appears as though most Whites' education about their place in society is implied and thus dysfunctional toward the end of quieting and one day stopping oppression and racism that occurs by virtue of socialization and education.

Stereotype threat. The Eurocentric approach and curriculum in schools are impediments to minoritized students' educational success (James, 2012). The deficiency of culturally relevant educational resources paired with EM attitudes of majority teaching staff serves to perpetuate the downward spiral in academic performance resulting from the construct of stereotype threat (Aronson, 2004). Stereotype threat is not a concept that lives only in print in academic studies, but is experienced every day by minoritized students in schools across the country. Steele and Aronson (1995) define stereotype threat as, "being at risk of confirming, as self-characteristic, a negative stereotype about one's group" (p. 797). This threat then manifests through anxiety and reduced working memory capacity which negatively affects academic performance due to the

knowledge of the widely held stereotype that Blacks don't perform well intellectually (Davis, Aronson & Salinas, 2006). When studying racial identity as a moderator of stereotype threat, Davis et al. (2006) found a significant interaction between the type of threat condition (low, medium or high) and Internalization status attitudes. However, even greater impact on performance was noted when in a high stakes kind of testing situation as evidenced by students solving fewer GRE (Graduate Record Examination) problems in the high threat condition with the best performance occurring in the low threat condition when the test was described as non-diagnostic and race was not primed as described by the study (Davis et al., 2006).

Further promoting stereotypes of minorities in education is the criminalization of school environments. As described by Sarah Farmer (2010), "the criminalization of schools refer to a combination of reactive disciplinary policies, surveillance, metal detectors, unwarranted searching and lockdowns that reflect the contemporary criminal justice system within the school environment" (p. 368). These kinds of environments don't seem to promote learning in a safe, collegial environment offering support for growth and development. The next possible question would center around the impact that stereotype threat combined with criminalized settings could have on Students of Color not only achieving at low rates, but entirely withdrawing from the educational process. Further fanning the flames of stereotype threat is the more a student of Color identifies with academics, the more that student will experience stereotype threat leading to an even more aversive school experience that students seek to escape either through disidentification or withdrawal (Osborne & Walker, 2006). This stereotyping contributes to many of the problems and struggles experienced in schools so as educators, James (2011) seeks to give attention to the students' lived experiences and the social context in which our students are positioned.

Noncognitive factors. On the “flip” side of EM lives the noncognitive concept “grit” that lives within students to varying degrees and is thought to influence and potentially combat consequences of EM. The term “grit” has been popular in research and literature with much emphasis placed on the potential weightiness of this trait. Grit is defined as, “...a perseverance and passion for long-term goals. Grit entails working strenuously toward challenges, maintaining effort and interest over years despite failure, adversity, and plateaus in progress” (Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, & Kelly, 2007, np). Duckworth et. al (2007) assert that people who are high in grit don’t get off track from their long term goals, even in the absence of positive feedback. Duckworth et. al conducted numerous studies to determine how grit is associated with success. In the first study, the researchers found that when age is controlled for, post college graduates were significantly higher in grit than others (Duckworth et. al, 2007). However, given that this was an online study to adults who volunteered, social desirability bias could have influenced the response style. In a subsequent study, they looked at Ivy League undergrads (N=138, 69% female, 31% male) and found that high grit scores were associated with higher GPAs ($r = .25$, $p < .01$) as well as lower SAT scores ($r = -.20$, $p < .03$) which demonstrates that people compensate by working harder with greater determination.

In another study, the 12-item grit scale was the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.31$, $p < 0.02$) over and above the whole candidate score or conscientiousness in determining the summer retention of West Point cadets (Duckworth et al, 2007). This research leaves a gap in determining how grit might impact student performance in underperforming schools as there is oft something that propels students to succeed despite obstacles (Tough, 2012).

The Chicago Consortium of Schools examined what that something is that propels students to succeed beyond test scores. The literature review highlights the importance of

focusing on noncognitive factors leading to students developing as learners leading to high course grades (Farrington, Roderick, Allensworth, Nagaoka, Seneca Keyes, Johnson, & Beechum, 2012). The noncognitive factors as a focus of development include academic behaviors, academic perseverance, academic mindsets, learning strategies, and social skills (Farrington et. al, 2012), all of which are within the scope of counselor training and practice.

Minoritized students grapple with how to navigate these insidious social constructs for which they have boundless experiential knowledge and little cognitive understanding of how these constructs are manifestations of fear and the need for continued power and influence. Our students feel the sting of ethnocentric monoculturalism but scoff their feelings off as “being just the way it is.” They feel the threat of stereotypes and uphold those stereotypes through behaviors associated with the intense frustration of feeling evaluative pressures framed with expectations of failure. Despite this, some students are able to prevail and overcome these obstacles. The most important question is “how?” Perhaps their success is inspired through intrinsic personal attributes such as grit or the development of noncognitive factors including tenacity, delayed gratification, self-control, growth mindset and other behaviors associated with development of student academic identity. Though teachers could be overwhelmed by the need to teach more (Farrington et. al, 2012), focus on noncognitive factors in the development of student success centers directly on the practice and expertise of professional school counselors. More generally, out of transformed, modern acts of segregation grow persistent opportunity and achievement gaps for which school counselors are trained and readily poised to lead current reform through professional school counseling practice shifts with cultural competence as the foundation.

Though school counselors are trained and readily poised to lead current reform, as discussed, the profession of school counseling is oft misunderstood and thought of as ancillary support toward student success. In order to aid in the understanding of how school counselors can be helpful in the process of coping with potentially devastating social constructs, it is essential to define school counseling and explore trends contributing to different kinds of practice.

School Counseling Definitions

Traditional or status quo. Historically, the profession of school counseling has seen great shifts in practice in response to growing and changing population needs. Initially, school counseling took the shape of vocational guidance and slowly progressed toward what could be conceptualized as the traditional model of practice of school counselors (Mason, 2010; Gysbers, 2002). This practice includes coordination, counseling and consultation with the focus on helping students on a more individual basis through the above-mentioned practices (ASCA, 2012).

Transition. However, current practice is not stable nationally, across states or even at the local level. Current practice reflects dramatic fluctuations in position topography in response to a changing practice landscape driven by education reform initiatives. According to the College Board report on The State of School Counseling in America (Bridgeland et al., 2011) the following statistics document a snapshot of school counseling practice in the United States:

“Currently, 36 states have comprehensive school counseling programs with individual counseling program plans. Twenty-nine states require schools to provide counselors for K–8 students. Thirty-two states require schools to provide counselors for students in grades nine through twelve. Nineteen states have set a required minimum student-to-

counselor ratio. These range from 1:500– 749 in Alabama to 1:250 in Maine, with some states adopting complex formulas” (p.27).

However, for the most part school counselors are working in positions with job descriptions as diverse as the students they serve (Bridgeland et al., 2011). As evidenced, there is much deviation in the variety and emphasis of professional responsibilities shaping school counselors’ practice. Thus, confusion persists related to current function, purpose and role of the school counselor as it looks in practice due to the changing landscape (Bridgeland et al., 2011; Colbert, Vernon-Jones & Pransky, 2006; Dahir, 2004; Dahir & Stone, 2009; Sears 1999) leaving school counselors and the students they serve in limbo. It is clear that school counselor practice operational definitions vary as much as the landscape from one school to the next. This lack of consistency evidences a profession in the midst of transition.

Transformed school counselor. Though pronounced role confusion persists as a result of the varied descriptions of school counselor roles across the nation, clear expectations exist for the transformed school counselor due to national educational crises and resultant legislation. The Education Trust’s National Center for Transforming School Counseling (NCTSC) drives counselors to work on the system as opposed to one student at a time through the analysis of data (Colbert & Perusse, 2007). ASCA (2012) has attempted to unify counselor vision and voice through the creation of the ASCA National Model designed to focus practice toward improving student achievement in an organized systemic fashion emphasizing program foundation, delivery, management and accountability, similar to the goals of NCTSC. The model delineates clear, comprehensive competencies encompassing knowledge, abilities and skills, and attitudes as they relate to each facet of the model leaving little room for interpretation. Two clear components supporting the model are themes of leadership and advocacy (ASCA, 2012) that are

not characteristic of traditional models of school counseling but have arisen out of need to link counselor practice to student outcomes through accountability practices. Within the advocacy theme of the ASCA National Model, counselors are expected to advocate for the individual student, engage in school and community collaboration, advocate for the larger system and engage in social and political advocacy (ASCA, 2012). Additionally, NCTSC identifies counselor scope of work to include leadership, advocacy, team and collaboration, counseling and coordination, assessment and use of data (NCTSC, n.d.) with an emphasis on giving the most to those who need the most (NCTSCb, n.d.). Specifically, counselors are expected to engage in programming development, provision and explanation of student data, arrangement of mentoring and defining and carrying out guidance and counseling functions (NCTSCa, n.d.) all of which are defined as leadership roles. Furthermore, counselors are expected to make data readily available and understandable to the whole school, to use that data to affect change while rallying the school and larger community for support while advocating for individual student success and planning (NCTSCa, n.d.). ASCA (2012) proclaims that a school counselor acting as a leader will, “promote professional identity and overcome the challenges of role inconsistency”(p. 1) emphasizing the need for school counselors to call upon leadership skills to drive all other counseling skills and activities (e.g. creation of a comprehensive counseling program, advocacy, collaboration and systemic change). Along with the professional expectations of NCTSC and ASCA are the eight components developed by the National Office for School Counselor Advocacy (NOSCA). The NOSCA eight components include: “academic planning for all students; connect college and career exploration and selection processes; college aspirations; college and career admissions processes; college and career assessments; transition from high school graduation to college enrollment; college affordability planning; and enrichment and

extracurricular engagement” (Bruce & Bridgeland, 2012, pp. 22-23). Driving all of these models is the need to practice from a leadership and social justice perspective in order to close achievement and opportunity gaps while demonstrating accountability. A social justice approach to counseling requires a shift in the way school counselors think about what they do (Holcomb-McCoy, 2007) which will then promote a shift in the way counselors work not only for their students, but for themselves as professionals advocating for their roles. Specifically, Holcomb-McCoy (2007) suggests the following six functions of school counselors who focus on social justice, “counseling and intervention planning; consultation; connecting schools, families, and communities; collecting and utilizing data; challenging bias; and coordinating student services and support” (p. 22). Furthermore, Colbert et al. (2006) address three main bridges to cross toward school counselor role transition and include, “(a) service delivery to schoowide concerns, (b) responsive action to prevention, and (c) an individual to a community building approach” (p. 74).

Professional Practice Upholding Status Quo

School counselors are being asked to shift from a position of support and encouragement to a position of fierce leader and advocate. This shift in practice behaviors and attitudes has been complicated and tumultuous but necessary in the current educational climate. In order to facilitate role change, it is necessary to examine what contributes to current counselor professional behavior, or antecedents. An antecedent in behavioral terms is anything that happens that precedes a behavior.

When asked to conjure up an image of a school counselor, some people would see a picture of a smiling person behind a desk doing a yearly check in, others would see the person who happily came into their classroom to talk about how to be good friends, and still others

might not be able to call an image to mind. An image that is not represented here is one of a fierce advocate or leader in social justice despite this being the expected behavior of current professional school counselors. At the micro, or individual, level counselors often live up to their reputation of being nice people who want everyone to feel wonderful (Bemak & Chung, 2008). However, being an advocate and leader does not support the need for some counselors to avoid and deflect conflict in the school setting (Bemak & Chung, 2008). As a matter of fact, counselors might value being nice more than implementing advocacy and organizational change (D'Andrea & Daniels, 1999). Counselors are cautioned to be careful to not come across as judgmental and are encouraged to focus on what stakeholders have done well when discussing marginalized populations (Wingfield, Reese, & West-Olatunji, 2010) which could be a deterrent to promoting equity. Though if counselors are aware of their racial identity, engage in self-reflection and when working with stakeholders are able to collaborate, give voice, empower, self-examine and raise consciousness they are likely better able to advocate (McMahan, Singh, Urbano, & Haston, 2010). The personhood of the counselor and how it presents through professional practice is “indeed itself a powerful force of change” (McMahan, Singh, Urbano, & Haston, 2010, p.24). Additionally, counselors’ need for self-transcendence is inconsistent with the values necessary to make significant programmatic changes as demanded (Shillingford & Lambie, 2010). Furthermore, counselors have been considered collaborators, doers, rule-followers and motivators (similar to traditional outlook on school counseling) not risk-takers who want to be visionaries in their field (Shillingford & Lambie, 2010) in order to function as leaders and advocates. It is critical to note that school counselors who report higher levels of leadership also report higher levels of comprehensive school counseling program implementation and that certain leadership practices predict level of program implementation (Mason, 2011).

Further perpetuating a cycle of inhibitory antecedent conditions is the construct of counselor self-efficacy (Bruce & Bridgeland, 2012). If counselors do not feel efficacious in their roles, they are less likely to engage in practices that would be considered higher risk-taking. Whereas, counselors with higher reported levels of self-efficacy are more likely to be willing to be held accountable for improving student outcomes (Bruce & Bridgeland, 2012). It is important to consider the roots of counselor efficacy especially when considering urban education. It is possible that counselors might work tirelessly in an effort to close gaps but due to lack of resources (human, technological, fiscal, etc.) they are unable to provide the necessary supports to significantly impact student outcomes and thus could report lower self-efficacy. This might also contribute to a feeling of resistance to evaluation and accountability due to fighting an uphill battle with little requisite resources. Ultimately, counselors face personal challenges to growing into transformed school counselors due to personality characteristics that possibly drew them to the profession, fear of retaliation for becoming a leader and advocate, and either strong or weak self-efficacy that develops as a result of the interaction of numerous personal and systemic factors. These factors will contribute to whether the counselor acts as a status quo counselor or decides to transform practice to fit the changing educational landscape.

At the systemic level of antecedent analysis lie issues pertaining to counselor education and training as well as the attitudes and training of the school based administration with which counselors work. When examining macro level antecedents to school counselor behavior, critical analysis of pre-service and in-service school counselor training is warranted. The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) outlines specific standards for school counseling programming at the university level. CACREP (n.d.) specifies, “students who are prepping to work as school counselors will demonstrate the

professional knowledge, skills and practices necessary to promote the academic, career, and personal/social development of all K-12 students” (n.p.). However, there is no mention of training for the individual counselor in how to become a leader or advocate. In many cases it’s as though the skillset is assumed. For example, CACREP (n.d.) only asks that students have an understanding of the role of school counselor as a change agent with few minor suggestions for images of a leader (design and implement school counseling program, provide programs for parents, teachers, etc...). When examining graduate school counseling programs, very few require students to take professional leadership or advocacy courses as part of the program of study. However, NCTSC has published a listing of twenty-three university preparation programs that partner with their vision to train future counselors as transformed school counselors (NCTSC, n.d.). The majority of school counselors surveyed report that their pre-service and in-service training is insufficient to achieve goals aligned with a transformed school counselor role (Bruce & Bridgeland, 2012). However, much of what a transformed school counselor would do is shaped by the same kinds of analysis and planning that would be used to intervene with an individual student (Colbert & Perusse, 2007). In addition, with the system-wide shift toward accountability, there is an increased emphasis on expertise and utility of data for the purposes of identifying areas and students in need of support and then documenting student change (Dahir, etc...). Many counselors report not feeling prepared or adept with data (Bruce & Bridgeland, 2012), which could contribute to upholding the status quo. Further complicating the matter of counselor education, is pre-service and in-service education of school-based administrators. The transformed school counselor role definition highlights collaboration with school based leadership in order to work toward integration of school improvement goals into counseling program goals; however, little training is provided to either group in how to collaborate in the

changing climate. Perusse, Goodnough, and Bouknight (2007) found that very few education administration faculty members surveyed discussed the transformed role of school counselors with future school principals. Furthermore, most principals surveyed in across numerous studies believe that school counselors should be spending time of special education related duties, and performing duties such as hall, cafeteria and bus duty (Bringman, Mueller, & Lee, 2010). Counselors continue to be viewed as “an understanding trusted resource for personal problem resolution” (Lieberman, 2004) upholding the status quo school counselor role. This lack of collaboration, communication, and comprehensive understanding will continue to perpetuate current practice confusion and dysfunction. School administrators’ views about school counselor practice are misaligned with school counseling associations (Perusse et al., 2007). This is exemplified in that principals often don’t realize the full scope of engagement of clerical and managerial duties of most counselors are encouraged by the very principal who wants the counselor to be a leader (Bruce & Bridgeland, 2012). Amatea and Clark (2005) in a qualitative study of counselor role conceptions by school based administrators found four distinct conceptions including, “innovative school leader, collaborative case consultant, responsive service provider and administrative team player” (np) with the innovative school leader most closely aligning with the ASCA National Model preferences for school counselor practice. The macro level examination highlights issues related to pre-service and in-service training for counselors and school based administrators that are meaningful cogs in the vehicle of counselor practice transformation.

Factors Shaping Transformed Practice

Cultural competence. Cultural competence, or multicultural counseling competence (MCC) more specifically, is not clearly defined in terms of school counseling practice through

professional associations such as ASCA or the NCTSC; however there is a clear ethical push for equity-based practices in school counseling in an effort to close achievement and opportunity gaps (ASCA, 2010). First and foremost, even before understanding cultural competence as it relates to school counseling, professionals in scholarship and practice alike should maintain the understanding that cultural understanding or explorations should not exclusively shape thinking about students' performance (Noguera, 2008). Yosso (2005) reminds readers that culture could very well be a softer, more changeable code for race in education. There is a strong call to ensure that counselors not rely on cultural stereotypes leading to poor intervention planning and development of an even wider chasm between the culturally different counselor and client (Holcomb-McCoy, 2007). Given heightened awareness, the construct of cultural competence can be examined in terms of defining a counselor's intrinsic qualities as well as demonstration of competence through counseling behaviors in order to prevent ethnocentrism (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). Cultural competence, issues measuring cultural competence and predictors of cultural competence are reviewed extensively in counseling literature with empirical support for understanding predictors of cultural competence.

In order to understand why cultural competence is a focus of transformed school counseling reform efforts, cultural competence, and/or multicultural counseling competence definitions are explored. Awareness about cultural difference was reaching an all time high in the late seventies and early eighties as counselors needed ways to work with diverse populations but dissatisfaction for preparation abounded (Smith, Constantine, Dunn, Dinehart, & Montoya, 2006). In response to this dissatisfaction, Sue (1982) developed the Tripartite Development of Personal Identity model (Smith et. al, 2006). Sue's model examines a person through the individual, group, and universal levels of identity development in order to understand that within

each person lives uniqueness blended with gradations of common bonds (Sue & Sue, 2013). This helps to shape the concept that cultural competence provides a vessel for understanding each distinctive story that a counselor should be open to hearing without judgment or influence of stereotype, including his or her own. Multicultural counseling competence definitions are based on the development of knowledge, attitudes, and skills relevant to working with diverse populations (Sue & Sue, 2013; Constantine, 2001; Holcomb-McCoy, 2007). However, Holcomb-McCoy and Myers (1999) suggest supplementing knowledge, attitudes, and skills with familiarity of multicultural terminology and racial identity development theories. Sue and Sue (2013) broadly define cultural competence not as something that is a destination, rather a process that involves development and continuous reassessment of the following, “(1) Therapist awareness of one’s own assumptions, values, and biases; (2) Understanding the worldview of culturally diverse clients; and (3) Developing appropriate intervention strategies and techniques” (p. 48).

As Sue and Sue (2013) suggest, part of becoming culturally competent entails truly knowing thyself. In order to develop cultural competence, the counselor should have an awareness that all people interact with their race, culture and ethnicity (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). The larger question then becomes, if and how does our knowledge and awareness of our own race and ethnicity impact our impressions of our work with minoritized clients? Scholars have found inconsistent relationships between race/ethnicity and MCC of school counselors with regard to evidence of a relationship between training and multicultural competence (Manese, Wu, & Nepomuceno, 2001); other studies found that minorities reported higher scores on MCC than White counterparts (Constantine, 2001) but then there were no

significant differences found between Whites and racial/ethnic minority counselors on MCC when evaluated on multicultural training and MCC (Smith et al., 2006).

Chao (2013) examined the relationship between MCC and race/ethnicity with training as a moderator hypothesizing that there are interaction effects of race/ethnicity and training on competence; that multicultural training is positively associated with higher levels of racial identity; racial identity moderates between race/ethnicity and MCC; and that colorblindness, race/ethnicity and multicultural training will interact such that low training and high colorblindness result in low MCC. Results indicated that there is no significant difference in MCC with high levels of training across white and racial / ethnic minority school counselors but with low levels of training, minority counterparts have stronger MCC (Chao, 2013).

Additionally, Chao (2013) found that the interaction of Race / Ethnicity x Racial / Ethnic Identity significantly predicted school counselors' self report of MCC. These findings support Constantine's and Yeh's (2001) findings that the number of formal multicultural counseling courses taken and independent self-construal score were significant predictors of cultural competences as measured by the CCCI-R.

Vinson and Neimeyer (2003) found that even though MCC skills and awareness increased for White participants over time, racial identity development remained static. Due to the difference in trend between Whites and non-White trainees, it is hypothesized that racial identity development and counseling knowledge and skills are not related for non-White trainees (Vinson & Neimeyer, 2003). One of the key factors in studying MCC is that it is a self-report, affective construct that might not reflect actual practice levels of counselors in the field due to the need to appear socially desirable (Constantine, 2001) or maintain the "nice-counselor" (Bemak & Chung, 2008) appearance.

In an effort to deal with this threat to validity, Guzman, Calfa, Keene, & McCarthy (2013) assessed counselors' perceived MCC using the Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey-Revised (Holcomb-McCoy & Myers, 1999) alongside critical incident vignettes, the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale and a demographic survey designed by the authors. Results indicate that self-reported competency was not found to predict demonstrated MCC competency as demonstrated through the vignette exercise (Guzman, Calfa, Keene, & McCarthy, 2013) supporting the notion that self-reported levels of MCC might not necessarily predict or be reflective of culturally competent practice (Constantine, 2001).

Though there is empirical evidence to support a positive relationship between levels of multicultural training and self-reported levels of multicultural competence, what this practice actually looks like is unclear due to differing theoretical definitions. Counselors are left with the charge of practicing with an equity-focused, culturally competent manner, but practical suggestions in the literature are scant. This could be due to the lack of operational definitions of culturally competent practice in applied settings, such as schools. However, Colbert et al., (2006) provide school counselors and researchers with direction for how school counselors might practice from a culturally competent base and provide the School Change Feedback Process.

It is essential to understand and remain acutely aware of behaviors and attitudes in practice related to culture-bound values such as focus on the individual; verbal, emotional and behavioral expressiveness; the value of insight across cultures; balancing self-disclosure; patterns of communication; and class bound values (Sue & Sue, 2013). School counselors have been finding that their practices are Eurocentric with an emphasis on middle class culture and

the cultural values of their students represent diverse worldviews whose needs are not adequately addressed in the Eurocentric model (Lee, 2001).

In ASCA's "The Professional School Counselor and Cultural Diversity" position paper the professional school counselor is expected to provide culturally competent services where the strengths of culturally diverse students are recognized (ASCA, 2009). Furthermore, ASCA (2009) expects school counselors to act as advocates for students who are marginalized and to act as advocates for equity. Suggestions to accomplish equity include developing their own cultural competence as counselors, encouraging cultural relations within the school and promoting the use of inclusive curriculum, textbooks, pedagogy and classroom management methods (ASCA, 2009). However, the most critical suggestion for addressing this issue in schools is for counselors to act as leaders in the facilitation of cultural knowledge and skill building to all school personnel (ASCA, 2009). Bridging this gap for school counselors is consideration of factors contributing to defining a culturally responsive school. Lee (2001) identifies eleven salient features of culturally responsive schools including, but not limited to: "The school has adopted a "salad bowl" as opposed to a "melting pot" philosophy of education; The school has been able to capitalize on cultural diversity and maintain academic standards (i.e., it has the same high academic expectations for all students); The school has a core curriculum that is neither Eurocentric nor Afrocentric nor Asiancentric, but rather is Centered" (n.p.). Though school counselors might not have the ability to exercise control over choice of academic core curriculum, school counselors could have the ability to shift views within a school through practicing as suggested. Grothaus and Johnson (2012) compiled a workbook for school counselors in an effort to turn theory into doable action within the school setting using a guided approach to walk counselors through the process of identifying, understanding and

applying their MCC knowledge, attitudes, and skills. Chapter titles include, “Constructing a culturally alert foundation; Leading the way; Multiculturally responsive management; Advocacy actions and attitudes; Delivering for diverse stakeholders; Culturally competent collaboration; It all adds up to accountability; Systemic change for the better; and Creating Culturally Competent School Counseling programs” (np). The authors align with Holcomb-McCoy (2007) in that culturally competent practice should work toward eradicating “isms” that contribute to inequity in our school environments such as institutional racism, sexism, classism, etc...(Grothaus & Johnson, 2012).

Ultimately, cultural competence in counseling involves knowing thyself and knowing when your actions as a counselor are working toward the goal of equity and when they are maintaining stereotypes to further marginalize students. Knowledge, attitudes and skills are common facets underlying MCC definitions and help to shape not only intrinsic self-defining characteristics of the counselor, but also what the counselor then does with their knowledge and attitudes to affect change. As evidenced, with greater exposure to MCC training, self-report of MCC increases as well leaving the door open for school counselors to work to align attitudes with demonstrated skills.

There is not a universal definition for what MCC looks like in a school; however, individual school counselors can use their knowledge and attitudes to develop the larger attitudes of the school culture and skills of professionals within their buildings to support their individual needs. School counselors’ cultural competence frames their work in social advocacy behaviors of leadership, advocacy, and accountability that serve to create a visible role and potentially impact on critical student outcomes.

Leadership. Counselors are expected to perform as leaders given the current educational climate of accountability in an effort to address the widening opportunity and achievement gaps (Bemak, 2000; Bemak & Chung, 2005, Bemak & Chung, 2008; Bridgeland & Bruce, 2011; Colbert, Vernon-Jones & Pransky, 2006; Dahir, 2004; Dahir & Stone, 2009; Education Trust, n.d.; Hart & Jacobi, 1992; Herr, 2002; House & Hayes, 2002; House & Sears, 2002; Holcomb-McCoy, 2007; Sears, 1999). Counselors are expected to be leaders and link their practice goals to school improvement plans in an effort to define a relationship between counseling programming and critical local foci (Perusse & Colbert, 2007). Effective school counseling leadership strengthens school counselors' abilities to implement data-driven programming and requires these characteristics to challenge inequities (Young in ASCA, 2012). Analyzing data, school improvement plans, and resource availability in an effort to create and implement meaningful equity based goals requires school counselors to act as educational leaders. Leadership can be view as a fluid in the process of letting go of the nice counselor syndrome (Bemak & Chung, 2008) in an effort to become systemic change agents (ASCA, 2003). Leadership is examined generally, as it applies to school counseling practice and through review of qualitative and quantitative analyses linking leadership to student outcomes.

In general, leadership is defined as, "the action of leading a group of people or an organization" (Google, n.d.). Leadership in this context creates the image of a counselor leading groups within a school or leading the organization itself. Leadership models exist across disciplines with emphases on personal characteristics, and actions of leaders. It is critical to shape the understanding that management is a construct that requires leadership skills to carry out and that leaders are made and experience character and vision outside of the school setting (Ford & Nelson, 2007). Leadership is thought to overcome the context of a situation whereas

managers concede, “Leaders conquer the context while managers surrender to it” (Bennis, 1994, p. 37). Attempting to close the achievement gap includes a transformational process in counselor role and this transformational process includes the ability to create an inspiring vision; excellent communication skills; knowledge of challenges; a certain comfort with conflict that comes with change; skills to navigate short and long term outcomes; and a model of integrity (Heilbrunn, 1994).

The intensified focus on leadership is representative of a profession committed to professional responsiveness. ASCA (2012) discusses several definitions of leadership leaving the school counselor to decide which definition suits their needs best. Despite an imprecise definition of leadership, ASCA (2012) asserts that school counseling leadership, “supports academic achievement and student development; advances effective delivery of the comprehensive school counseling program...”(p. 1). The ASCA (2012) ties components of the ASCA National Model to general leadership theory and school counseling leadership activities in an effort to link counselor practice to leadership contexts. As noted previously, Bolman and Deal (2008) identify structural, human resource, political, and symbolic leadership which ASCA (2012) then links to Dollarhide’s school counseling leadership activities (2003). These leadership activities were conceptualized in an effort to align school counselor practice with national standards and move away from inappropriate functions (Dollarhide, 2003). For example, under the umbrella of structural leadership exist activities such as, “Build the foundation of an effective school counseling program; Attain technical mastery of counseling and education; Design strategies for growth of the school counseling program...”(Dollarhide, 2003, np).

The National Center for Transforming School Counseling (NCTSC) defines school counseling as, “a profession that focuses on the relations and interactions between students and their school environment to reduce the effects of environmental and institutional barriers that impede student academic success” (NCTSC, n.d.). The NCTSC emphasizes social justice and leadership practices through an accountability and equity focused lens in order to close the achievement gap. A shift toward leadership will require a widening of the school counselor’s lens to include school-wide efforts (Colbert et al., 2006; Ryan, Kaffenberger, & Carol, 2011) and a shift in the way counselors behave and are perceived in the school setting.

Researchers in the field are discovering additional strategies and methods to approach the shift to a leadership role. Singh et al. (2010) identified seven strategies that participants in her study used in acting as social advocates including: using political savvy to navigate power structures; consciousness raising; initiating difficult dialogues; building intentional relationships; teaching students self-advocacy skills; using data for marketing; and educating others about the school counselor role of advocate. These seven strategies might seem like typical practice of a school counselor; however, her strategies are less aligned with service delivery and more aligned with navigating political and power dynamics within a school culture.

Additionally, Colbert et al. (2006) recommends shifting focus from providing service to individual students and their families to include a focus on school-wide concerns thereby requiring an expansion of the counselor’s depth of field in terms of service provision. Colbert and Magouirk Colbert (2003) cited in Colbert et al., (2006) designed the School Change Feedback Process that places counselors at the forefront of promoting school-wide change. The SCFP assesses teachers’ opinions and thoughts related to their own participation in the process of school reform (Colbert et al. 2006). This process would potentially align the counselor as a

professional who empowers and unifies staff while providing a collective voice on difficult issues that individual staff members might not wish to address on their own, thereby maintaining a favorable impression of the school counselor. McCoach and Colbert, (2010) refocused the SCFP on the concept of collective teacher efficacy as a way to determine whether counselors' role in school-wide change could impact the academic achievement gap. Results showed that when controlling for parent socioeconomic status that as collaboration increases the achievement gap decreases. House and Hayes (2002) discuss in depth how counselors can become transformative in their practice through being integral to student success and acting as leaders, collaborators and student advocates (2002). Other methods suggested emphasize the importance of school counselors advocating and collaborating on behalf of themselves and their students toward becoming a school leader (Wingfield, et al., 2010).

Though school counselors are encouraged to act as leaders, research to address how leadership qualities impact the school counselor practice and student outcomes remains negligible. There are several qualitative studies documenting the process of adopting leadership skills as well as quantitative studies that address program implementation and leadership skills (Mason, 2010); and impressions of campus leadership (Armstrong, MacDonald, & Stillo, 2010). At this juncture, most scholarly articles related to school counselor leadership are narrative in nature without any specific research component outside review of literature.

In terms of quantitative studies, Mason (2010) researched the relationship between school counseling program implementation and school counselor leadership practices. Significant predictors of program implementation included Model the Way ($t=3.65, p<0.01$) and Enable Others to Act ($t=2.28, p < 0.05$) practices examined through the Leadership Practices Inventory Self-Instrument (Mason, 2010). This particular study demonstrates that when school counselors

act as leaders they leverage their skills in implementing and maintaining a comprehensive school counseling program.

Qualitative approaches to leadership in school counselor leadership are more prevalent possibly as a result of the relatively new demand for quantitative data as it relates to school counselor practice. Dollarhide (2003) published a case study in which she examined leadership contexts as applied to school counseling and how these leadership contexts and skills were used as an individual counselor. She found that using all four of leadership contexts: structural leadership; human resource leadership; political leadership; and symbolic leadership developed by Bolman and Deal resulted in a significant redefinition of the counseling program (Dollarhide, 2003). She later went on to study the temporal context of leadership for school counselors and found repeated themes for both successful and unsuccessful counselor leaders (Dollarhide, Gibson, & Saginak, 2008). The themes include, “leadership attitudes, goals, external conditions, reactions to resistance, and biggest challenges” (Dollarhide, Gibson, & Saginak, 2008, np). Counselors who were successful leaders took leadership responsibility, “self-defined their roles as a counselor; secured support from others; demonstrated the ability to grow from resistance; and were willing to expand leadership skills” (Dollarhide, Gibson, & Saginak, 2008, n.p.).

Ford and Nelson (2007) investigated secondary school counselors’ perceptions of their roles as educational leaders through a phenomenological study. Following data analysis, the themes under which responses were classified include, “ (a) counselors’ job descriptions and the role of educational leadership; (b) counselors’ perception of their role as educational leader; and (c) counselors’ knowledge of the transforming role of the school counselor” (Ford & Nelson, 2007). According to the results, all counselors perceived themselves as leaders; however, they had no knowledge of the Education Trust Initiative, the National Center for Transformed School

Counseling, or the New Vision Counselor to which leadership is the central focus in closing the achievement gap (Ford & Nelson, 2007).

At present, there are not any studies uniformly defining and assessing transformed school counselor leadership skills and practice and subsequently linking transformed school counselor leadership practices to critical student outcomes.

Advocacy. The need for advocacy-based practices is well documented and encouraged in school counseling literature, professional organizations, and larger government driven initiatives. Most recently, First Lady Michele Obama's *Reach Higher* initiative emphasizes a mission to, "...help make sure all students understand what they need to complete their education, including: Exposing students to college and career opportunities; Understanding financial aid eligibility...; Encouraging academic planning...; and Supporting high school counselors" (Office of the First Lady, 2014). It is essential to notice the emphasis on all students, which covertly addresses the need to close achievement, opportunity and attainment gaps in this country [U.S.A.]. ASCA (2012) has included advocacy as part of the revised ethical standards for school counselors and emphasize the ideal positioning of school counselors to advocate for the academic achievement of every student while closing gaps. Additionally, these standards call on counselors to actively seek to expand cultural competence and commitment to social justice advocacy engaging with students and their significant others including parents, guardians and the larger community (Hatch, 2013; Huey, 2011). The most recent revision of the ASCA National Model includes expanded explanations of the themes supporting the model including advocacy (ASCA, 2012). ASCA encourages school counselors as educational leaders in school reform to promote academic achievement through development of academic, career, and personal/social needs and to, "believe, support and promote every student's opportunity to

achieve success in school” (ASCA, 2012, p. 4). Further supporting the emphasis on advocacy is the Transforming School Counseling Initiative (TSCI). The TSCI focuses on school counselors advocating through their practice in the name of social justice for traditionally marginalized groups. For example, the TSCI supports school counselors advocating for systemic change to place emphasis on students who are traditionally underserved, “... families and communities with long histories of marginalization often have little success in ameliorating the negative effects of official bureaucracies, including schools” (NCTSC, n.d.). The NCTSC (n.d.) advocates that school counselors work to assess student needs with high levels of cultural competency; using data expertise identify gaps and assess barriers to learning; and through leadership coordinate resources to facilitate student success. ASCA and TSCI both support the school counselor acting as an advocate in order to reduce the likelihood of any minoritized, underserved student being set apart from their peers for any reason other than excellence.

Despite the push to act as advocates in social justice educational reform, there exists a lack of clarity in the conceptualization of advocacy as it applies to school counselors. The construct of advocacy has been an expectation of school counselor practice at least since the development of the ASCA National Model (2003) but has existed much longer in counseling practice and literature, dating back to the early 1900s (Kiselica & Robinson, 2001; Chibbaro & Cao, 2008; Chibbaro, 2006). However, the difficulty with advocacy in school counseling is the numerous conceptions of advocacy practice and behaviors. No well-defined description of school counselor advocacy exists in the literature nor do methods exist for measuring advocacy behaviors of school counselors (Chibbaro, 2006; Field & Baker, 2004). In an attempt to understand advocacy from practicing counselors’ perspectives Field & Baker (2004) interviewed school counselors and found three themes including doing more than expected,

operationalization of advocacy behaviors and maintaining focus on the individual student.

Though there seems to be lack of clarity in uniform operational definitions of advocacy for school counselors, certain central ideas cut across most definitions, "... a common theme that advocacy involves identifying unmet needs and taking actions to change the circumstances that contribute to the problem or inequity" (Trusty & Brown, 2005, np). Furthermore, it seems that though ASCA (2012) identifies systemic change as a separate construct; it could be conceptualized as system level advocacy. Exemplifying this assertion is the following, "...school counselors have access to schoolwide achievement, attendance and behavioral data that not only informs the school counseling program but often underscores the need to identify and remove barriers..."(ASCA, 2012, p. 8).

Though no consistent clear definition of advocacy exists in the literature to guide professional school counselors' advocacy practices, the literature suggests what attributes and skills counselors might have in order to carry out advocacy related services. In terms of personal attributes, counselors need to be flexible; have awareness of their own values; and maintain a sense of what is realistic (Field & Baker, 2004). Further supporting this notion are the skills Kiselica & Robinson (2001) highlight for skills for advocacy in counseling with initial emphasis on the ability to appreciate human suffering. They also include the importance of communication skills, the ability to maintain a multisystems perspective and knowledge of how to access and use professional resources. There is a great deal of emphasis on personal attributes of the school counselor including consistent foci on autonomy, others' impressions and inhibition due to the need for counselors acting as advocates to take appropriate risks in reform efforts (Bemak & Chung, 2005; Field & Baker, 2004; Trusty & Brown, 2005). Parikh, Post, and Flowers (2011) were interested in measuring the relationship between counselors' belief in a just

world and their social justice advocacy attitudes. Their findings suggest that the lower the counselor's belief in a just world, the higher their social justice advocacy attitudes (Parikh, Post, & Flowers, 2011). Furthermore, counselors who reported higher levels of political liberalism also reported higher levels of social justice advocacy attitudes (Parikh, Post, & Flowers, 2011). Trusty & Brown (2005) propose not only a counselor's level of autonomy as being essential to the success of advocacy efforts but skills acting as autonomy complements including, "communication skills; collaboration skills; problem-assessment skills; problem-solving skills; organizational skills; and self care skills" (np).

The next question asked by counselors in the field is likely, how do I act as an advocate within my role in a school system? Some might argue that the professional advocacy competencies developed by professional counseling associations, including the American Counseling Association (ACA), and the ASCA could serve to provide a structure or framework by which to conceptualize different strategies (Ratts, DeKruyf, & Chen-Hayes, 2007). In an attempt to address this issue, the ASCA (2012) has devised a table of competencies and advocacy components within the ASCA National Model organized from the micro-level to macro-levels of focus with examples of typical school based activities to highlight areas where advocacy naturally fits into professional school counselor practice. Several scholars in the field have attempted to address how to act as advocates by reviewing and developing models of advocacy. Trusty & Brown (2005) emphasize the importance of counselor autonomy in acting as a social justice advocate. However, in acting as advocates, the school counselor should exercise caution not to erode their relationships with key administrators necessary for moving toward social justice. Trusty & Brown (2005) suggest counselors have a certain kind of advocacy disposition in order in order for advocacy skills to develop. Rather than defining

advocacy through prescriptive activities, Trusty & Brown (2005) suggest a seven step model for the process of advocacy including the following, “(1) Develop advocacy dispositions...(2) Develop advocacy relationships and advocacy knowledge...(3) Define the advocacy problem...(4) Develop action plans... (5) Implement action plans...(6) Make an evaluation... and (7) Celebrate or regroup”(np). Chibbaro (2006) also proposes practical suggestions for counselors to act given differing factors that shape our students’ experiences across different settings. The general suggestions, regardless of type of setting include, “(1) Conduct a needs assessment; (2) Develop a plan of action; (3) Take assertive action; (4) Follow-up to ensure changes or solutions are being implemented” (p. 27-28). More specific to the work of school counselors are the suggestions proposed by Bemak & Chung (2005) in order to become an advocate who includes significant influences on the lives of traditionally marginalized students in their planning and daily work. They suggest thirteen guidelines for becoming an advocate in the schools including aligning with marginalized students and their families; partnering with principals who will work toward social change; directly teaching students about their rights while providing tools of change; understanding how to promote social action within a sociopolitical context; and utilizing data to change professional roles and point out inequities (Bemak & Chung, 2005).

Accountability. Driving and supporting school counselor practice reform is practice centered on accountability especially in light of the data driven emphases of NCLB goals and First Lady Obama’s Reach Higher initiative (NCLB, 2001; Office of the First Lady, 2014). Accountability in general is, “an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one’s actions” (Merriam-Webster, 2015a). As defined by ESEA flexibility documents, states must have data systems in place to track critical information as it is related to how prepared

students are in terms of college and career readiness (USDOE, 2013) bringing school counselor practice into the spotlight of education reform. Accountability is the vehicle by which counselors in schools can demonstrate links from practice to changes in student outcomes, or data, related to closing the achievement gap thereby supporting students and school counselors' worthiness (Brown & Trusty, 2005). Ultimately, school counselors need to become routine users of data since increased academic performance is a mandated goal for all students (Dahir & Stone, 2009).

School reform has made it necessary for school counselors to become adept at analyzing student and school based data to drive decisions related to individual student and curricular programming. School counselors can shrink obstacles to learning by competing in a data-driven landscape through effective use of data to support counseling, collaboration, leadership and advocacy practices (House & Hayes, 2002) ultimately creating better outcomes for all students. School counselors have not readily begun to use data to drive decision making in meaningful, efficient ways to address issues related to equity and improving achievement (Dahir & Stone, 2009; Schlossberg, Morris, & Lieberman, 2001; Whiston & Quinby, 2009; White, 2007). However, school counselors need to become adept at data analysis and management in order to "actually 'prove' the effectiveness of their CSCP work" (Wood & Winston, 2007) and to demonstrate the continued benefit from comprehensive guidance programs (Sink, 2009).

Though establishing causal links is unlikely due to the variety of factors that influence student achievement, counselors are encouraged to focus on, "establishing the efficacy of interventions that increase academic achievement, not the entire program" (Brown & Trusty, 2005). Teachers have long been expected to use data tracked through use of scientifically research based intervention to guide overall planning and individual student goals, whereas school counselors use of data might have been limited to data tracking for purposes of reviewing

special education goals and objectives. School counselors need to begin to align their practice to school improvement goals and produce data that measures salient need and progress related to student outcomes and climate (Bruce et al., 2012). Dahir's book, *The Transformed Counselor* (as cited: Bridgeland & Bruce, 2011), proposes techniques to align data to the 2009 Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP) standards. School counselors should not only have data related to smaller counseling programs for students receiving additional support, but access to data for every student in their school(s). School counselors have qualitative information about students and their families that can help to shape appropriate interventions at the school-wide level as well as the individual level. Having access to qualitative and quantitative data sets the stage for school counselors to be in a position to act as leaders in school reform (House & Hayes, 2002) as they have their hands on the pulse of the community.

ASCA (2012) encourages school counselors to use data in prevention of barriers that deny students opportunity and access, "...they utilize data to prevent and remove environmental and institutional barriers that deny students high-level academic, career and college access and personal/social opportunities"(p. 14). This calls on school counselors to become adept at utilizing evidence based practices as well as analyzing and interpreting data generated from those practices. Dimmitt, Carey, and Hatch (2007) encourage the use of their model that makes recommendations for counselors using data to determine problems, interventions, and whether or not the interventions were effective. This calls on counselors to use data and consider research methods such as single subject design as well as quantitative and qualitative analyses in order to link research, practice and student outcomes (Dimmitt et. al, 2007; Kaffenberger & Young, 2013; Young & Kaffenberger, 2011; Eschenauer & Chen-Hayes, 2005). Traditionally, school

counselors have taken a rather negative view of data (Eschenauer & Chen-Hayes, 2005) and this view could lead to counselors to stray away from data based practices. Furthermore, another problem counselors face is the lack of clarity around what needs to be measured, "...the profession still lacks a set of agreed upon, measurable, student learning outcomes that have established relationships to student achievement, a plan for scope and sequence, and psychometrically sound instruments..."(Dimmitt et. al, 2007, p. 13). Given this lack of clarity, there is press to demonstrate accountability through rigorous program and intervention evaluation specifically assessing the actual comprehensive school counseling program components, the staff responsible for implementation, and the impact the program has on student learning (Gysbers, 1995). Once counselors actually evaluate their CSCP or intervention through single case design methodology counselors need to be comfortable and adept at reporting accountability related data to major stakeholders (Dahir & Stone, 2009; Dimmitt et al. 2007; Kafenberg & Young, 2013; ASCA, 2012). Sink (2009) supports that accountability related data reporting should be done in a systematic predictable way to key stakeholders.

Demonstrating accountability through data analysis, interpretation, and action planning is an integral theme of the ASCA National Model and key to the National Center for Transforming School Counseling scope of work (ASCA, 2012; NCTSC, n.d.). Furthermore, the University of Massachusetts at Amherst launched the Center for School Counseling Outcome Research in an effort to support evidence based school counseling practice (Sink, 2009). School counselors are expected to implement data-driven programs while monitoring student progress through data analysis in order to make adjustments to programming to effect positive change for all students (ASCA, 2012). School counselors are encouraged to ask the following types of questions in the analysis of available data, "What strengths are indicated by the data at your school?; What

concerns are raised about the data?; Do achievement gaps exist?; Have attendance rates changed?; How is your school counseling program addressing the gaps?” (ASCA, 2012, p. 100). By suggesting school counselors pose equity based inquiries, the association is supportive of school counselors acting as advocates for success of all students and subsequently taking responsibility for making changes in programming to effect student outcomes. ASCA (2012) identified three different kinds of data for school counselors to monitor including process, perception and outcome data in order to effectively assess curriculum, small-group and achievement gap related data reports. However, many school counselors continue to report only process data, a.k.a. bean counting, which is not effective in demonstrating the impact of academic related student outcomes (Dahir & Stone, 2009).

One of the largest hurdles school counselors face in accountability practices is engaging in the process of data collection and analyses given the lack of clarity around what to measure or how. Additionally, Young & Kaffenberger (2011) report, “...when school counselors feel more confident in their abilities, they are more likely to use data to address achievement gap issues” (p. 68). In order to better understand the reasons why some school counselors use data, Young & Kaffenberger (2011) conducted a study in which the goal was to determine the data usage patterns and motivational beliefs of school counselors in Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP) schools exploring six different research questions. Their findings point to strong points as well as concerns that support the existing literature on accountability in school counseling practice. In terms of data reporting, 81% (n=91) of counselors surveyed report data narratively rather than using tables or charts (Young & Kaffenberger, 2011). However, only 5 of the 48 counselors in the same study reported sharing data with stakeholders in order to advocate for the profession (Young & Kaffenberger, 2011).

Given the weightiness of accountability as it relates to comprehensive school counseling programs, examination accountability as it relates to proximal and distal outcomes for students is vital to understanding extant debates. Meta-analyses as well as individual studies are reviewed to develop a sense for existing accountability data linked to school counselor intervention, programming and student outcomes.

Dimmitt et. al (2007) created a comprehensive summary of outcome research articles related to school counseling intervention. The research domains examined included in their assessment include the following: “school counseling programs; meta-analyses and research summaries; academic achievement: family interventions; academic achievement; career development; social and emotional functioning; and research linking social and emotional functioning with academic achievement” (pp. 184-206). Of the 14 studies examined in terms of counseling intervention (family, classroom, small group and individual) 10 showed moderate to strong effect on academic achievement (no specific high stakes measure indicated) and other related proximal outcomes (Dimmitt et al., 2007). In terms of career development studies related to school counseling programming, one study that was a meta-analysis of career education on grade point average found minimal effects (mean ES = 0.16) suggesting career development programming has little effect on larger student outcomes (Dimmitt et. al, 2007). However, 10 studies demonstrated positive changes in proximal student outcomes directly related to the career development program (Dimmitt et. al, 2007). Of the 42 studies presented on social and emotional functioning, 35 indicate significant changes to immediate proximal student outcomes targeted by the intervention suggesting programs can change students’ proficiency related to specific skills (Dimmitt et. al, 2007).

Considering there is much debate surrounding the usefulness of school counseling programs, numerous studies have attempted to capture the effects of school counseling programs on distal student outcomes such as achievement, graduation rates, drop out rates, and college application patterns. A meta-analysis conducted to measure the effectiveness of school counseling intervention on academic achievement yielded results evidencing the strongest effect sizes with guidance curriculum ($d = .35$) and responsive services ($d = .35$) in comparison to programwide evaluation ($d = .19$) and interventions labeled as “other” ($d = .05$) (Whiston, Tai, Raharjda, & Eder, 2011). However, the authors report the possibility of additional moderator variables as they found “significant residual pooled within-group variance...for guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and programwide evaluation” (Whiston et. al, 2011, p. 42). Interestingly, this meta-analysis provides support for teachers embedding counseling intervention into coursework as teachers were significantly better than others studied, including counselors, at providing intervention (Whiston et. al, 2011). Whiston et. al (2011) found that school counseling interventions are effective at decreasing discipline problems ($d = .83$) and increasing students’ capacity for problem solving which could increase instructional time yielding increased achievement as well. However, due to the ratio of counselors to students, it is unlikely that counselor intervention alone can increase student achievement (Whiston et. al, 2011). Carey et. al (2012) studied counselor practice and links to student outcomes in 144 high schools in Utah and found that the amount of time school counselors spent engaging in activities aligned with the ASCA model was significantly associated with math proficiency ($r = .364$), program completion ($r = .344$) and graduation ($r = .315$). In a similar study, Carey et al. (2012) focused on Nebraska schools in a similar manner. In this study, they found that although the proportion of time spent in guidance curriculum activities correlated positively

with graduation rate ($r = .183$, $n = 127$, $p < .039$), though the amount of time spent in responsive services correlated significantly with suspension rate ($r = .273$, $n = 128$, $p < .002$) and graduation rate ($r = -.190$, $n = 126$, $p < .033$) but in directions that do not appear to support engagement in the program. Lapan & Harrington (2010) conducted a study of Chicago Public Schools and predictors of PSAT test scores, enrollment in advanced placement courses, application to three or more colleges and found that the 12 Touch program was a clear significant predictor of high school seniors applying to three or more colleges ($R^2 \text{ change} = .132$, $F \text{ Change} = 7.746$, $p = 0.008$). It was also determined that engagement in non-guidance tasks tends to yield results showing a greater number of students dropping out of school (Lapan & Harrington, 2010). Carey and Dimmitt (2012) found that having more school counselors serving students reflects in differences in attendance and discipline referrals amongst other differences related to suspension rates, engagement in school and appropriate peer interaction. Furthermore, Lapan, Gysbers, and Petroski (2003) found that students from schools with more fully implemented counseling programs reported better outcomes. Schlossberg, Morris, and Lieberman (2001) found that it is possible for students who participate in a ninth grade counseling program to have better school attitudes while having developmental needs met.

Given the emphasis on accountability in Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP) schools, examining data from exemplar accountability model schools could present clear information with regard to the potential impact of strong counseling program implementation on student outcomes. Wilkerson, Perusse, & Hughes (2013) examined the AYP progress of schools in Indiana in RAMP and non-RAMP schools over a four year period from pre-identification to two years post-identification. Findings suggest that there are links between RAMP designation and student achievement; however, there is no significant change across time in high stakes

achievement scores (Wilkerson et. al, 2013). Descriptive statistics indicate that student proficiency at RAMP schools exceeded student proficiency at non-RAMP schools at elementary, middle, and high school levels but that statistically significant differences were evident only at the elementary school level (Wilkerson et. al, 2013). This significant difference at the elementary level supports press for early intervention with counselors acting as accountable leaders.

Though there is demand for accountability practices linking school counselor intervention and programming to distal student outcomes, the existing support for such linkages is conceptually inconsistent with somewhat erratic outcomes. Existing research evidences relationships between counselor intervention and programming; however, the results are inconsistent and in need of further exploration with sound methodology and instrumentation. Additional evidence of research supporting counseling toward the aim of being social justice advocates and closing the achievement gap through accountability needs to be conducted in order to further solidify school counselors' roles in closing the gap efforts.

Minoritized students in urban, under-resourced districts navigate rough, unyielding seas with a powerful riptide in the form of ethnocentric monoculturalism and stereotype threat that is continuously threatening to pull them off course into even more treacherous inescapable circumstances. Some people will argue that the past is in the past and that what happened to our ancestors doesn't impact the here and now. However, injustices suffered by minoritized students' ancestors in the form of outright racism have shaped our students' present, as racism is analogous to energy; it doesn't disappear, it only changes form. The form that racism has taken in recent years is tricky, sly, and under the radar and insidious enough to make people feel as though they have gone mad and for no apparent reason.

Despite the tremendous injustices faced by minoritized students, many have spoken out and risen above the noise to shout about their unwillingness to be kept down and denied access to educational attainment based purely on race. However, the successes of our ancestors in the presence of overt racism wanes in the overwhelming shadow of students being held down by the devious social constructs quietly and swiftly pulling the achievement gap wide open.

The next logical question could be, “So now what?” Now, it is time for educators to identify and recognize the roots of the achievement gap and call into action all of their professional resources in an attempt to fully educate and empower our marginalized students. Teachers bear the burden of teaching cognitive skills necessary for students to be able to navigate how to solve a problem; so then who teaches students why they should solve a problem and subsequently develop the skills to do so?

School counselors are ideally situated to act as leaders and jump into education reform armed with resources to provide students the chances all students deserve. School counseling has a history of responding to shifts in the cultural, social, and political landscapes in the United States, and once again, it is time for counselors to respond. The ASCA (2012) alongside the National Center for Transforming School Counseling (no date) strongly advocate for the role of the school counselor to shift to one of social justice advocates; but what exactly does this mean? Furthermore, do all counselors feel the need to practice in a manner that is aligned with social justice? In order for all students to succeed and equitably access opportunities, school counselors as a community of professionals need to collectively assess, define, and be proactive within their roles with practice emphases on well defined constructs of leadership, advocacy, and accountability.

A gap in the literature exists with regard to current school counselor practice demands of shifting practice foci and the available support to conduct transformed school counselor work. There is evidence to support counselors working as leaders and advocates with accountability; however, there is a gap with regard to how working counselors believe that they should be engaging in these behaviors; the level of support for them to engage in social advocacy behaviors; and the degree to which school counselors actually engage in social advocacy behaviors. In order to focus and redefine the practice of school counseling, it is necessary to understand the practical reality of school counseling and beliefs of school counselors in order to adequately support and intervene in an organized, data-driven manner.

Chapter III

Research Methods

Operational Definitions and Assumptions

In order to communicate clearly about what this study proposes to measure and operationalization of the term social advocacy behaviors measured in this study follows.

School counselor. Any professional employed by public schools in the State of Connecticut who has earned a School Counselor certification. In the State of Connecticut, school counselors must complete a master's degree, ten month full-time internship, graduate level coursework in, "principles and philosophy of developmental guidance and counseling; psychological and sociological theory as related to children; career development theory and practice; individual and group counseling procedures; pupil appraisal and evaluation techniques; school based consultation theory and practice; and evidence of laboratory and practicum experiences in school counseling" (Connecticut State Department of Education, 2001).

Social advocacy behaviors. School Counselor social advocacy behaviors involves leadership and accountability. Being a social advocate includes starting difficult conversations and building / maintaining intentional relationships while empowering and unifying staff. School counselors communicate, collaborate, plan, and problem solve in order to provide equitable educational access while aligning with marginalized students and their families. Social advocacy also calls on school counselors to collaborate but function autonomously in their ability to take on salient issues related to inequity.

Social advocacy behaviors also include accountability driven practice foci involving competence with data analysis in order to identify and remove barriers to educational attainment; target intervention to provide equitable opportunities, use assessment to develop counseling

program goals and integrate goals with school improvement goals; use data to review impact of interventions on key student outcomes; and communicate those outcomes to key stakeholders.

Research Design

The design chosen for this study is a non-experimental design in which current existing characteristics, such as counselor attitudes and demographics, are explored in addition to correlation and prediction analyses across the study variables examined through the online survey instrument developed for this study, the School Counselor Social Advocacy Scale (See Appendix A1 for the original document and Appendix A8 for the final document). The variables measured in this study include Importance, or the degree to which counselors believe they should engage in certain social advocacy behaviors; Support, the quality of support counselors feel they have available to engage in social advocacy behaviors; and Engagement, or the frequency that the counselor actually engages in the social advocacy behavior. Individual survey questions are also identified as variables within this study. Other variables include demographic considerations. Please see the variable table, Table 1 to see the initial items developed for the SCSAS.

Table 1. Variable values and variable description for initial SCSAS

Variable value(s)	Variable description
Importance	The level of how valuable school counselors feel an identified behavior is in their work as a school counselor
Support	The quality of support school counselors feel an identified behavior has in their work as a school counselor
Engagement	The level of how frequently school counselors participate in an identified behavior is in their work as a school counselor
Q1I, Q1SS, Q1E	I develop school counseling programs that align with school improvement plans
Q2I, Q2S, Q2E	I initiate difficult conversations with staff in my building
Q3I, Q3S, Q3E	I build relationships with key stakeholders with intention
Q4I, Q4S, Q4E	I guide staff in the implementation of school wide counseling

	program interventions
Q5I, Q5S, Q5E	I empower staff to unify on important issues
Q6I, Q6S, Q6E	When I encounter resistance, I am resilient
Q7I, Q7S, Q7E	I seek out support when I need it
Q8I, Q8S, Q8E	I complete clerical work for college applications for my students
Q9I, Q9S, Q9E	I work in my office on counseling related tasks
Q10I, Q10S, Q10E	I act as a systems change agent
Q11I, Q11S, Q11E	I only focus on getting students the classes they need
Q12I, Q12S, Q12E	I develop school counseling programs that teach students about their rights
Q13I, Q13S, Q13E	I develop action plans to address problems related to inequity.
Q14I, Q14S, Q14E	I provide counseling that is culturally relevant for our students
Q15I, Q15S, Q15E	I follow up to make sure action plans are in place
Q16I, Q16S, Q16E	I keep to myself in order to get work done.
Q17I, Q17S, Q17E	I align with marginalized students
Q18I, Q18S, Q18E	I have strong problem solving skills
Q19I, Q19S, Q19E	I help staff in my building recognize inequity
Q20I, Q20S, Q20E	I use data to improve school counseling program interventions
Q21I, Q21S, Q21	I analyze school data
Q22I, Q22S, Q22E	I use school counseling programs that have always worked in the past
Q23I, Q23S, Q23E	I use data to identify barriers to educational attainment
Q24I, Q24S, Q24E	I lead communication about data
Q25I, Q25S, Q25E	I review data to determine the effect of programs on student outcomes
Q26I, Q26S, Q26E	I use a school counseling program based on what I think the students feel
Q27I, Q27S, Q27E	I use counseling program data to target interventions to close the achievement gap
Q28I, Q28S, Q28E	I conduct needs assessments in order to effectively work with faculty and staff
Q29I, Q29S, Q29E	I present data as it relates to overall school and district performance

The research questions center on understanding school counselor attitudes, beliefs of support and professional behaviors as they relate to the construct of social advocacy as defined in

this study. The remainder of the study was dedicated to finding relationships between social advocacy behaviors and relevant demographic information in an effort to help define counselor roles and subsequently shift resources to where they would be most useful. This study also examined the predictive value of demographic data on school counselor social advocacy behaviors.

Sample

The sample of participants targeted for collection of data related to school counselor social advocacy was school counselors working in urban, suburban and rural settings in the State of Connecticut. An email message describing the study was sent to urban, suburban and rural school counselors and counseling department chairs explaining the purpose of the survey and asking for their participation in completion of the online survey (please see Appendix A2). The members of the Connecticut School Counselor Association were also sent an email requesting their feedback through participation in the online survey (See Appendix A4). A total of 185 school counselors responded to the survey. Across the survey responses, 48 were consistently missing across the demographic data suggesting counselors chose not to respond to demographic questions.

Convenience sampling was used to access local urban school counselors for whom the researcher could visit in person.

Recruitment. Targeted school counselors self-selected to participate in the study through the online survey process. Initially, a notice was sent to individual school counseling department chairs for school counselors to participate in the study anonymously. Additionally, an email was sent to members from the member directory of the Connecticut School Counselor Association where school counselors can click to participate in the study anonymously. Individual school

counselors in the State of Connecticut were also emailed requesting their participation in the survey. Please see Appendix A2 for the letter sample. The study author also visited local urban schools in order to provide notices in person for counselors to participate in the study anonymously.

Consent. Participants who self-select to participate in the study were provided an information sheet and the option to check a box to agree to consent in study participation on the study survey website.

Protection of anonymity. Participants took an online survey through qualtrics.com in which s/he was not asked to provide identifying information beyond basic demographics targeted to help understand the data provided in the study. The online survey does not require participants to provide information that could link the survey responses back to the individual responder. All data were collected and stored anonymously using the qualtrics.com website and later downloaded to the researcher's P drive as an SPSS data file on the University of Connecticut computer network.

Survey Completion. Participants who self-selected to complete the online survey had the option of not completing the survey if a participant decided not to continue with participation.

Analyses

In order to answer the first three research questions, descriptive statistics were examined as they relate to school counselors' attitudes related to the degree to which they believe that they should engage in social advocacy behaviors, the quality of level of support in order to engage in social advocacy behaviors; and the degree to which school counselors self – report engaging in social advocacy behaviors. Prior to running descriptive statistics, a scatter plot was assessed to

gain visual information as it relates to heterogeneity of the sample and range of scores. Simple descriptive statistics including frequency and mean were examined.

In order to answer research questions four and five, analyses examined relationships among the variables. Specifically, Pearson product-moment correlations (r) were calculated for question 4 and Chi-Square values were computed for question 5 due to the categorical nature of the demographic questions.

For question four, the data was measured using an interval scales thus Pearson r was appropriate. Assumptions were made that the data have linear relationships and that there is sufficient response heterogeneity of the sample. Relationships examined using Pearson r include: (1) the degree to which counselors feel they should engage in social advocacy behaviors; the quality of support for engaging in social advocacy behaviors; and the actual level of engagement in social advocacy behaviors.

For question five, relationships between demographic considerations indicated in the measure used in the study such as type of school setting (urban, rural, suburban); type of school (elementary, middle, or high); years of experience; professional association membership; counselor to student ratio; RAMP status; PBIS status; and attitudes about clarity of role within their school/district were examined alongside social advocacy behaviors, thus the use of Pearson r analyses to determine strength of relationships.

In order to answer research questions six and seven, regression analyses were conducted in order to assess the strength of the relationship between dependent variables and independent variables in order to determine a linear equation for predicting the level of the dependent variable given some indicator of the independent variable. Assumptions made include the following: the relationship between the dependent and independent variables are linear; the dependent variable

is continuous; the dependent variable is normally distributed; and the data are homeoscedastic (Swaminathan & Rogers, n.d.).

For question six, the dependent, or predictor, variable is impression of quality of support while the independent, or criterion variables, include counselors' beliefs if they should engage in social advocacy behaviors and their self-reported level of engagement in social advocacy behaviors.

For question seven, the dependent, or predictor variable is demographic considerations while the independent, or criterion variables, include the self-reported engagement in social advocacy behaviors of advocacy based leadership and accountability.

Instrument Development

The School Counselor Social Advocacy Scale (SCSAS) was designed to gain information related to school counselor attitudes as they related to whether they should engage in social advocacy behaviors; the quality of support available in order to engage in social advocacy behaviors; and their actual level of engagement in social advocacy behaviors. The survey was designed due to the lack of appropriate measures existing in the current literature with regard to counselor social advocacy behaviors in a changing practice landscape. McCoach and Colbert (2010) utilized the Collective Teacher Efficacy Scale as a means to begin assessing how school counselors might transform their role to include social advocacy. The instrument developed for this study extended that work to access school counselors directly. Please see Chapter 4 for the detailed development of the SCSAS.

Instrument development purpose. The purpose of this component of the study was to design a survey that examines impressions of school counselor attitudes as related to social advocacy behaviors. The SCSAS was designed to lessen possible issues that arise with self-

report measures. The initial SCSAS was comprised of twenty-nine item stems on three different levels for a total of 87 responses as they relate to the factors supported by the instrument of Importance, Support and Engagement. The factors that are examined give the participant the option to present a multi-faceted response that is less dependent on the participant appearing socially desirable. It gives counselors the opportunity to provide contextual understanding of the frequency of behaviors related to transformation that will help to guide intervention and action planning at a later date.

The SCSAS also includes fifteen demographic questions in order to get additional information about other factors that could contribute to school counselor attitudes and self-reported behaviors examined by the SCSAS. The demographic questions include inquiries related to the following: school/work setting (urban, suburban, or rural); type of school (elementary, middle, or high); district ERG (Educational reference group); stage of professional career (in training or working); years working as a school counselor; professional memberships; current school RAMP status; number of students in school; number of counselors in school; involvement in intervention groups/meetings; involvement in PBIS meetings (if PBIS school); leadership opportunities; teacher involvement in counseling programming; and professional role clarity.

The instrument was developed through conducting a literature review; developing content and content validation. The survey was then tested through recruitment of school counselors nationwide in order to be able to gather enough data to run a confirmatory factor analysis; reliability testing; and subscale generation. The main goal was to develop a survey that has stems with strong correlations to expected factors with no additional factors being identified. It was hypothesized that identified stems would have high correlations with the intended factor and

low to no correlations with other factors. It was also hypothesized that no additional factors would become apparent through statistical analysis of response patterns.

Instrument Sample. The sample of participants targeted for collection of data related to school counselor social advocacy was school counselors working in urban, suburban and rural settings in nationwide. An email message describing the study was sent to national listservs including The ASCA Scene, CESNET-L, explaining the purpose of the survey and asking for their participation in completion of the online survey (please see Appendix A3). The members of the Connecticut School Counselor Association were also sent an email requesting their feedback through participation in the online survey (See Appendix A4). Other state and local school counselor associations were contacted in an attempt to reach additional counselors. These state associations included Florida, Texas, Illinois, and Wisconsin. However, the state associations did not respond to request for assistance in survey development.

Chapter IV

Results

Introduction

This chapter presents data results in two parts (1) instrumentation and (2) study specific data. Part one describes the development process of the School Counselor Social Advocacy Scale. Part two presents response rates, demographics, item analysis of research questions, and item level analysis based on beliefs held by school counselors in the State of Connecticut regarding social advocacy behaviors. Beliefs focus on whether counselors should engage in specific behaviors, the quality of support they feel they have to engage in social advocacy behaviors; and the degree to which they engage in social advocacy behaviors. The research questions posed in Chapter Three will be answered in the study specific data section of the chapter. Any additional relevant relationships in the data are presented following research question analysis.

Instrumentation

Central to school counselors being included in closing the gap conversations are impressions of school counselor role (Bemak & Chung, 2005; Hart & Jacobi, 1992; Savitz-Romer, 2012). Counselor self-efficacy and its relation to outcomes for students have been studied at length; however, there is not a strong understanding of how counselors are making the shift in the field as there is little information pertaining to how counselors feel about specific behavioral and practice expectations or their level of support for doing so. Current measures to address constructs related to counselor work include examination of self-efficacy (School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale), multicultural self-efficacy (School Counselor Multicultural Self-Efficacy Scale), and activities (School Counselor Activity Rating Scale). Though these scales

are psychometrically sound, they are not practically relevant in terms of assessing counselor work with regard to role shift away from status quo practice toward equity-centered social justice practice reflected in current expectations set forth by ASCA and the National Center for Transforming School Counseling (NCTSC).

In order to address the issue of counselors being left out of critical achievement gap discussions, it is essential to examine school counselor beliefs as they relate to the level of Importance quality of Support from administration and actual Engagement in regard to behaviors shaping social advocacy comprising transformed school counseling. If counselor attitudes, level of support and actual level of engagement in the behaviors can be assessed, proper supports can be put into place to define counselor expectations, solidify counselor roles while leading to development of action plans to address critical student needs. At present there is no sound instrument to assess these areas. In order to reflect the shift in counselor work it was necessary to create a measure that captures attitudes as they relate to specific actions that operationalize the shifting role of professional school counselors.

Content validation. In order to validate the content of the School Counselor Social Advocacy Scale survey, a specific process was utilized combining rationale provided by McKenzie et al. (1999) and McCoach, Gable and Madura (2013). Combining these two approaches yielded a comprehensive approach to content validation.

The first step in the process was to conduct an in-depth literature review to determine the conceptual definitions for the construct highlighted on the survey. Following the literature review, definitions were created for leadership, advocacy and accountability as they relate to the practice of school counseling. Following a literature review and development of conceptual

definitions for the construct a sample instrument was created with item stems created to reflect the represented construct.

In order to validate the content of the instrument, it was necessary to gain access to experts in the field of school counseling. For the purposes of this content validation process, experts in the field of school counseling can be defined as anyone with a Ph.D. at the university level who is currently practicing as a counselor educator; anyone with a Master's degree who is currently practicing as a School Counselor in a professional school setting; anyone who is currently a graduate student in a school counseling program and has taken courses on the ASCA National Model in his/her program of studies. In the process of content validation for this study, twenty-two experts were sent an email requesting his/her expertise and seven experts offered content validation feedback.

Expert content validators provided content validation feedback on the content validation form that was created specific to this instrument. The first step in creating the instrument was randomizing the order of the item stems in order to lessen the likelihood that the expert could guess the construct based on item groupings. Following randomization, columns were added to the form next to the stems in order to provide a place for experts to indicate the construct that they felt best represented the item stem, their level of confidence with their choice and the relevance of the item stem to the construct of choice. All responses for confidence and relevance were Likert-style scales. Additionally, content validators were asked for specific qualitative feedback related to the item stems. However, despite being given the opportunity to provide feedback, most content validators did not adequately address this section of the content validation form. Most comments included suggestions such as, "Keep up the good work" or "Nope, it doesn't need anything else." However, one expert did provide feedback related to the

overlap from one construct to the next and expressed concern about being able to differentiate between leadership and advocacy. Additionally, this process has brought light to an issue related to the ambiguity surrounding clear operationalization of professional school counseling standards.

In terms of data analysis, this process aided in streamlining the instrument to be reflective of relevant constructs in the practice of school counseling. In the process of examining each individual construct, it became evident that the constructs of leadership and advocacy needed to be condensed into one construct, advocacy based leadership. The CVI, or content validity index for leadership was 45%; however, the experts were, in some cases, divided about the construct under which the statement fell (e.g. leadership or advocacy specifically) and one expert chose “2” for every response. Without considering the expert’s responses who consistently selected “2” the CVI for leadership was 100%, reflecting agreement about the relevance of the stems. Of the thirteen stems, two are intentionally the opposite of leadership, and one showed an equal split between leadership and advocacy. “I seek out support when I need it” with 50% choosing leadership with high certainty and high relevance and the other 50% choosing advocacy. Overall, two stems were deleted due to high relevance on the initially chosen construct and the other due to redundancy.

The CVI for Advocacy was 20%; however, one expert selected “2” for every response suggesting a possible reporting error. Not considering possible errant response style, the CVI was 90%. Two item stems were deleted due to disagreement on construct and discrepant response style with regard to relevance. For example, “I get what I need to accomplish my goals” was deleted due to even response patterns across three constructs. Another, “I am autonomous in my role” was deleted due to relevance score of “2” or less reported by 71% of

experts. Other stems needed to be moved to a different construct and most stems evidenced a split between leadership and advocacy, which prompted collapsing the two constructs into a single construct called advocacy based leadership.

The CVI for the construct of Accountability was 40%; however, one expert routinely selected choice “2”. Without consideration of the “2” selection, the CVI for the construct of accountability was 90%. Most stems were maintained within accountability; however, “I use data to remove barriers that deny students access to opportunities” was deleted due to discrepancy across construct selection. Additionally, one statement was reworded to reflect a closer relationship to the opposite of accountability on purpose.

Since items were either deleted or condensed into one construct, new stems were developed in consultation with a Ph.D. level content validator. For an in-depth analysis of the quantitative feedback from expert content validators, please see appendices A5-A7.

Overall, The processes aided in the streamlining of the instrument in an effort to accurately capture relevant constructs as they pertain to the work of practicing School Counselors. The content validation process resulted in the development the initial instrument later tested through the confirmatory factor analysis process.

Recruitment and survey response rates. In an effort to reach the highest percentage of the school counseling professionals in the United States, counselors were sought out on three different listservs: the ASCA Scene, CESNET-L, and local Connecticut School Counselor Association email lists. The message was posted to the ASCA Scene on four different occasions, and CESNET-L on three different occasions. In total, 291 school counseling professionals responded to the survey.

Confirmatory factor analysis. The School Counselor Social Advocacy Scale (SCSAS) is an instrument designed with three a priori factors to examine attitudes toward changing school counselor roles. A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was run using SPSS AMOS Version 20 to indicate how well the actual data conforms to the a priori model (McCoach et. al., 2013).

Initial model. The School Counselor Social Advocacy Scale (SCSAS) is an instrument initially designed with five a priori factors to examine attitudes toward changing school counselor roles. The five factors specified include Importance, or the level of importance related to social advocacy behaviors; Support, or the level of quality of support available to engage in social advocacy behaviors; and Engagement, or the frequency of how often the counselor engages in the specific social advocacy behavior. The other two factors examine the kinds of behaviors and include advocacy based leadership and accountability. There were a total of twenty-nine items designed a priori to fit specified factors. A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was run using SPSS AMOS Version 20 to indicate how well the actual data conformed to the a priori model (McCoach et. al., 2013).

The initial a priori model was comprised of twenty-nine item stems with three levels of response (Importance, Support, and Engagement) across two other factors of advocacy based leadership and accountability. This model yielded an undesirable fit necessitating modification. The CFI (0.659), TLI (.625), and RMSEA (.079) all show minimal fit to the model. Though regression weights on the variables of Importance, Support and Engagement were above 0.45 suggesting sufficient loadings of items on specified factors (McCoach et. al., 2013), the factor loadings on Advocacy Based Leadership and Accountability evidenced weak relationships. Please see Table 1 for regression weights on the original model.

Table 1

Regression weights original model

Item	Factor	Standardized Regression Weight
Q1S	Importance	.521
Q2S	Importance	.464
Q3S	Importance	.501
Q4S	Importance	.489
Q5S	Importance	.533
Q6S	Importance	.368
Q7S	Importance	.312
Q10S	Importance	.469
Q12S	Importance	.606
Q13S	Importance	.655
Q14S	Importance	.516
Q17S	Importance	.450
Q19S	Importance	.702
Q20S	Importance	.758
Q18S	Importance	.469
Q21S	Importance	.825
Q23S	Importance	.798
Q24S	Importance	.841
Q25S	Importance	.850
Q27S	Importance	.675
Q28S	Importance	.712
Q29S	Importance	.819
Q1Supp	Support	.711
Q2Supp	Support	.703
Q3Supp	Support	.726

Q4Supp	Support	.773
Q5Supp	Support	.737
Q6Supp	Support	.781
Q7Supp	Support	.718
Q10Supp	Support	.801
Q12Supp	Support	.709
Q13Supp	Support	.763
Q14Supp	Support	.695
Q17Supp	Support	.763
Q18Supp	Support	.732
Q19Supp	Support	.704
Q20Supp	Support	.683
Q21Supp	Support	.667
Q23Supp	Support	.692
Q24Supp	Support	.675
Q25Supp	Support	.668
Q27Supp	Support	.698
Q28Supp	Support	.647
Q29Supp	Support	.726
Q1Eng	Engagement	.679
Q2Eng	Engagement	.397
Q3Eng	Engagement	.428
Q4Eng	Engagement	.655
Q5Eng	Engagement	.636
Q6Eng	Engagement	.382
Q7Eng	Engagement	.379
Q10Eng	Engagement	.513

Q12Eng	Engagement	.510
Q13Eng	Engagement	.659
Q14Eng	Engagement	.440
Q17Eng	Engagement	.574
Q18Eng	Engagement	.488
Q19Eng	Engagement	.521
Q20Eng	Engagement	.724
Q29Eng	Engagement	.611
Q28Eng	Engagement	.497
Q27Eng	Engagement	.740
Q25Eng	Engagement	.644
Q24Eng	Engagement	.652
Q23Eng	Engagement	.753
Q21Eng	Engagement	.652
Q1S	Accountability	-.206
Q1Supp	AdvLeadership	-.086
Q1Eng	Accountability	-.043
Q2S	AdvLeadership	.597
Q2Supp	AdvLeadership	.253
Q2Eng	AdvLeadership	.524
Q3S	AdvLeadership	.198
Q3Supp	AdvLeadership	.004
Q3Eng	AdvLeadership	.226
Q4S	AdvLeadership	.300
Q4Supp	AdvLeadership	.021
Q4Eng	AdvLeadership	.210
Q5S	AdvLeadership	.426

Q5Supp	AdvLeadership	.125
Q5Eng	AdvLeadership	.450
Q6Eng	AdvLeadership	.333
Q6Supp	AdvLeadership	.136
Q6S	AdvLeadership	.380
Q7S	AdvLeadership	.195
Q7Supp	AdvLeadership	.015
Q7Eng	AdvLeadership	.054
Q10S	AdvLeadership	.561
Q10Supp	AdvLeadership	.183
Q10Eng	AdvLeadership	.474
Q12S	Accountability	-.002
Q12Supp	AdvLeadership	-.100
Q12Eng	AdvLeadership	.014
Q13S	Accountability	-.079
Q13Supp	AdvLeadership	-.275
Q13Eng	AdvLeadership	.017
Q14S	Accountability	-.132
Q14Supp	AdvLeadership	-.247
Q14Eng	AdvLeadership	.113
Q17S	AdvLeadership	.161
Q17Supp	AdvLeadership	.087
Q17Eng	AdvLeadership	.165
Q18Eng	AdvLeadership	.000
Q18Supp	AdvLeadership	-.143
Q18S	AdvLeadership	.077
Q19S	Accountability	.020

Q19Supp	AdvLeadership	-.081
Q19Eng	AdvLeadership	.148
Q20Supp	Accountability	.544
Q21Supp	Accountability	.639
Q23Supp	Accountability	.518
Q24Supp	Accountability	.538
Q25Supp	Accountability	.647
Q27Supp	Accountability	.476
Q28Supp	Accountability	.299
Q29Supp	Accountability	.416
Q20S	Accountability	.075
Q21S	Accountability	.048
Q23S	Accountability	.051
Q24S	Accountability	.030
Q25S	Accountability	.044
Q27S	Accountability	.015
Q28S	Accountability	-.126
Q29S	Accountability	-.117
Q20Eng	Accountability	.445
Q21Eng	Accountability	.434
Q23Eng	Accountability	.345
Q24Eng	Accountability	.308
Q25Eng	Accountability	.463
Q27Eng	Accountability	.344
Q28Eng	Accountability	.154
Q29Eng	Accountability	.250

In order to better fit the model, the factors Advocacy Based Leadership and Accountability were collapsed into Social Advocacy Behaviors. Thus all items would load on three factors including Importance, Support, or Engagement, rather than the initial five. The item correlations were first examined and any items that had low to no correlation with other items were deleted. This model yielded an undesirable fit necessitating modification as well. The CFI (.596), TLI (.566), and RMSEA (.086) all show minimal fit to the model. Though many regression weights on the variables of Importance, Support and Engagement were above 0.45 suggesting sufficient loadings of items on specified factors (McCoach et. al., 2013), numerous items needed consideration for deletion. Please see Table 2 for regression weights on the initial three-factor model.

Table 2

Regression weights original three-factor model

Stem	Factor	Estimate
Q1I	IMPORTANCE	.539
Q2I	IMPORTANCE	.501
Q3I	IMPORTANCE	.481
Q4I	IMPORTANCE	.585
Q5I	IMPORTANCE	.602
Q7I	IMPORTANCE	.447
Q10I	IMPORTANCE	.561
Q12I	IMPORTANCE	.523
Q14I	IMPORTANCE	.443
Q17I	IMPORTANCE	.442
Q18I	IMPORTANCE	.431
Q19I	IMPORTANCE	.654
Q20I	IMPORTANCE	.699
Q21I	IMPORTANCE	.824
Q23I	IMPORTANCE	.779
Q24I	IMPORTANCE	.743
Q25I	IMPORTANCE	.785

Q27I	IMPORTANCE	.677
Q29I	IMPORTANCE	.750
Q1S	SUPPORT	.673
Q2S	SUPPORT	.680
Q3S	SUPPORT	.699
Q4S	SUPPORT	.714
Q5S	SUPPORT	.664
Q6S	SUPPORT	.740
Q10S	SUPPORT	.732
Q12S	SUPPORT	.681
Q13S	SUPPORT	.719
Q14S	SUPPORT	.674
Q17S	SUPPORT	.714
Q18S	SUPPORT	.683
Q19S	SUPPORT	.740
Q20S	SUPPORT	.718
Q21S	SUPPORT	.734
Q23S	SUPPORT	.770
Q24S	SUPPORT	.789
Q25S	SUPPORT	.763
Q27S	SUPPORT	.777
Q29S	SUPPORT	.777
Q1E	ENGAGEMENT	.521
Q2E	ENGAGEMENT	.417
Q3E	ENGAGEMENT	.426
Q4E	ENGAGEMENT	.604
Q5E	ENGAGEMENT	.542
Q6E	ENGAGEMENT	.333
Q10E	ENGAGEMENT	.581
Q12E	ENGAGEMENT	.534
Q13E	ENGAGEMENT	.599
Q14E	ENGAGEMENT	.358
Q17E	ENGAGEMENT	.353
Q18E	ENGAGEMENT	.304
Q19E	ENGAGEMENT	.568
Q20E	ENGAGEMENT	.714
Q21E	ENGAGEMENT	.798

Q23E	ENGAGEMENT	.735
Q24E	ENGAGEMENT	.723
Q25E	ENGAGEMENT	.740
Q27E	ENGAGEMENT	.751
Q29E	ENGAGEMENT	.662

Final model. In order to better fit the model, errors of the same stems were correlated across constructs as similar wording of stems increases the likelihood of correlation (McCoach et. al., 2013). Items with low factor loadings were deleted one by one to best fit the model. The items that were deleted include the following across constructs 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 12, 17 and 18. Item 21 was deleted due to high correlations with other stems related to data and counseling programming.

The final model specified evidences a good fit to the empirical data. The χ^2 is 919.577 with 459 degrees of freedom ($\alpha = 0.00$) so the null hypothesis is rejected. However, in CFA it is desirable for the null hypothesis to be retained (McCoach et. al., 2013). The root mean-square error of approximation, RMSEA, (0.059); the Tucker-Lewis coefficient, or TLI, (0.873) and the comparative fit index, CFI, (0.902) all suggest a good fit to the model. Please see Table 3 for regression weights following drawing of correlation across errors and deletion of items with low loadings.

Table 3

Standardized Regression Weights – three factor model

Item	Factor	Standardized Regression Weight
Q4I	Importance	.497
Q10I	Importance	.549
Q12I	Importance	.575
Q13I	Importance	.642

Q19I	Importance	.711
Q20I	Importance	.634
Q23I	Importance	.762
Q24I	Importance	.700
Q25I	Importance	.757
Q27I	Importance	.717
Q29I	Importance	.733
Q4S	Support	.678
Q10S	Support	.690
Q12S	Support	.726
Q13S	Support	.744
Q14S	Support	.703
Q19S	Support	.792
Q20S	Support	.712
Q23S	Support	.791
Q24S	Support	.810
Q25S	Support	.743
Q27S	Support	.780
Q29S	Support	.767
Q4E	Engagement	.562
Q10E	Engagement	.538
Q12E	Engagement	.574
Q13E	Engagement	.632
Q19E	Engagement	.597
Q20E	Engagement	.713
Q23E	Engagement	.717
Q24E	Engagement	.703
Q25E	Engagement	.753
Q27E	Engagement	.741
Q29E	Engagement	.653

Following achievement of best possible model fit, correlations were examined. Correlations support theoretical relationships across the factors. Counselor impression of Importance of specific behaviors correlates moderately to the quality of Support they have for engaging in the behaviors ($r = .384$). Additionally, counselors' engagement in social advocacy behaviors and impressions of quality of support ($r = .659$); and engagement and counselors' belief in the importance of the behaviors ($r = .550$) evidence substantial relationships.

Reliability. In order to assess the reliability of the instrument internal consistency reliability estimates were calculated on each of the four subscales. This process included examining the overall internal reliability; examination of inter-item correlations for low, high and negative correlates; examination of means and standard deviations for inter-item correlations; examination of changes in alpha with deletion of items; final interpretation of reliability coefficients and determination of need to increase the number of items on a subscale assuming maintenance of current inter-item correlations. Please see Appendices A9-A11 for correlation tables for each subscale.

Importance is the first subscale on the SCSAS and is comprised of eleven items designed to determine a respondent's belief in the importance of social advocacy behaviors supported through the CFA process. Following an initial reliability analysis, the initial reliability coefficient ($\alpha=0.894$) was above the recommended value of 0.8 (McCoach et. al., 2013). Inter-item correlations reveal overall inter-item correlation of 0.438 which falls within the recommended correlation range of 0.30-0.60 (McCoach et. al., 2013). The 95% confidence interval for alpha reflects a small confidence interval ranging from 0.870 -0.916; thus there is a 95% level of confidence that the population alpha lies between 0.870 and 0.916. Due to the low

variability and appropriately high inter-item correlations, the alpha coefficient ($\alpha=0.894$) can be considered adequate for the subscale. Computation of mean subscale score ($x = 5.04$) and standard deviation ($SD=0.80$) followed. The mean indicates that the sample(s) used in the development of the instrument tend to agree that social advocacy behaviors are important. Since the alpha coefficient ($\alpha=0.894$) is adequate, no additional items are necessary.

Support is the second subscale on the SCSAS and is comprised of twelve items designed to determine a respondent's belief in the quality of support for social advocacy behaviors identified through the CFA process. Following an initial reliability analysis, the initial reliability coefficient ($\alpha=0.936$) was above the recommended value of 0.8 (McCoach et. al., 2013). Inter-item correlations reveal overall inter-item correlation of 0.511 which falls within the recommended correlation range of 0.30-0.60 (McCoach et. al., 2013). The 95% confidence interval for alpha reflects a small confidence interval ranging from 0.921-0.949; thus there is a 95% level of confidence that the population alpha lies between 0.921 and 0.949. Due to the low variability and inter-item correlations, the alpha coefficient ($\alpha=0.936$) can be considered adequate for the subscale. Computation of mean subscale score ($x = 4.55$) and standard deviation ($SD=1.21$) followed. The mean indicates that the sample(s) used in the development of the instrument tend to agree that support for social advocacy behaviors is average. Since the alpha coefficient ($\alpha=0.936$) is adequate, no additional items are necessary.

Engagement is the third subscale on the SCSAS and is comprised of eleven items designed to determine a respondent's self report of frequency of social advocacy behaviors supported through the CFA process. Following an initial reliability analysis, the initial reliability coefficient ($\alpha=0.891$) was above the recommended value of 0.8 (McCoach et. al., 2013). Inter-item correlations reveal overall inter-item correlation of 0.427 which falls within the

recommended correlation range of 0.30-0.60 (McCoach et. al., 2013). The 95% confidence interval for alpha reflects a small confidence interval ranging from 0.863-0.915; thus there is a 95% level of confidence that the population alpha lies between 0.863 and 0.915. Due to the low variability and appropriately high inter-item correlations, the alpha coefficient ($\alpha=0.891$) can be considered adequate for the subscale. Computation of mean subscale score ($x = 4.60$) and standard deviation ($SD=1.13$) followed. The mean indicates that the sample(s) used in the development of the instrument tend to agree that they engage in social advocacy somewhat frequently. Since the alpha coefficient ($\alpha=0.891$) is adequate, no additional items are necessary. Table 4 summarizes reliability data for each factor.

Table 4

Reliability data: three factor model of SCSAS

Factor	Items	Alpha coefficient	Inter-Item Correlation	95% CI	Mean scale score	Standard deviation
Importance	11	.894	.438	.870-.916	5.04	0.80
Support	12	.936	.551	.921-.949	4.55	1.21
Engagement	11	.891	.427	.863-.915	4.60	1.13

Study Specific Data

Study location rationale. This research was conducted in the State of Connecticut as a result of the demographics that continue to uphold the achievement gap. Connecticut is comprised of communities of great wealth neighboring communities marked with great poverty. The achievement gap across the communities in the State of Connecticut is large despite the small geographical dominance of the State. Connecticut was chosen due to the potentially diverse needs of counselors in order to best service their communities in addition to the potential conceptual generalizability to states with similar achievement gap challenges.

Response rates. In an effort to reach the highest percentage of the 1,475 certified school counselors in the State of Connecticut, counselors were sought out by three different methods. Initially, school counseling professionals were emailed through the Connecticut School Counselor Association (CSCA) website. A total of 639 emails were sent to CSCA members. Of the 639 emails sent, 24 email addresses were not valid as indicated by an error message generated by the email server. An email was also sent to 733 school counselors with 52 email addresses not valid as indicated by an error message generated by the email server. Duplicate requests were not sent. Of the 1,372 counselors emailed, 1296 had valid email addresses and 185 participated in the online survey yielding a 14.3 % response rate, overall.

Demographics. The final portion of the survey prompted respondents to provide demographic data (See Table 5). The number (n) of counselors varied for each question due to respondents leaving questions blank. Most counselors surveyed either work in urban (n=57, 41.6%) or suburban (n=58, 42.3%) areas of Connecticut with rural counselors being the least represented (n=18, 9.7%). The majority of counselors responded that they are working (n=126, 93.3%) rather than in training (n=9, 6.7%). The counselors reported varying levels of years of experience including: less than 5 (n=32, 23.4%); between 6-10 years (n=42, 30.7%); between 11-15 years (n=25, 18.2%); between 16-20 years (n=20, 14.6%); and more than 20 years (n=18; 13.1%). Of the counselors surveyed, most indicated membership to a professional association (n=116, 84.7%). When asked about Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP) status, most counselors responded that their school(s) was not a RAMP school (n=87, 63.5%); while some did not know their RAMP status (n=48, 35.0%); and few identified as a RAMP school (n=2, 1.5%) which is expected given that one school in Connecticut is a RAMP school.

In terms of student body, most school counselors indicated that their school or district services between 501-1000 students (n=51, 37.2%); less than 500 students (n=21, 15.3%); between 1001-1500 (n=32, 23.4%); more than 1500 (n=33, 24.1%). In terms of the number of counselors working in each district counselors mostly identified different models across their districts and schools. Of the counselors surveyed, 57 or 41.6% responded “other” indicating that they had some arrangement other than between 1-5 counselors per school. Within the other category the breakdown varied between 30 counselors (n=1, 0.5%) to 1.5 (n=1, 0.5%). The next highest frequency is 4 (n=24, 17.5%). Continuing with the number of counselors in each building, counselors surveyed identified the following: 3 counselors (n=15, 10.9%); 5 counselors (n=15, 10.9%); 2 counselors (n=14, 10.2%); and 1 counselor (n=12, 8.8%).

Of the counselors surveyed, there is an approximate even split between counselors who lead intervention groups (n=75, 54.7%) and those who do not (n=62, 45.3%). In addition, most counselors reported being participants in response to intervention (RTI) team meetings and activities (n=99, 72.3%) compared with those who do not (n=32, 17.3%) and those who do not know (n=6, 4.4%). Similarly, most counselors who identify as working in a PBIS school participate in PBIS team meetings and activities (n=46, 33.6%). However, of the counselors surveyed the majority identified as not being a PBIS school or district (n=62, 45.3%).

Counselors reported that teachers teach counseling based whole-group lessons (n=49, 36.0%) with less frequency than those who do not (n=87, 64.0%). Counselors nearly equally felt that their role is well defined within their district (n=71, 52.2%) compared with those who do not feel their role is well defined (n=65, 47.8%). When asked about whether counselors are part of a network school, most replied no (n=74, 54.4%); not sure (n=58, 31.4%); with yes responses the

lowest (n=4, 2.9%). Similar patterns were revealed in terms of alliance district acknowledgment: yes responses (n=15, 8.1%); I don't know (n=68, 36.8%); and "no" responses (n=53, 28.6%).

Most counselors report receiving training in the ASCA national model (n=77, 56.6%) with a similar number (n=59, 43.4%) indicating they had not received ASCA national model training.

With regard to Education Reference Group (ERG), most counselors (n=65, 48.5%) did not know their district ERG. ERGs B (n=17, 12.7%) and H (n=12, 9.0%) received the next highest ERG acknowledgement. ERGs D, G, are the next most frequent (n=9, 6.7%).

Table 5

School Counselor Demographic Data

Stems		Frequency	Valid Percent
<i>Setting</i>			
	Urban	57	41.6
	Suburban	58	42.3
	Rural	18	13.1
	Other	4	2.9
	Missing	48	
<i>Level</i>			
	In training	9	6.7
	Working	126	93.3
	Missing	50	
<i>Years working</i>			
	Less than 5	32	23.4
	Between 6-10	42	30.7
	Between 11-15	25	18.2
	Between 16-20	20	14.6
	More than 20	18	13.1
	Missing	48	
<i>Professional membership</i>			
	Yes	116	84.7
	No	21	15.3

	Missing	48	
<i>Ramp Status</i>			
	Yes	2	1.5
	I don't know	48	35.0
	No	87	63.5
	Missing	48	
<i>Number of Students</i>			
	Less than 500	21	15.3
	Between 501-1000	51	37.2
	Between 1001-1500	32	23.4
	More than 1500	33	24.1
	Missing	48	
<i>Counselor numbers</i>			
	1	12	8.8
	2	14	10.2
	3	15	10.9
	4	24	17.5
	5	15	10.9
	Other	57	41.6
	Missing	48	
<i>Counselor numbers other</i>			
	1.5	1	.5
	10	4	2.2
	11	7	3.8
	12	4	2.2
	13	1	.5
	14	1	.5
	17	2	1.1
	26	1	.5
	27	1	.5
	30	1	.5
	6	8	4.3
	7	8	4.3
	8	9	4.9
	9	1	.5
	Different at each school	1	.5
	Less tan 5 across	1	.5

	district at middle school		
	level		
<i>Intervention Leader</i>			
	Yes	75	54.7
	No	62	45.3
	Missing	48	
<i>RTI Participant</i>			
	Yes	99	72.3
	I don't know	6	4.4
	No	32	23.4
<i>PBIS Participation</i>			
	Yes	46	33.6
	No	29	21.2
	Not PBIS School	62	45.3
	Missing	48	
<i>Teachers Teach Counseling</i>			
	Yes	49	36.0
	No	87	64.0
	Missing	49	
<i>Clear role</i>			
	Yes	71	52.2
	No	65	47.8
	Missing	49	
<i>Network school</i>			
	Yes	4	2.9
	No	74	54.4
	I don't know	58	42.6
<i>Alliance district</i>			
	Yes	15	11.0
	No	53	28.6
	I don't know	68	36.8
	Missing	49	
<i>ASCA training</i>			
	Yes	77	56.6
	No	59	43.4
	Missing	49	
<i>ERG</i>			

A	3	2.2
B	17	12.7
C	2	1.5
D	9	6.7
E	5	3.7
F	5	3.7
G	9	6.7
H	12	9.0
I	7	5.2
I'm not sure	65	48.5
Missing	51	

Research Question Analyses.

Research question 1. To what degree do school counselors believe that they should engage in behaviors related to social advocacy as outlined by the SCSAS?

The importance subscale of the SCSAS reflects school counselors' beliefs in the importance of social advocacy behaviors aligned with transformed school counseling. Responses reflect counselors' impressions about the level of importance of certain behaviors on a Likert scale of 1-6 (unimportant to very important). The mean score of the importance subscale ($\bar{x}=5.04$) suggests that counselors surveyed feel that the behaviors in this section of the scale are important to their professional roles. Items include topics related to being a systems change agent; implementing school wide school counseling programs; aligning with marginalized students; developing programs with social justice foci; and data driven decision making. These social advocacy behaviors support the push toward counselors becoming leaders and advocates instrumental in closing the achievement gap.

Table 6

Importance Subscale of SCSAS Individual Statements and Mean Subscale Score

Descriptive Statistics – Importance SCSAS

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
I guide staff in the implementation of school wide counseling program interventions.	181	2	6	5.36	.982
I act as a systems change agent.	151	1	6	5.15	1.116
I develop school counseling programs that teach students about their rights.	153	1	6	4.72	1.315
I develop action plans to address problems related to inequity.	147	1	6	5.00	1.261
I help staff in my building recognize inequity.	145	1	6	5.14	1.105
I use data to improve counseling program interventions	137	2	6	5.13	1.090
I use data to identify barriers to educational attainment.	133	1	6	5.13	1.111
I lead communication about data with key stakeholders.	132	2	6	4.83	1.230
I review data to determine the effect of programs on student outcomes.	131	1	6	5.14	1.122
I use counseling program data to target interventions to close the achievement gap.	130	1	6	5.18	1.197
I present data as it relates to overall school and district performance.	128	1	6	4.45	1.484
IMPORTANCE OVERALL	154	2.64	6	5.04	.796

Research question 2. To what degree do school counselors assess the quality of support in engaging in social advocacy behaviors?

This Support subscale of the survey asks counselors to rate their belief in the quality of the support they have to engage in social advocacy. Counselors were asked to rate the quality of support on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from very poor to excellent. Counselor responses suggest a belief that the quality of Support to carry out behaviors associated with social advocacy is average ($x=4.56$).

Minimums, maximums, mean values, standard deviations, and the subscale mean are listed in Table 7 for each statement on the School Counselor Social Advocacy Scale.

Table 7

Support Subscale of SCSAS Individual Statements and Mean Subscale Score

Descriptive Statistics – Support SCSAS					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
I guide staff in the implementation of school wide counseling program interventions	178	1	7	4.29	1.647
I act as a systems change agent	147	1	7	4.27	1.636
I develop school counseling programs that teach students about their rights.	145	1	7	4.06	1.678
I develop action plans to address problems related to inequity.	140	1	7	4.22	1.569
I provide counseling that is culturally relevant for our students.	147	1	7	5.06	1.589
I help staff in my building recognize inequity.	141	1	7	4.43	1.485
I use data to improve counseling program interventions	134	1	7	5.17	1.597
I use data to identify barriers to educational attainment.	128	1	7	4.87	1.523
I lead communication about data with key stakeholders.	127	1	7	4.47	1.622
I review data to determine the effect of programs on student outcomes.	127	1	7	4.94	1.622
I use counseling program data to target interventions to close the achievement gap.	125	1	7	4.73	1.658
I present data as it relates to overall school and district performance.	123	1	7	4.38	1.672
SUPPORT OVERALL	151	1.58	7	4.56	1.219

Research question 3. To what degree do school counselors believe that they are engaging in social advocacy behaviors?

The third subscale of this survey, Engagement, asks counselors to rate the relative frequency with which they engage in social advocacy. Counselors were asked to rate the frequency of engagement on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from never to always. Counselor

responses suggest moderate levels of engagement in social advocacy behaviors ($\bar{x}=4.60$) with most statements yielding responses of somewhat infrequently to somewhat frequently.

Minimums, maximums, mean values and standard deviations are listed in Table 8 for each statement on the Engagement subscale of the School Counselor Social Advocacy Scale.

Table 8

Engagement Subscale of SCSAS Individual Statements and Mean Subscale Score

Descriptive Statistics – Engagement SCSAS					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
I guide staff in the implementation of school wide counseling program interventions	158	1	7	4.80	1.618
I act as a systems change agent.	132	1	7	4.83	1.575
I develop school counseling programs that teach students about their rights.	131	1	7	4.13	1.875
I develop action plans to address problems related to inequity.	126	1	7	4.09	1.753
I help staff in my building recognize inequity.	124	1	7	4.92	1.565
I use data to improve counseling program interventions	117	2	7	5.42	1.428
I use data to identify barriers to educational attainment.	113	1	7	5.00	1.658
I lead communication about data with key stakeholders.	112	1	7	4.39	1.752
I review data to determine the effect of programs on student outcomes.	111	1	7	4.83	1.543
I use counseling program data to target interventions to close the achievement gap.	110	1	7	4.91	1.820
I present data as it relates to overall school and district performance.	110	1	7	3.82	1.777
ENGAGEMENT OVERALL	135	1.91	6.82	4.60	1.135

Research question 4. Are there relationships between the degree to which counselors believe they should engage in social advocacy behaviors (Importance); the quality of support for

engaging in social advocacy behaviors; and the actual level of engagement in social advocacy behaviors?

When comparing the subscales of the SCSAS for relationships across the subscales for the study sample, statistically significant relationships exist. The correlation between Importance and Engagement ($r=0.550$, $p < 0.000$) is significant suggesting that if counselors feel that social advocacy behaviors are important they are likely to engage in the behaviors. Additionally, there is a positive significant correlation between Support and Engagement ($r=.659$, $p < 0.000$) suggesting that when school counselors feel supported, they will engage in social advocacy behaviors. In addition, a moderate correlation between the Importance and Support subscales is evidenced ($r=.384$, $p < 0.000$). Relationships of the magnitude identified through this study suggest that the constructs are unique yet related to one another but do not suggest multicollinearity as the correlations are all below 0.85. Please see Table 9 for correlation data.

Table 9

Correlations across SCSAS subscales

Correlations – SCSAS Subscales				
		Importance	Support	Engagement
IMPORTANCE	Pearson Correlation	1	.384**	.550**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	154	151	135
SUPPORT	Pearson Correlation	.384**	1	.659**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	151	151	135
ENGAGEMENT	Pearson Correlation	.550**	.659**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	135	135	135

Research question 5. Is there a relationship between demographic considerations such as type of school (urban, rural, suburban,); years of experience; professional association membership; number of students; number of counselors; RAMP status; PBIS status; and attitudes about clarity of role within their school/district and Importance in social advocacy behaviors?

In order to examine the relationships across demographic factors and the subscale of Importance, t-tests or ANOVA were completed as both compare means of discrete groups represented on the continuous outcome variable of engagement. T-tests were used to compare the means of the following demographic variables with Importance: role well defined (yes or no); place in school counseling career (working or in training); professional counseling association membership (yes or no); leader of intervention groups (yes or no); participation in RTI team meetings (yes or no); participation in PBIS activities; teachers teach whole group lessons (yes or no); ASCA RAMP designation; trained on the ASCA National Model (yes or no). ANOVA tests were completed to assess differences in means of engagement across setting; years working as a school counselor; the number of students in a school and the number of counselors in a school.

The only relationship significant relationship is between Importance and feelings of role definition. As counselors report feeling that their role is well defined ($M = 5.18$, $SD = .70$) feel that social advocacy behaviors are more important than those who do not feel that their role is well defined ($M = 4.89$, $SD = .87$) $t(123) = 2.14$, $p < .05$, $r = .19$. In each other analysis, there is no significant difference in the means compared. Regardless of whether a school counselor reported working ($M = 5.01$, $SD = .79$) or in training ($M = 5.27$, $SD = .86$) the feelings of importance were not statistically significantly different. Additionally, professional association membership does not yield different feelings of importance around social advocacy behaviors (M

= 5.05, $SD = .81$; $M = 4.98$, $SD = .70$). Being a leader in intervention programming ($M=5.11$, $SD = .69$) or not ($M = 4.94$, $SD = .89$) does not yield a different importance mean. Engaging in RTI ($M = 5.03$, $SD = .78$) or PBIS activities ($M = 5.17$, $SD = .78$) does not signify difference in feelings of Importance in social advocacy behaviors. Teachers teaching counseling content in the whole group also did not yield statistically significant differences in importance of social advocacy behaviors for school counselors (yes: $M = 5.03$, $SD = .73$; no: $M = 5.04$, $SD = .83$) Furthermore, ASCA RAMP status identification ($M = 4.95$, $SD = 1.34$) does not yield a statistically significant mean in feelings of Importance than counselors who report that their school is not RAMP designated ($M = 4.99$, $SD = .81$). Counselors who reported being trained on the ASCA National Model ($M = 5.09$, $SD = .77$) report no significant difference in feelings of Importance compared with counselors who were not trained on the ASCA National Model ($M = 4.97$, $SD = .84$).

None of the analyses of variance yielded a statistically significant result. This suggests that a counselor's feeling of the importance of school counselor social advocacy behaviors is not different in relation to the kind of district a school counselor works in (urban, suburban, rural or other), the number of years working as a school counselor; the number of students in a school and the number of counselors in a school. In all of these cases, school counselor feelings of importance in social advocacy behaviors were not different from one another.

Table 13

Demographic question mean and standard deviations as they relate to importance

Demographic questions		Mean	Standard deviation
Role well defined?	Yes	5.18	.70
	No	4.89	.87
Place in career	Working	5.27	.86
	Training	5.01	.79
Prof assn member	Yes	5.05	.81

	No	4.98	.70
Lead intervention	Yes	5.11	.69
	No	4.94	.89
RTI participation	Yes	5.03	.78
	No	5.15	.82
PBIS participation	Yes	5.17	.78
	No	4.99	.82
Teachers teach counseling	Yes	5.03	.73
	No	5.04	.83
RAMP designation	Yes	4.95	1.34
	No	4.99	.81
ASCA NM training	Yes	5.09	.77
	No	4.97	.84

Research question 6. Is there a relationship between demographic considerations such as type of school (urban, rural, suburban,); years of experience; professional association membership; number of students; number of counselors; RAMP status; PBIS status; and attitudes about clarity of role within their school/district and Engagement in social advocacy behaviors?

In order to examine the relationships across demographic factors and the subscale of Engagement, t-tests or ANOVA were completed as both compare means of discrete groups represented on the continuous outcome variable of engagement in the exact same type of analyses conducted for demographics and the subscale of Importance. T-tests were used to compare the means of the following demographic variables with Engagement: role well defined (yes or no); place in school counseling career (working or in training); professional counseling association membership (yes or no); leader of intervention groups (yes or no); participation in RTI team meetings (yes or no); participation in PBIS activities; teachers teach whole group counseling lessons (yes or no); ASCA RAMP designation; trained on the ASCA National Model (yes or no). ANOVA tests were completed to assess differences in means of engagement across

setting; years working as a school counselor; the number of students in a school and the number of counselors in a school.

Two statistically significant results are apparent within the data as it relates to t-tests and engagement. The first significant relationship deals with leading intervention groups and engagement in social advocacy behaviors. Counselors who report leading intervention programs ($M = 4.88, SD = 1.09$) report significantly higher levels of engagement than counselors who do not lead intervention programs ($M = 4.38, SD = 1.19$) $t(98) = 2.31, p < .05, r = .28$. Since Levene's test for equality of variances is not significant, the assumption is made that the variances are not equal. The relationship between role definition and engagement is significant as well. On average, the reported level of engagement in social advocacy behaviors ($M = 4.99, SD = 1.03$) is significantly higher for school counselors who report feeling that their role is well defined than for those school counselors who report feeling that their role is not well defined ($M = 4.29, SD = 1.20$), $t(115) = 3.31, p < .05, r = .31$.

Though the other differences are not statistically significant, this information is essential to understanding the construct of Engagement and what is or is not related. In terms of place in school counseling career (either in training or working), school counselors reported no difference in engagement whether working ($M = 4.65, SD = 1.15$) or in training ($M = 4.79, SD = .73$). Additionally, professional counseling association membership means of engagement are not significantly different based on whether a school counselor is a member of a professional association ($M = 4.67, SD = 1.13$) or not ($M = 4.71, SD = 1.30$). Counselors reporting engaging in RTI activities ($M = 4.77, SD = 1.14$) or PBIS activities ($M = 5.08, SD = 1.06$) report no different levels of engagement in social advocacy behaviors than those who do not participate in RTI ($M = 4.44, SD = 1.24$) or PBIS ($M = 4.67, SD = 1.20$). Furthermore, counselors who report

that teachers teach counseling content ($M = 4.92$, $SD = 1.04$) report no difference in engagement in social advocacy behaviors than those who report that teachers do not teach counseling content lessons ($M = 4.54$, $SD = 1.20$). Furthermore, RAMP designation does not yield statistically significant differences in engagement whether schools are identified ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 0.00$) or not ($M = 4.60$, $SD = 1.06$). And lastly, training in the ASCA National Model does not yield significantly different levels of engagement in social advocacy behaviors (yes: $M = 4.67$, $SD = 1.12$; no: $M = 4.69$, $SD = 1.21$).

None of the ANOVA tests concerning the subscale of Engagement and demographic factors yielded statistically significant results suggesting the means across the groups were not significantly different from one another. This suggests that levels of engagement in social advocacy behaviors are similar regardless of district setting, how many years a counselor has been working, how many students are in a school and how many counselors are in a school.

Table 14

Demographic question mean and standard deviations as they relate to engagement

Demographic questions		Mean	Standard deviation
Role well defined?	Yes	4.99	1.03
	No	4.29	1.20
Lead intervention	Yes	4.88	1.09
	No	4.38	1.19
Place in career	Working	4.65	1.15
	Training	4.79	.73
Prof assn member	Yes	4.67	1.13
	No	4.71	1.30
RTI participation	Yes	4.44	1.24
	No	5.15	.82
PBIS participation	Yes	5.08	1.06
	No	4.99	.82
Teachers teach counseling	Yes	4.92	1.04
	No	4.54	1.20
RAMP designation	Yes	4.23	0.00
	No	4.60	1.06

ASCA NM training	Yes	4.67	1.12
	No	4.60	1.06

Individual item responses. Counselors were asked to respond to 87 items on the survey from which the School Counselor Social Advocacy Scale (SCSAS) was developed. Stems were included on the SCSAS and presented within the context of status quo counseling behaviors in order to assess behaviors in transition. The items were added due to the practical import of understanding the transition to becoming a social advocacy based counselor. These items are not a subscale of the SCSAS due to their three levels of construct within each item; however, they are analyzed and presented at the individual item level. Descriptive statistics for each stem are included in Table 15. Please note, this is not a subscale of the SCSAS.

Stems included in this area of assessment are as follows: I complete clerical work for college applications for my students; I work in my office on counseling related tasks; I only focus on getting students the classes they need; I keep to myself in order to get work done; I use programs that have always worked in the past; and I use a school counseling program based on what I think the students feel.

Table 15

Mean, Median, and Mode of Specific School Counselor Behaviors associated with Status Quo practice

Descriptive Statistics								
	LEVEL	N	Min	Max	Mean	Mode	Std. Deviation	
I complete clerical work for college applications for my students.	IMP	173	1	6	3.30	1	1.968	
I complete clerical work for college applications for my students.	SUPP	133	1	7	4.38	4	1.837	

I complete clerical work for college applications for my students.	ENG	113	1	7	5.58	7	2.021
I work in my office on counseling related tasks	IMP	172	2	6	5.65	6	.723
I work in my office on counseling related tasks	SUPP	169	1	7	5.12	4	1.593
I work in my office on counseling related tasks	ENG	149	3	7	6.21	7	1.024
I only focus on getting students the classes they need.	IMP	150	1	6	3.59	6	1.911
I only focus on getting students the classes they need.	SUPP	126	1	7	4.70	4	1.631
I only focus on getting students the classes they need.	ENG	109	1	7	5.17	7	1.943
I keep to myself in order to get work done.	IMP	148	1	6	3.70	6	1.756
I keep to myself in order to get work done	SUPP	142	1	7	4.17	4	1.684
I keep to myself in order to get work done.	ENG	129	1	7	4.42	4	1.899
I use programs that have always worked in the past.	IMP	135	1	6	4.39	4	1.258
I use programs that have always worked in the past.	SUPP	131	2	7	4.89	4	1.308
I use programs that have always worked in the past.	ENG	117	3	7	5.40	6	1.168
I use a school counseling program based on what I think the students feel	IMP	129	1	6	4.26	4	1.470
I use a school counseling program based on what I think the students feel.	SUPP	125	1	7	4.08	4	1.594
I use a school counseling program based on what I think the students feel.	ENG	110	1	7	4.78	6	1.699

Though the statements were not included in the SCSAS, the responses to the items indicate numerous trends documented in research on school counseling practice.

The first item, “I complete clerical work for college applications” represents a behavior that historically is frustrating, problematic, yet expected for counselors. Respondents to this survey support this as indicated by the most selected response of “unimportant” ($x=3.30$, $mode=1$) while counselors report a high level of engagement in this task ($x=5.58$, $mode=7$). The modes in this case help to inform the research in that counselors most often feel that this is an unimportant task and yet they are engaging in this task, for the most part, with the highest frequency.

The next item, “I work in my office on counseling related tasks” was designed to determine if counselors are spending time in their offices rather than time in classrooms, meetings, etc. Respondents feel this behavior is important ($x=5.65$), they have average quality of support ($x= 5.12$) and high levels of engagement ($x=6.21$) indicating that counselors surveyed are spending time in their offices working on counseling related tasks. Unlike the first item, the mode for Importance signifies that counselors are feeling that this task is most important. However, counselors could have interpreted this question to include direct counseling service which is an important task under the Delivery component of the ASCA National Model. Interestingly, counselors do not feel parallel support compared to Importance and their level of Engagement. This could signify that when a counselor feels a behavior is important, s/he will engage in that behavior even with flagging support.

The item, “I keep to myself to in order to get work done” evidences moderate levels of importance ($x=3.70$, mode=6) with average support ($x=4.17$, mode = 4) and average frequency ($x=4.42$, mode=4), again highlighting the behavior of counselors spending much time in their offices. The mode scores are again indicative that many counselors feel that keeping to themselves to get work done is still important, yet the support and opportunity for doing so is moderate. Counselors could feel that they need time and space to complete the work that is supported by their administrators, yet not by ASCA or NCTSC, which would support the import of the item, yet their administrators are not offering the kind of support that is necessary and thus they do not engage with high frequency. Again, this stem is illustrative of a profession in transition.

The last two items were designed to assess historical success and counselors’ clinical judgment as opposed to student outcome data in selecting programming. Both evidence

moderate levels of importance ($x=4.39$; $x=4.26$), moderate quality of support ($x=4.89$; $x=4.08$) and frequent to moderate engagement ($x=5.40$; $x=4.78$). These data suggest that counselors engage in selecting programming based on historical success and clinical judgment with moderate frequency and importance placed on these concepts suggesting a shift toward data based decision making and clinical judgment.

These statements highlight that school counselors surveyed are experiencing transition in their roles. They understand the level of importance of these behaviors and are working toward higher levels of engagement in most while still engaging in some behaviors they feel are not relevant to their role as a counselor (e.g. clerical work). The data points that reflect the noise in the profession around these items are the standard deviations of the item stems. The standard deviations range from .723 to 2.021 on a six or seven point Likert scale. This bounce in the data shows that counselors have differing feelings and report different levels of engagement in the activities. If counselors' roles were well defined and they were unified in practice, the standard deviations would be smaller, reflecting a more tightly knit professional community. However, in the case of transition and behaviors that should be changing or dropping off, a large standard deviation is a sign of change within the profession.

Chapter V

Discussion

This chapter presents a summary of instrument development findings, research question findings, limitations to the current study, implications for future research, and implications for training and practice of school counselors.

Instrument Development Findings

In order to assess current school counselor behaviors as they relate to trends in legislation and national professional association goals, design of an instrument to capture feelings as they relate to current professional role shift was necessary. At present, a strong understanding of how or if counselors are making the shift from status quo to transformed professional practice in the field is not available as there is little information pertaining to how counselors feel about specific behavioral / practice expectations or their level of support for doing so. Current school counseling behavior related measures include examination of self-efficacy (School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale), multicultural self-efficacy (School Counselor Multicultural Self-Efficacy Scale), and activities (School Counselor Activity Rating Scale). Though these scales are psychometrically sound and relevant to their specific purpose, they are not practically relevant to specifically answer the research questions of this study as the instrument stems relate to expectations set forth by ASCA and the National Center for Transforming School Counseling (NCTSC). In an effort to begin to assess how school counselors might transform their role to include social advocacy, McCoach and Colbert (2010) utilized the Collective Teacher Efficacy Scale and as such the instrument developed for this study extended that work to assess school counselors directly.

The instrument development process yielded an instrument, the School Counselor Social

Advocacy Scale (SCSAS) with items loading on three separate constructs of Importance, Support and Engagement. The instrument gives insight into how counselors feel about social advocacy; the quality of support they feel in carrying out social advocacy behaviors; and their actual level of engagement in the behaviors. Social advocacy involves school counselor social advocacy based leadership and accountability. Conceptually, for the purposes of this instrument, being a social advocate includes starting difficult conversations and building / maintaining intentional relationships while empowering and unifying staff. School counselors communicate, collaborate, plan, and problem solve in order to provide equitable educational access while aligning with marginalized students and their families. Social advocacy also calls on school counselors to collaborate but function autonomously in their ability to take on salient issues related to inequity. Social advocacy behaviors also include accountability driven practice foci involving competence with data analysis in order to identify and subsequently remove barriers to educational attainment; target intervention to provide equitable opportunities, use assessment to develop counseling program goals and integrate goals with school improvement goals; use data to review impact of interventions on key student outcomes; and communicate those outcomes to key stakeholders.

The initial instrument was comprised of a total of 29 questions on three different levels of interpretation (importance, support, and engagement) yielding a total of 87 responses while primarily divided across two main factors of advocacy based leadership and accountability. However, after the content validation and confirmatory factor analysis processes the instrument was decreased to 12 total items that load on three separate factors of Importance, Support, and Engagement yielding 34 possible total responses. On the final instrument, the three factors share eleven common statements asked as they relate to the factors with one additional statement on

the factor of Support with six other stems related to status quo behaviors that are not included in the subscales nor make up a separate subscale. The reliability coefficients of each subscale, or factor, indicate strong reliability across Importance ($\alpha = 0.894$), Support ($\alpha = 0.936$), and Engagement ($\alpha = 0.891$).

Research question findings

The results of this research study support previous research studies and statements in the literature review as they pertain to the continuous development and refinement of counselor roles in response to social and political changes. This study is unique in that it attempts to capture counselor beliefs about professional role transformation. This shift is away from status quo counseling models to transformed practice defined and supported by NCTSC and ASCA (NCTSC, no date; ASCA, 2014). Due to NCLB, there is pressure for educators to become accountable leaders and counselors are finally joining the conversation after many years of being left out as ancillary and unimportant (Bruce et al., 2012; Hart & Jacobi, 1992; Savitz-Romer, 2012). Counselors are encouraged to be leaders and social justice advocates for students while breaking away from the status quo counselor roles shaping the nice counselor syndrome (Bemak & Chung, 2005; Bemak & Chung, 2008).

This research highlights that counselors are aware of the proposed shifts in practice discussed in the literature review and currently support the movement toward transformed school counseling shaped by social advocacy behaviors. The counselors surveyed in this study showed support for school counselor social advocacy behaviors, acknowledging their importance as evidenced by a subscale mean score of 5.04 (Importance) on a six-point Likert scale. Counselors believe that they should aid staff in the implementation of school wide school counseling programs while acting as systems change agents who teach students about their rights. They

believe they should be helping staff recognize inequity and using data to build programs to close the achievement gap, identify barriers to educational attainment while communicating about data as it relates to overall school and district performance. These behaviors are key social advocacy counseling behaviors and the results are representative of current practice that supports national professional association expectation (e.g. ASCA and NCTSC). This research supports the larger goal of counselors believing in the importance of being instrumental in closing the achievement gap.

Supporting counselors' high level of belief in the importance of social advocacy behaviors, moderate levels of support for engaging in such behaviors are reported ($\bar{x}=4.56$). This moderate level of support should help counselors to see that leadership is supported, and, thus fear of professional shift away from the stereotypical nice counselor (Bemak & Chung, 2008) is possibly less warranted. Overall, counselors report feeling supported with average quality of support with regard to social advocacy behaviors. This research evidences that school counselors surveyed feel the least quality of support developing school counseling programs that teach students about their rights ($\bar{x}=4.06$). They feel the highest quality of support using data to improve counseling program interventions ($\bar{x}=5.17$). However, there is noise in the quality of support reported as evidenced by standard deviations between 1.485 and 1.678 on a seven-point Likert scale.

These trends could suggest that school based administrative personnel support counselors using data to drive their work decisions and have professional expectations that are increasingly in line with the transformation of teacher roles as it relates to response to intervention based accountability. However, administrators might still reflect attitudes of uncertainty when it comes to counselors engaging in leadership behaviors associated with school counselor social advocacy.

Moderate support is also possibly reflective of the shift in counseling away from clinical judgment alone toward data drive programs and models to support growth and act as primary prevention programs (e.g. CASEL, Naviance, RULER).

Counselors also report their personal Engagement in school counselor social advocacy behaviors, which is unique to this study. Other studies assert what school counselors should do in terms of transformed school counselor social advocacy behaviors, yet self report or other direct measures had not been taken prior to this study. Counselors participating in this study report moderate levels of Engagement ($x=4.60$) in social advocacy behaviors. Moderate levels of engagement in social advocacy behaviors reflect that counselors surveyed in this study support what the professional school counseling community is encouraging with regard to social advocacy behaviors and that they are engaging in professional practices that are reflective of counselor behavior encouraged toward closing the achievement gap.

The individual stem data of the Engagement section are also reflective of a profession with varying opinions and attitudes about behaviors related to status quo practices. The amount of variation in the data could be reflective of counselors in the midst of a shift or differing practices of counselors across different circumstances. In either case, the data reflect inconsistent professional practices. Though the overall mean of the subscale reflects moderate engagement ($x=4.6$); the noise within the individual items is high suggesting a profession whereby the professionals comprising the community are not aligned in their practice. The spread, or standard deviation, ranges from 1.428 to 1.875 with the greatest amount of noise reflected in the stem “I develop programs that teach students about their rights.” This amount of noise in the data suggests that school counselors could be pushed in one direction or another in terms of their beliefs in Importance and subsequent Engagement depending on individual and

systems level factors affecting stability and comfort in aligning with and empowering marginalized students.

As would be expected, there are high and statistically significant correlations between Importance and Engagement ($r=0.550$, $p < 0.000$). This trend shows that counselors are acting as leaders in the field during professional transition by engaging in social advocacy behaviors that they feel are important. Counselors know what is practical and socially important in their communities and are engaging in social advocacy behaviors. When counselors report high levels of support they are even more likely to engage ($r=.659$, $p < .000$). Furthermore, the quality of support a counselor feels is related to their feelings of Importance suggesting that what administration feels is important could impact what a counselor feels is important. Ultimately, what the data show is that counselors believe in the importance of social advocacy behaviors, are willing to engage in social advocacy behaviors even when the support for such behaviors is moderate. What is critical is seeing the noise as representative of a potential practice shift in the profession. This shift is in a delicate balance and could be impacted toward or away from goals of the profession depending on individual counselor and systemic factors.

Additional promising trends examined in this study are the relationships between social advocacy importance and engagement and demographic factors including setting; time working as a school counselor; professional counseling association membership; RAMP designation; number of students and counselors in schools; leadership in intervention; participation in RTI and PBIS activities; teachers teaching counseling content; role definition and training in the ASCA National Model. The significant relationship related to Importance is counselor role definition. What this suggests is that counselors who feel their role is more clearly defined, the more important they feel school counselor social advocacy behaviors are in their practice.

However, in terms of engagement, school counselors' engagement levels are significantly higher if they report leading intervention programming and if their role is more clearly defined. This data is critical to understanding that school counselor social advocacy behaviors work in conjunction with a more clearly defined role. Role confusion has persisted for school counselors historically. This confusion has contributed to less than desirable beliefs about what school counselors can contribute to meaningful discussions about the achievement and opportunity gaps. This study evidences that as school counselors identify with a clearly defined role, they are engaging more frequently in school counselor social advocacy behaviors.

Though the other areas explored did not reflect a significant difference in means, this might be useful information about where to direct energy in the transformation of the role of the school counselor. If counselors will shift toward being leaders in the school setting and working toward acting as systems change agents, being leaders on school based teams is recommended. These data show that counselors who engage in leading intervention report significantly higher levels of engagement in social advocacy behaviors. Counselors who feel that their role is well defined report higher levels of Engagement in social advocacy behaviors as well. This data suggests that school counselors are working toward becoming school-based leaders, do so more readily if their role is well defined. However, this definition is more reflective of stability and consistency within the district but does not specify what kind of role counselors have. This simply suggests that schools or districts where counselors are solid in their understanding of their role likely participate in meetings related to school based initiatives. This could reflect the organizational structure of the school whereby schools that are more team oriented have more clear expectations and understanding of roles, processes, and procedures than those who do not. As evidenced by the data in this study, engagement in social advocacy behaviors is related to

counselors being leaders toward closing the achievement gap through leading intervention, thus it is essential to understand the relationships across the factors and how they present in actual practical situations. According to counselors participating in this study, a counselor's belief in the quality of support and their belief in the importance of the behaviors are related to their engagement in social advocacy behaviors.

Key to understanding the shift toward social advocacy behaviors is gaining perspective about status quo counselor behaviors. Six separate items were added to the SCSAS to address status quo behaviors; though they do not represent a subscale of the instrument. Taken individually, counselors report high levels of engagement in clerical work ($x=5.58$, mode=7), working alone in their offices ($x=6.21$, mode=7), getting students courses ($x=5.17$, mode=7) and employing clinical judgment ($x=5.40$, mode=6). Despite the high levels of engagement, counselors' belief in the importance of these behaviors signifies moderate importance when reviewing the item level means; however, the modes for these item stems indicate counselors feel that these activities are unimportant only in one case. Counselors report that completing clerical work for applications is unimportant (mode=1); however, counselors report high levels of importance (reflected by the mode) of other status quo tasks for the most part. For example, counselors felt it was important to work in their offices on counseling related tasks (mode = 6 on 6-point scale); only focusing on getting students the classes they need (mode = 6 on 6-point scale); and keeping to themselves to get work done (mode = 6 on 6-point scale). In addition, the standard deviations for all of these items are large suggesting school counselors' beliefs in Importance and actual Engagement reflects dispersion and difference. Adding to the discrepant response styles are the reported levels of support for engaging in status quo related school counselor behaviors. School counselors report average levels of support again with high levels

of dispersion mirroring discrepancies associated with a shift in role definition.

Limitations

There are several limitations to this study in terms of instrumentation , study methodology, and study conceptual foci.

With regard to instrumentation, the instrument used in this study should be refined further. The instrument sample size was relatively small and the participants did not answer all questions yielding missing data. The missing data created problems in the confirmatory factor analysis process as Modification Indices generated by SPSS were not a possible reference. Additionally, the scale could have gone through additional pilot testing such as pilot validation, followup CFA, reliability analyses, and further examination of the properties of the items and scales (McCoach et al., 2013). In terms of the actual structure of the instrument, it is set up with three different response scale styles (agreement, quality, and frequency) making direct comparison across the subscales challenging as the subscales ask counselors to rate behaviors on three different levels of interpretation. In addition, the importance subscale was written on a six-point Likert scale; whereas the Support and Engagement subscales were written on a seven-point Likert scale.

This study could be problematic in that it is not an experimental design, but a descriptive, correlational design. Preferred methodology would have been an experimental design, however, in order to appropriately plan experimental design studies with regard to the constructs measured in this study, it is necessary to assess the current trends in attitudes and practice. In terms of generalizability, this study will only be conducted in the State of Connecticut thereby restricting the level of generalizability of the outcomes of the study. Additionally, the results of the study are based on self-report and participants could falsely report their attitudes and behaviors in an

attempt to appear more socially desirable. However, the SCSAS was designed with this in mind and thus the three, multifaceted ratings per statement.

In terms of conceptual or behavior foci, limitations are centered on the depth and scope of data collection to inform future directions of the field. Additional data from counselors is warranted to better inform research and practice. Additional data from counselors could shape understanding as to why the professional community is not aligned in practice as reflected by the current data. Another limitation is that the data does not inform why counselors feel the way they do about school counselor social advocacy behaviors. Data with regard to administrative, teacher, and student opinions as they relate to school counselor social advocacy behaviors is necessary. Specifically, there is no data from administrators to inform how administrators might perceive school counselor social advocacy behaviors and their impressions about importance, the quality of support they provide to counselors, and the level of engagement they either want to see from counselors or what they actually see from counselors. Furthermore, student and / or family feedback from which to gather student and / or family perspectives of school counselors is not included. There is no teacher feedback from which to gather teacher perspectives of impressions of school counselors limiting the scope of the implications of this study. Lastly, the actual data collected in this study demonstrate large standard deviations reflecting possible misalignment in the field of school counseling across the counselors studied. This misalignment may or may not be representative of all school counselors.

Implications for Future Research

Given that the data from this study suggests varying opinions of importance, support, and engagement in social advocacy behaviors encouraged by professional associations (e.g. ASCA and the NCTSC), future research could focus on numerous aspects of the transition process away

from status quo practices toward school counselor social advocacy. Future directions can be conceptualized with relation to instrumentation, study methodologies and study conceptual or behavioral foci.

Instrumentation is identified as having numerous limitations in this study. However, the limitations can be addressed through future research. As mentioned previously, the instrument structurally could be revised to include 7-point Likert scale items across all areas assessed (Importance, Support, and Engagement). In addition, future redesign of the instrument could include creating thirty-four separate statements that are rated on one scale, rather than three separate scales. This design could also include the eighteen status quo statements. This would avoid difficulty in comparison across the subscales as a result of the use of different measurement scales. Also, the instrument needs to go through additional pilot validation, followup CFA, reliability analyses, and further examination of the properties of the items and scales (McCoach et al., 2013) in order to create an instrument that is ready for reliable use in the field of school counseling.

In terms of study methodologies, future large n, non-experimental research could include research to gather data with regard to the state of school counseling as reflected by what is relevant and reflected by national models and professional counseling associations to continue to get a pulse of the school counseling community practice. In addition, future research in school counseling practice could involve quasi-experimental design or employ single case design in order to get a sense for the relationships between counselor practice and student outcomes related to perception and performance at the proximal and distal levels. As evidenced previously, direct quantitative large N studies as they relate to school counselor practice are not the norm in the field. The use of methodology that gives clear shape school counseling is warranted

quantitatively and qualitatively. Specifically, conducting experimental research in this way will add to the body of research documenting current school counselor practice, thereby validating the role of the transformed school counselor.

Generally speaking, what is left out of school counseling research is data from teachers, administrators, and students. Data from these key stakeholders will provide a holistic assessment helping to guide appropriate intervention at the program evaluation and implementation levels. More specifically, the conceptual foci of future research as a result of the data collected in this study are abundant. The points that are most salient in the results of this study are the questions that arise related to the counselor role across different settings; systemic supports and factors; and individual counselor attributes.

The data in this study evidence that the role of school counselors across the State of Connecticut are potentially inconsistent as demonstrated in the differences in importance and engagement as they relate to school counselor social advocacy behaviors. Additional research needs to be conducted to assess the alignment of school counselor roles. Based on the data, the next step would be to determine why the potential difference or sameness in the data as it pertains to roles. Furthermore, counselors in this study were asked about their feelings as they relate to role definition; however, development of a measure or series of interview questions could be developed to more specifically understand role definition and the factors that create a feeling of clear definition. The data in this study support that school counselors who report that their role is well defined engage in statistically significantly more school counselor social advocacy behaviors, and thus determining what role definition means to these counselors would inform what could be linked to increased engagement.

Since school counselors interact with others in complex systems it is essential to consider how and to what degree the quality of support shapes the role of the school counselor as well as understanding impressions of those in a position to support school counselors of their feelings associated with school counselor social advocacy behaviors. The participants in this study are school counselors; however, it would be useful to understand the systemic factors that either support or discourage participation in advocacy behaviors. In order to gain understanding of systemic factors, additional research should be conducted with administrators at the school, district, and state levels and then compared to counselor data within respective districts to gain insight and develop appropriate programming and support. Additional information as it pertains to administration opinion and focus on status quo behaviors is warranted as what promotes encouragement of either class of behaviors is essential to creating collaborative working relationships that satisfy the needs of administration and school counselors. School counselors surveyed in this study evidence moderate quality of support on average; however, what is not known is quality of dialogue around school counselor practice between the administrator(s) and counselor(s). The relationship between the counselor and administrator concerning school counselor social advocacy behaviors as well as status quo behaviors is important to understand in order to move the profession forward given the aims of professional associations and academia.

School counselors themselves are different people with different personal attributes that could either contribute to or detract from engagement in school counselor social advocacy. Literature supports that school counselors could have personal attributes that contribute to the maintenance of status quo behaviors without the forward mobility of advocacy behaviors. Rather than focus research on counselor attributes that draw counselors to counseling, engaging in research that seeks to understand what personal attributes are common across counselors who

engage in school counselor social advocacy would be useful. This understanding could inform professional development foci as well as provide guidance for clinical support for school counselors within their districts. Furthermore, on average, the school counselors surveyed in this study report feeling that school counselor social advocacy behaviors are important. Additional information about whether the importance is rooted in district or personal motivation could inform the level of engagement in social advocacy behaviors. Developing an understanding of what motivates counselor belief in importance in social advocacy behaviors is useful toward the encouragement of engagement in school counselor social advocacy. Understanding from a data driven perspective what creates the belief in importance and providing support at pre-service and in-service training levels in order to encourage further engagement is essential.

Though this study does not evidence a profession in the midst of transition or shift, it provides a snapshot of what is happening in the field of counseling in a state where the achievement gap is wide. The data do suggest misalignment in beliefs and behaviors as evidenced by large standard deviations across the data. This potential misalignment could create the need for refined insight on methods of supporting counselors working in different settings. Needs assessments for counselors in different settings could inform what is happening at the individual district level down to the individual counselor level and provide a vehicle for allocation of resources.

Implications for Training and Practice

The question becomes where do we go from here? Counselors are in a position to be culturally competent and accountable leaders and advocates toward closing the achievement gap (ASCA, 2012; Education Trust, n.d.; Savitz-Romer, 2012). The profession of school counseling is in a critical transition toward closing the gap efforts aligned with federal educational initiatives

(Office of the First Lady, 2014). Counselors are positioned to lead efforts aimed at closing the achievement gap that reach beyond test taking skills and address root issues related to the achievement gap such as stereotype threat and ethnocentric monoculturalism (Aronson, 2004; Steele & Aronson, 1995; Sue & Sue, 2013). Through culturally competent practice, counselors can lead, advocate and demonstrate accountability for developing students to not only test well, but achieve through development of noncognitive skills supporting cognitive growth (Duckworth et al, 2007; Farrington et. al, 2012; Tough, 2012).

Despite the press to engage in leadership, advocacy, and accountability, or school counselor social advocacy as defined by this study, there was no understanding through research about how counselors felt about social advocacy behaviors associated with these constructs. This study provides data about how counselors feel about school counselor social advocacy, how supported they are in carrying out social advocacy and how frequently they actually engage in these behaviors in a state with large discrepancies in achievement and opportunity across race and socioeconomic status. Given that Importance and Support predict Engagement in social advocacy behaviors and a counselor's belief in Importance is influenced by the quality of support leaders, leaders in the profession can determine methods by which to foster belief in the importance of social advocacy behaviors while gaining support in order to maximize engagement to a sustained degree.

Training. At present, school counselors in training are instructed in the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2012) which supports leadership and advocacy toward systemic change. The Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) outlines specific requirements for counselor education programs including the following for school based counselors around concepts as they relate to foundations, contextual dimensions

and practice: foundations including history, models of school counseling programs, career development, school-based collaboration and consultation and assessments as they relate to P-12 education; contextual dimensions with specific focus on counselors acting as, “leaders, advocates, and systems change agents in P-12 schools” CACREP, 2015, p. 31), consultation, leadership and multidisciplinary teams, advocating for school counseling roles and practice generally focused on strategies to promote access and achievement for all students (CACREP, 2015). According to the CACREP website, at present 720 programs are currently CACREP accredited with accreditation growing regularly.

In addition to CACREP, the NCTSC (n.d.) has published a document that promotes the consideration of essential elements for change in programs that prepare school counselors. The elements include creation of a mission statement that supports transformed school counseling; technological competency; diversity in candidates; curricular reform that includes foci on preparing leaders and advocates who are committed to educational equity; pedagogy, field experiences, and practice focused on transformed counseling; support entering the field; creating relationships with community partners; ongoing professional development; creating partnerships between universities and local districts as well as state level department of education partnerships (NCTSC, n.d.). The creation of these accreditation requirements and documents aimed at closing the achievement gap are a step in the direction toward training school counselors who are adept in these areas. These documents support engaging counselors in transformed training at the preservice level while supporting them throughout their careers.

In specific need is training around skills as they relate to leadership and advocacy processes that are inherent to all of the models discussed. Training programs need to focus energy on developing school counselors who are not only comfortable but also competent

advocates. Training programs could supplement the traditional coursework and the recommended CACREP coursework foci with on explicit teaching of these skills and subsequent integration into all coursework and field based experiences.

Supporting counselors at the preservice level also requires that school counselors in training receive support in the field from field based supervisors who are also trained in counseling practices geared toward closing the achievement gap. Counselors who are in training should have support from field-based personnel that mirrors their training in the classroom in order to maximize learning and understanding of the constructs in action and the associated consequences at the individual, school, and district levels of practice. Given the need to promote a continuous process from preservice training through field- based support, additional professional development is necessary for school counselors in practice with additional support for those supervising interns in their course of study.

Given that school counselors surveyed in this study believe in the importance of engaging in school counselor social advocacy behaviors, providing continuous professional development toward the aim of increasing beliefs in importance as well as engagement is warranted and possible. The NCTSC (n.d.) encourages the partnership of universities with local school districts as well as the individual state boards of education. This collaboration could include professional development opportunities for counselors in the field to interact with school counselors in training in an effort to unify the community of learners and field based practitioners. This effort would also create a bridge between school counselors in training and potential field based supervisors increasing the likelihood of a dialogue that is meaningful in the pedagogical and practical senses of the work of a school counselor.

Practice. Not only is there a need for a changes to pre-service and in-service training to support social advocacy behaviors, practice will undergo changes as a result. A practice model to more specifically delineate what engagement in school counselor social advocacy behaviors could look like is necessary in order to facilitate meaningful change toward counselors becoming instrumental in closing the achievement gap as confusion has persisted about counselor roles (Bridgeland et al., 2011; Colbert, Vernon-Jones & Pransky, 2006; Dahir, 2004; Dahir & Stone, 2009; Sears 1999). Practicing with school counselor social advocacy as defined by this study within the frameworks provided could begin to systematically eliminate oppression and biases that impede student growth. Eliminating oppressive organizational structures and social constructs that interfere with opportunity and achievement is what drives transformed school counseling and other initiatives such as *Reach Higher* and places counselors in a position of leadership to close the achievement gap. With documented links to student outcomes, counselors will increase their belief in importance and subsequently have a direct impact on the success of all students.

As counselors are navigating the changes associated with role transformation and coping with demands related to this process, counselors need a specific framework in which to activate their transforming beliefs associated with the importance subscale in support of closing the achievement gap. Given the educational landscape of Response to Intervention; methods for behavioral support, such as PBIS; the Common Core State Standards; counseling standards including ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success (ASCA, 2014); and the data supporting engagement highlighted in this study, an integrated consultative engagement model is suggested. As we know from McCoach and Colbert (2010), collaboration in lower socioeconomic status schools relates to closing the achievement gap.

The social advocacy behaviors examined through this study include guiding staff in the implementation of school wide counseling programs; acting as a systems change agent; developing school counseling programs that teach students about their rights; developing action plans to address problems related to inequity; helping staff recognize inequity; using data to improve counseling program interventions; using data to identify barriers to educational attainment; leading communication about data with key stakeholders; reviewing data to determine the effect of programs on student outcomes; using counseling program data to target interventions to close the achievement gap; and presenting data as it relates to overall school and district performance. These behaviors would have to be central to practice and should be carried out through collaborative, reflective, data – driven practice that is developed through ongoing professional development. Colbert et al. (2006) through the SCFP place school counselors in a significant role in the transformation process toward closing the achievement gap. The data from this study suggest that as counselors lead intervention they engage in higher levels of social advocacy. Thus, placing counselors central to education reform could be transformative for all students.,

Professionals engaged in this process will collaborate with integration of relevant social / political content into core academic lessons; utilize data; and engage in continuous reflective practice relevant to areas of need. And with future research supporting this type of process, (addressing your limitation, this could be generalized on larger level to impact the school counseling profession.

Understanding counselors' beliefs about the importance of social justice advocacy behaviors is critical because what counselors believe is going to influence how they engage ($r=.550, p < .000$) as well as what they believe others Support ($r=.659, < .000$) and that

others support will also influence what they believe is Important ($r=.384, p < .000$). These data are critical, as counselors cannot change the quality of their support for being social advocates in schools. The current professional practice demands can be supported through counselors examining their own beliefs in the importance of transformation and providing training to promote leadership behaviors, address roadblocks, and become advocates and leaders dedicated to eroding the achievement gap. Essentially, creating an opportunity for counselors to understand his or her beliefs about social advocacy behaviors, knowing the potential roadblocks and how to garner support for aligning professionally with contextually relevant social justice foci will close not only the achievement gap, but begin to erode the social constructs that keep students from succeeding.

Closing

School counseling has undergone seismic shifts in scope and practice since its inception. School counselors have moved from ancillary helping roles to being central to school reform aimed at closing the achievement gap. The expectation for school counselors in this country is to plant the seeds that college is not something that is talked about but is an expectation (Office of the First Lady, 2014). Within the field of education there is increased focus and priority on graduating all students college and career ready in order to prepare a nation of leaders. ASCA (2012) and The Education Trust (n.d.) have begun the process of giving shape to what the transformation will look like for the profession of school counseling through the development of national standards for practice.

As discussed in the literature review of this study about school counselor social advocacy behaviors, school counselors sit in an extremely important seat in the progress of education reform, especially for our students who are minoritized and face social constructs that impeded

their ability to develop as students and access their potential. Students face the toxic influences of ethnocentric monoculturalism (Sue & Sue, 2013), stereotype threat (Steele & Aronson, 1995; Aronson, 2004), and denial of their roots by continuous exposure to Eurocentric, White middle class oriented curricula (James, 2012). In order to address the massive effort of closing the achievement gap, counselors need to undergo yet another seismic shift with regard to their professional foci as suggested by the National Center for Transforming School Counseling (n.d.). School counselors now are expected to be leaders, advocates, data savvy communicators, and strong reflective and resilient agents of change (ASCA, 2012). This study examined school counselors' attitudes as they relate to behaviors shaping what ASCA (2012) and the NCTSC (n.d.) suggest school counselors do.

Despite school counselors needing to embark on this shift, there was no relevant and meaningful assessment to gain insight into what counselors feel, how supported they are and what they are actually doing in practice with regard to social advocacy behaviors. In order to address counselor need, the SCSAS was developed and subsequently analyzed to give shape and understanding to what our practitioners are experiencing in the field. With further refinement of the SCSAS as discussed above, further insight into these constructs will help to inform practice to support school counselors toward closing the achievement gap. Without relevant data, academia cannot develop meaningful scholarship dedicated to making essential strides toward achieving critical goals set forth by our nation to bring equity not only to our social strata but to our children and their progress.

For the purposes of this study, one of the states with the largest achievement disparities was chosen to survey school counselors and their attitudes about social advocacy. School counselors believe in the importance of the behaviors, feel somewhat supported and report

moderate to high levels of engagement in such behaviors. However, the counselors surveyed for this study are working in a professional landscape fraught with divided feelings as they relate to role definition, yet are acting on what is expected at the state and national levels as evidenced in their engagement of school counselor social advocacy behaviors. Counselors believe in the importance of this work and thus development and provision of practice models could serve to provide school counselors the structure within which to carry out the critical work of engaging in social advocacy transformation to eradicate barriers, promote excellence, and minimize the weight of the phrase “achievement gap.”

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Appendices

Appendix A1 - School Counselor Social Advocacy Scale (SCSAS) Original

Appendix A2 – Marketing materials for SCSAS - Letter to counselors for CT study

Appendix A3 - Marketing materials for SCSAS – Letter to counselors (Instrument development)

Appendix A4 – Marketing materials for SCSAS – Letter to CSCA members / counselors

Appendix A5- Content validation part 1

Appendix A6-Content validation part 2

Appendix A7-Content validation part 3

Appendix A8 – Final version of School Counselor Social Advocacy Scale

Appendix A9 - Correlation table: Importance subscale SCSAS

Appendix A10-Correlation table: Support subscale SCSAS

Appendix A11-Correlation table: Engagement subscale SCSAS

Appendix A1. School Counselor Social Advocacy scale

Item	IMPORTANCE to YOU						QUALITY OF SUPPORT							ENGAGEMENT						
	1=Unimportant, 6=Important						1=No Support, 7=Strong support							1=Never, 7=Always						
I develop school counseling programs that align with current school improvement plans.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I initiate difficult conversations with staff in my building to effect positive change.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I build relationships with key stakeholders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I guide staff in the implementation of school wide counseling program interventions	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I empower staff to unify on important issues.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When I encounter resistance, I am resilient.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I seek out support when I need it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I complete clerical work for college applications for my students.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I work in my office on counseling related tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I act as a systems change agent.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I only focus on getting students the classes they need.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I develop school counseling programs that teach students about their rights.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I develop action plans to address problems related to inequity.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I provide counseling that is culturally relevant for our students.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Item	IMPORTANCE to YOU						QUALITY OF SUPPORT							ENGAGEMENT						
	1=Unimportant, 6=Important						1=No Support, 7=Strong support							1=Never, 7=Always						
I follow up to make sure action plans are in place.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I keep to myself in order to get work done.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I align with marginalized students.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I have strong problem solving skills.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I help staff in my building	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix A2 – Marketing materials for SCSAS – Letter to Connecticut school counselors

Dear _____ School Counselors,

How are you? I hope your month isn't too wild between work, crazy weather, and it simply being close to the end of the school year!! I found your addresses on your website's counseling page and am reaching out to you for help.

I am a Ph.D. candidate at UCONN and am trying to survey school counselors across the State of CT to find out more about what is going on for our counselors here at home in CT. I will be presenting this data at the CSCA Conference on 5/21!

For those who participate, there is also a raffle for a gift card of your choosing, for those who wish to do so. Also, for those who already participated, a giant THANK YOU!!!!!!!!!!

We are gathering school counselor opinions of leadership, accountability, and advocacy as they relate to your work as a school counselor here in CT. It's time to hear your voices and find out what CT School counselors are doing and what we need! I've created an online TOTALLY ANONYMOUS survey to get your feedback.

The survey can be accessed through the web address listed below:

https://uconn.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_0wT4Oz7HEByYpIF

We are interested in understanding your role as it relates to changes in scholarship, legislation and practice shifts in the professional community. There is a great deal of press for school counselors to act with high levels of accountability as leaders and advocates. However, we understand that you, as counselors, are pulled in many different directions.

We would like to know how relevant you feel certain school counselor behaviors are, the level of support you feel you have in engaging in these behaviors, and the frequency that you engage in these behaviors.

Also, there are several demographic questions which will help us to understand different needs in different circumstances so that we can better align advocacy efforts with what is actually happening in the field. Our goal is to understand what is happening in the State of Connecticut in order to best support school counselors in the process of role transformation.

In order to make this happen, we need counselor feedback in order to understand and guide the development of school counselor roles and identification of roadblocks to counselor progress.

If you have any questions about the survey, anonymity or how this data will be used, please feel free to contact me, Danielle Annett, at [203-815-0411](tel:203-815-0411) or Robert D. Colbert, Ph.D. at (860) 486- 0201. UCONN IRB Protocol number X15-032.

Thank you for all of your help!

Warmest Regards,

Appendix A3 - Marketing materials for SCSAS – Letter to counselors (Instrument development)

I am a PhD candidate at UCONN seeking to develop an affective instrument to determine how **school counselors** are feeling about engaging in transformed school counseling roles. In order to best support counselors and design intervention studies relevant to the topic it is first important to be able to assess how counselors are feeling about their current roles and the behaviors associated with role shift.

I would like to know how relevant school counselors feel certain school counselor behaviors are, the level of support in engaging in these behaviors, and the frequency of engagement in these behaviors. Knowing this information will help give shape to the roles of people who could be incredibly instrumental in addressing the achievement gap. In order to begin to answer these questions, I have designed an affective survey with three levels to each statement (belief in importance, support, and engagement) for which I will conduct a factor analysis in development of the final instrument

The link to the survey is:

https://uconn.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_bmFZCmd4quzbsGx

There are several demographic questions as well, which will help me to understand different needs in different circumstances so that we can better align advocacy efforts with what is actually happening in the field. My goal is to understand what is happening in our communities in order to best support school counselors in the process of role transformation.

I would love school counselor, counselor educator, and school counseling student feedback in order to understand and guide the development of changing roles and identification of roadblocks to counselor progress toward transformed practice.

If you have any questions about the survey, anonymity or how this data will be used, please feel free to contact me, Danielle Annett, at 203-815-0411 or Robert D. Colbert, Ph.D. at (860) 486- 0201. UCONN IRB Protocol number X15-032.

Thank you for all of your help

Appendix A4 – Marketing materials for SCSAS – Letter to CSCA members

Dear xxxx,

How are you? I hope your month isn't too wild between testing, crazy weather, and it simply being what feels like the longest month of the school year!!

I am a Ph.D. candidate at UCONN and we would like to gather school counselor opinions of leadership, accountability, and advocacy as they relate to your work as a school counselor here in CT. It's time to hear your voices! I've created an online TOTALLY ANONYMOUS survey to get your feedback.

The survey can be accessed through the web address listed below:
https://uconn.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_3lno0zd2WeBiAtL

We are interested in understanding your role as it relates to changes in scholarship, legislation and practice shifts in the professional community. There is a great deal of press for school counselors to act with high levels of accountability as leaders and advocates. However, we understand that you, as counselors, are pulled in many different directions.

We would like to know how relevant you feel certain school counselor behaviors are, the level of support you feel you have in engaging in these behaviors, and the frequency that you engage in these behaviors.

Also, there are fifteen demographic questions which will help us to understand different needs in different circumstances so that we can better align school counselor scholarship with what is actually happening in the field. Our goal is to understand what is happening in the State of Connecticut in order to best support school counselors in the process of role transformation.

In order to make this happen, we need counselor feedback in order to understand and guide the development of school counselor roles and identification of roadblocks to counselor progress.

If you have any questions about the survey, anonymity or how this data will be used, please feel free to contact me, Danielle Annett, at [203-815-0411](tel:203-815-0411) or Robert D. Colbert, Ph.D. at (860) 486- 0201. UCONN IRB Protocol number X15-032.

Thank you!

Warmest Regards,
Danielle

Appendix A5- Content validation part 1

LEADERSHIP	Leadership	Advocacy	Accountability	1-Very Unsure	2-Moderately Unsure	3-Moderately Sure	4-Very Sure	Totally Irrelevant	Not very Relevant	Somewhat Relevant	Totally Relevant	Decision
I work alongside teachers to identify problems in my school		3/7 - 43%	4/7 - 57%			4/7 - 57%	3/7 - 43%		3/7 - 43%	4/7 - 57%		DELETE
I develop programs that align with current school improvement plans	3/7 - 43%	1/7 - 14%	3/7 - 43%			3/7 - 43%	4/7 - 57%		1/7 - 14%	6/7 - 86%		Move to Accountability
I initiate difficult conversations with staff in my building	6/7 - 86%				1/7 - 14%	2/7 - 29%	4/7 - 57%		1/7 - 14%	1/7 - 14%	5/7 - 71%	Maintain but modify - add "to effect positive change"
I implement intervention linked to areas identified for school improvement	4/7 - 57%		3/7 - 43%		1/7 - 14%		6/7 - 86%		1/7 - 14%		6/7 - 86%	DELETE
I am intentional in my relationship building	5/7 - 57%		2/7 - 29%		1/7 - 14%	3/7 - 43%	3/7 - 43%		2/7 - 29%	5/7 - 71%		Maintain as leadership
I guide staff in the implementation of school-wide counseling program interventions	7/7 - 100%					1/7 - 14%	6/7 - 86%		1/7 - 14%		6/7 - 86%	Maintain as leadership
I empower staff to unify on important issues.	7/7 - 100%				1/7 - 14%	2/7 - 29%	4/7 - 57%		1/7 - 14%		6/7 - 86%	Maintain as leadership
I collaborate with staff in my building	4/7 - 57%	1/7 - 14%	2/7 - 29%		1/7 - 14%		6/7 - 86%		1/7 - 14%		6/7 - 86%	DELETE
When I encounter resistance, I am resilient	6/7 - 86%	1/7 - 14%			1/7 - 14%	2/7 - 29%	4/7 - 57%		4/7 - 57%	3/7 - 43%		Maintain as leadership
I seek out support when I need it	3/7 - 43%	3/7 - 43%	1/7 - 14%		1/7 - 14%	2/7 - 29%	4/7 - 57%		2/7 - 29%	5/7 - 71%		Looks like a combination of leadership and advocacy
I complete clerical work for college applications		4/7 - 57%	3/7 - 43%	1/7 - 14%	5/7 - 71%	1/7 - 14%		3/7 - 43%	2/7 - 29%	2/7 - 29%		Maintain SQ
I work in my office on counseling related tasks	2/7 - 29%		4/7 - 57%		2/7 - 29%	4/7 - 57%	1/7 - 14%	3/7 - 43%	3/7 - 43%	1/7 - 14%		Maintain SQ
I try to find problems related to equity in our school	1/7 - 14%	6/7 - 86%				3/7 - 43%	4/7 - 57%	1/7 - 14%		6/7 - 86%		DELETE - Redundant

Appendix A6- Content validation part 2

ADVOCACY	Leadership	Advocacy	Accountability	Very Unsure	Moderately Unsure	Moderately Sure	Very Sure	Totally Irrelevant	Not very Relevant	Somewhat Relevant	Totally Relevant	Decision
I act as a systems change agent	5/7 - 71%	1/7 - 14%	1/7 - 14%			3/7 - 43%	4/7 - 57%			1/7 - 14%	6/7 - 86%	Collapse into advocacy based leadership
I only focus on getting kids the classes they need		6/7 - 86%	1/7 - 14%		4/7 - 57%	3/7 - 43%	1/7 - 14%		4/7 - 57%	3/7 - 43%		Maintain SQ
I develop programs that teach students about their rights	2/7 - 29%	4/7 - 57%	1/7 - 14%		1/7 - 29%	3/7 - 43%	3/7 - 43%		1/7 - 14%	3/7 - 43%	3/7 - 43%	Collapse into advocacy based leadership
I develop action plans to address problems related to inequity	2/7 - 29%	4/7 - 57%	1/7 - 14%		1/7 - 29%	3/7 - 43%	3/7 - 43%		1/7 - 14%		6/7 - 86%	Collapse into advocacy based leadership
I provide counseling that is culturally relevant for our students		6/7 - 86%	1/7 - 14%		1/7 - 29%	3/7 - 43%	3/7 - 43%		1/7 - 14%		6/7 - 86%	Collapse into advocacy based leadership
I follow up to make sure action plans are in place	2/7 - 29%		5/7 - 71%		1/7 - 29%	3/7 - 43%	3/7 - 43%			2/7 - 29%	5/7 - 71%	Move to accountability
I keep to myself in order to get work done	1/7 - 14%		6/7 - 86%	3/7 - 43%	2/7 - 29%	2/7 - 29%		2/7 - 29%	4/7 - 57%	1/7 - 14%		Maintain SQ
I align with marginalized students		7/7 - 100%			1/7 - 29%	1/7 - 14%	5/7 - 71%		1/7 - 14%	1/7 - 14%	5/7 - 71%	Collapse into advocacy based leadership
I am autonomous in my role	5/7 - 71%	1/7 - 14%	1/7 - 14%	1/7 - 14%	3/7 - 43%		3/7 - 43%	1/7 - 14%	4/7 - 57%	1/7 - 14%	1/7 - 14%	DELETE
I have strong problem solving skills	6/7 - 86%	1/7 - 14%			1/7 - 29%	2/7 - 29%	4/7 - 57%		1/7 - 14%		6/7 - 86%	Collapse into advocacy based leadership
I get what I need in order to accomplish my goals	3/7 - 43%	2/7 - 29%	2/7 - 29%			3/7 - 43%	4/7 - 57%		1/7 - 14%		6/7 - 86%	DELETE
I help staff in my building recognize inequity	6/7 - 86%	1/7 - 14%				3/7 - 43%	4/7 - 57%		1/7 - 14%		6/7 - 86%	Collapse into advocacy based leadership

Appendix A7-Content validation part 3

ACCOUNTABILITY	Leadership	Advocacy	Accountability	Very Unsure	Moderately Unsure	Moderately Sure	Very Sure	Totally Irrelevant	Not very Relevant	Somewhat Relevant	Totally Relevant	Decision
I use data to improve counseling program interventions		1/7 - 14%	6/7 - 86%		2/7 - 29%	5/7 - 71%				7/7 - 100%		Maintain
I analyze school data		1/7 - 14%	6/7 - 86%		3/7 - 43%	4/7 - 57%			2/7 - 29%	5/7 - 71%		Maintain
I use programs that have always worked in the past			7/7 - 100%	3/7 - 43%	2/7 - 29%	1/7 - 14%		3/7 - 43%	2/7 - 29%	2/7 - 29%		Maintain SQ
I use data to identify barriers to educational attainment			7/7 - 100%	1/7 - 14%	2/7 - 29%	4/7 - 57%		1/7 - 14%	1/7 - 14%	5/7 - 71%		Maintain
I communicate about data with key stakeholders	2/7 - 29%	1/7 - 14%	4/7 - 57%		2/7 - 29%	5/7 - 71%		1/7 - 14%		6/7 - 86%		Move to leadership and reword - "I lead communication about data with key stakeholders"
I review data to determine effect on student outcomes	1/7 - 14%		6/7 - 86%	1/7 - 14%	1/7 - 14%	5/7 - 71%		1/7 - 14%		6/7 - 86%		Maintain
I use programs that the students seem to feel good about		4/7 - 57%	3/7 - 43%	2/7 - 29%	3/7 - 43%	2/7 - 29%		2/7 - 29%		5/7 - 71%		Seems to be reflective of NCS. Maintain but consider altering wording to "I use a program based on what I think the students feel"
I use counseling program data to target interventions to close the achievement gap	1/7 - 14%		6/7 - 86%	1/7 - 14%	1/7 - 14%	5/7 - 71%		1/7 - 14%	1/7 - 14%	5/7 - 71%		Maintain
I use data to remove barriers that deny students access opportunities	1/7 - 14%	2/7 - 29%	4/7 - 57%		4/7 - 57%	3/7 - 43%			1/7 - 14%	6/7 - 86%		DELETE
I conduct needs assessment in order to effectively work with staff			7/7 - 100%		3/7 - 43%	4/7 - 57%			1/7 - 14%	6/7 - 86%		Maintain
I present data as it relates to overall school and district performance	1/7 - 14%		6/7 - 86%	1/7 - 14%	1/7 - 14%	5/7 - 71%		1/7 - 14%	1/7 - 14%	5/7 - 71%		Maintain

Appendix A8 – Final version of SCSAS



School Counselor Social Advocacy Scale

Please read each item stem and select the response on the scale that most represents how you feel about the content of the item stem. Please answer each part of this survey.

Item	IMPORTANCE to YOU						QUALITY OF SUPPORT							ENGAGEMENT						
	1=Unimportant, 6=Important						1=No Support, 7=Strong support							1=Never, 7=Always						
I guide staff in the implementation of school wide counseling program interventions	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I complete clerical work for college applications for my students. <i>**If you are an elementary or middle school counselor, please select "1" for the first statement and leave the rest blank**</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I work in my office on counseling related tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I act as a systems change agent.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I only focus on getting students the classes they need.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I develop school counseling programs that teach students about their rights.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I develop action plans to address problems related to inequity.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I provide counseling that is culturally relevant for our students.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I keep to myself in order to get work done.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I help staff in my building recognize inequity.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I use data to improve counseling program interventions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I use programs that have always worked in the past.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I use data to identify barriers to educational attainment.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I lead communication about data with key stakeholders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7



School Counselor Social Advocacy Scale

Please read each item stem and select the response on the scale that most represents how you feel about the content of the item stem. Please answer each part of this survey.

I review data to determine the effect of programs on student outcomes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I use a school counseling program based on what I think the students feel.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I use counseling program data to target interventions to close the achievement gap.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I present data as it relates to overall school and district performance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Demographic Questions																				
Please choose in which type of setting you currently work						<input type="radio"/> Urban <input type="radio"/> Suburban <input type="radio"/> Rural <input type="radio"/> Other														
At what point are you in your school counseling career?						<input type="radio"/> In training <input type="radio"/> Working														
How many years have you been a School Counselor?						<input type="radio"/> Less than 5 <input type="radio"/> Between 6-10 <input type="radio"/> Between 11-15 <input type="radio"/> Between 16-20 <input type="radio"/> More than 20														
Are you a member of any counseling association?						<input type="radio"/> YES <input type="radio"/> NO														
Is your school identified as an ASCA RAMP school?						<input type="radio"/> YES <input type="radio"/> IDK <input type="radio"/> NO														
About how many students are in your school?						<input type="radio"/> Less than 500 <input type="radio"/> Between 501-1000 <input type="radio"/> Between 1001-1500 <input type="radio"/> More than 1500														
How many counselors are in your school?						<input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4 <input type="radio"/> 5 <input type="radio"/> Other _____														
Do you lead any intervention programs?						<input type="radio"/> YES <input type="radio"/> NO														
Do you participate in RTI team meetings and activities?						<input type="radio"/> YES <input type="radio"/> NO														
If you are a PBIS school, do you participate in PBIS activities?						<input type="radio"/> YES <input type="radio"/> NO														
Do teachers in your school teach any counseling based lessons?						<input type="radio"/> YES <input type="radio"/> NO														
Does your role feel well-defined in your district?						<input type="radio"/> YES <input type="radio"/> NO														
Did you receive training in the ASCA National Model?						<input type="radio"/> YES <input type="radio"/> NO														

Appendix A9. Importance subscale correlations

Correlations – Importance Subscale SCSAS

		Q4I	Q10I	Q12I	Q13I	Q19I	Q20I
Q4I	Pearson Correlation	1	.432**	.208**	.313**	.335**	.286**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.002	.000	.000	.000
	N	276	226	228	223	219	206
Q10I	Pearson Correlation	.432**	1	.265**	.386**	.407**	.356**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	226	227	225	221	217	204
Q12I	Pearson Correlation	.208**	.265**	1	.492**	.446**	.363**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	228	225	229	223	218	205
Q13I	Pearson Correlation	.313**	.386**	.492**	1	.603**	.296**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	223	221	223	224	215	200
Q19I	Pearson Correlation	.335**	.407**	.446**	.603**	1	.321**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	219	217	218	215	220	204
Q20I	Pearson Correlation	.286**	.356**	.363**	.296**	.321**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	206	204	205	200	204	207
Q23I	Pearson Correlation	.401**	.393**	.356**	.442**	.522**	.628**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	202	201	201	197	202	203
Q24I	Pearson Correlation	.339**	.300**	.478**	.257**	.459**	.516**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	201	200	200	197	202	202
Q25I	Pearson Correlation	.347**	.358**	.400**	.380**	.444**	.629**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	199	198	198	193	198	200
Q27I	Pearson Correlation	.475**	.353**	.420**	.520**	.501**	.447**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	198	197	197	192	197	199
Q29I	Pearson Correlation	.345**	.446**	.336**	.440**	.482**	.498**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	196	196	195	192	196	197

Correlations – Importance Subscale SCSAS						
		Q23I	Q24I	Q25I	Q27I	Q29I
Q4I	Pearson Correlation	.401**	.339**	.347**	.475**	.345**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	202	201	199	198	196
Q10I	Pearson Correlation	.393**	.300**	.358**	.353**	.446**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	201	200	198	197	196
Q12I	Pearson Correlation	.356**	.478**	.400**	.420**	.336**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	201	200	198	197	195
Q13I	Pearson Correlation	.442**	.257**	.380**	.520**	.440**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	197	197	193	192	192
Q19I	Pearson Correlation	.522**	.459**	.444**	.501**	.482**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	202	202	198	197	196
Q20I	Pearson Correlation	.628**	.516**	.629**	.447**	.498**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	203	202	200	199	197
Q23I	Pearson Correlation	1	.535**	.642**	.572**	.568**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	203	200	197	196	195
Q24I	Pearson Correlation	.535**	1	.642**	.409**	.596**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	200	202	197	196	195
Q25I	Pearson Correlation	.642**	.642**	1	.483**	.567**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	197	197	200	198	196
Q27I	Pearson Correlation	.572**	.409**	.483**	1	.485**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	196	196	198	199	197
Q29I	Pearson Correlation	.568**	.596**	.567**	.485**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	195	195	196	197	197

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Appendix A10. Support subscale correlations

Correlations – Support Subscale SCSAS

		Q4S	Q10S	Q12S	Q13S	Q14S	Q19S	Q20S
Q4S	Pearson Correlation	1	.585**	.547**	.554**	.484**	.521**	.494**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	273	222	220	216	223	215	203
Q10S	Pearson Correlation	.585**	1	.531**	.500**	.411**	.563**	.437**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	222	223	219	215	220	212	200
Q12S	Pearson Correlation	.547**	.531**	1	.657**	.549**	.553**	.405**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	220	219	221	214	220	211	199
Q13S	Pearson Correlation	.554**	.500**	.657**	1	.628**	.659**	.436**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	216	215	214	217	216	210	194
Q14S	Pearson Correlation	.484**	.411**	.549**	.628**	1	.640**	.399**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	223	220	220	216	224	214	201
Q19S	Pearson Correlation	.521**	.563**	.553**	.659**	.640**	1	.484**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	215	212	211	210	214	216	200
Q20S	Pearson Correlation	.494**	.437**	.405**	.436**	.399**	.484**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	203	200	199	194	201	200	204
Q23S	Pearson Correlation	.493**	.510**	.427**	.555**	.546**	.600**	.562**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	197	195	195	191	196	197	198
Q24S	Pearson Correlation	.526**	.543**	.544**	.521**	.613**	.624**	.590**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	196	194	193	190	195	196	197
Q25S	Pearson Correlation	.407**	.471**	.440**	.432**	.479**	.475**	.716**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	195	193	192	187	193	193	196
Q27S	Pearson Correlation	.430**	.474**	.482**	.526**	.545**	.605**	.679**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	193	191	191	186	192	192	194
Q29S	Pearson Correlation	.519**	.535**	.534**	.520**	.475**	.588**	.670**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	190	190	188	184	188	189	191

Correlations – Support Subscale SCSAS

		Q23S	Q24S	Q25S	Q27S	Q29S
Q4S	Pearson Correlation	.493**	.526**	.407**	.430**	.519**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	197	196	195	193	190
Q10S	Pearson Correlation	.510**	.543**	.471**	.474**	.535**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	195	194	193	191	190
Q12S	Pearson Correlation	.427**	.544**	.440**	.482**	.534**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	195	193	192	191	188
Q13S	Pearson Correlation	.555**	.521**	.432**	.526**	.520**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	191	190	187	186	184
Q14S	Pearson Correlation	.546**	.613**	.479**	.545**	.475**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	196	195	193	192	188
Q19S	Pearson Correlation	.600**	.624**	.475**	.605**	.588**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	197	196	193	192	189
Q20S	Pearson Correlation	.562**	.590**	.716**	.679**	.670**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	198	197	196	194	191
Q23S	Pearson Correlation	1	.707**	.657**	.699**	.681**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	198	194	192	190	188
Q24S	Pearson Correlation	.707**	1	.694**	.616**	.652**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	194	197	192	189	188
Q25S	Pearson Correlation	.657**	.694**	1	.755**	.652**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	192	192	196	192	190
Q27S	Pearson Correlation	.699**	.616**	.755**	1	.678**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	190	189	192	194	189
Q29S	Pearson Correlation	.681**	.652**	.652**	.678**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	188	188	190	189	191

Appendix A11. Engagement subscale correlations

Correlations – Engagement Subscale SCSAS

		Q4E	Q10E	Q12E	Q13E	Q19E	Q20E
Q4E	Pearson Correlation	1	.443**	.412**	.430**	.317**	.319**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	230	192	190	186	181	173
Q10E	Pearson Correlation	.443**	1	.363**	.504**	.423**	.259**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.001
	N	192	193	189	185	181	172
Q12E	Pearson Correlation	.412**	.363**	1	.491**	.319**	.355**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	190	189	191	184	179	171
Q13E	Pearson Correlation	.430**	.504**	.491**	1	.478**	.361**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	186	185	184	187	177	166
Q19E	Pearson Correlation	.317**	.423**	.319**	.478**	1	.325**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	181	181	179	177	182	169
Q20E	Pearson Correlation	.319**	.259**	.355**	.361**	.325**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001	.000	.000	.000	
	N	173	172	171	166	169	174
Q23E	Pearson Correlation	.296**	.314**	.255**	.379**	.464**	.545**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.001	.000	.000	.000
	N	169	169	168	164	168	169
Q24E	Pearson Correlation	.369**	.408**	.373**	.276**	.392**	.484**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	168	168	166	163	167	168
Q25E	Pearson Correlation	.391**	.292**	.476**	.408**	.324**	.623**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	165	165	163	158	162	165
Q27E	Pearson Correlation	.349**	.405**	.297**	.433**	.434**	.576**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	165	165	164	159	163	165
Q29E	Pearson Correlation	.390**	.344**	.366**	.327**	.326**	.530**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	165	166	163	160	163	165

		Q23E	Q24E	Q25E	Q27E	Q29E
Q4E	Pearson Correlation	.296**	.369**	.391**	.349**	.390**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	169	168	165	165	165
Q10E	Pearson Correlation	.314**	.408**	.292**	.405**	.344**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	169	168	165	165	166
Q12E	Pearson Correlation	.255**	.373**	.476**	.297**	.366**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	168	166	163	164	163
Q13E	Pearson Correlation	.379**	.276**	.408**	.433**	.327**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	164	163	158	159	160
Q19E	Pearson Correlation	.464**	.392**	.324**	.434**	.326**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	168	167	162	163	163
Q20E	Pearson Correlation	.545**	.484**	.623**	.576**	.530**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	169	168	165	165	165
Q23E	Pearson Correlation	1	.607**	.559**	.566**	.461**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	170	167	163	163	164
Q24E	Pearson Correlation	.607**	1	.550**	.516**	.533**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	167	169	163	162	164
Q25E	Pearson Correlation	.559**	.550**	1	.585**	.559**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	163	163	166	163	164
Q27E	Pearson Correlation	.566**	.516**	.585**	1	.495**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	163	162	163	166	163
Q29E	Pearson Correlation	.461**	.533**	.559**	.495**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	164	164	164	163	166

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).