

EDUCATIONAL



THE UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Report to the Education Interim
Committee

School Counselor Services Report

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School Counselor Services Report

STATUTORY REQUIREMENT

U.C.A. Section 53E-3-519 requires the Utah State Board of Education to prepare and submit to the Education Interim Committee a report on the Board's strategic efforts to address counseling services in schools.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is provided to the Education Interim Committee to report on the Board's strategic efforts to address counseling services in schools as specified in House Bill 81, School Counselor Services, from the 2019 General Session. This report discusses the implementation of R277-464, School Counselor Direct and Indirect Services, and work the Board has done to address counseling services in schools. The Utah College and Career Readiness School Counseling Program Model strongly emphasizes college and career readiness for each student and the counselor's role in helping students realize positive postsecondary outcomes. The framework is student-centered, data-driven, counselor-implemented, and systemic in nature. The Board's strategic efforts to address counseling services in schools is based in this framework and includes time task analysis, data projects, program reviews, plans for the college and career readiness process, training, grant program implementation, and a summer conference, which are detailed in the report.

BACKGROUND

In the 2019 General Session, the Legislature passed House Bill 81, School Counselor Services. This bill directed the Utah State Board of Education (Board) to make rules specifying:

- the recommended direct and indirect services a school counselor may provide;
- the recommended amount of time a school counselor may spend on direct and indirect services; and
- recommended activities for a school counselor.

The bill also required the Board to prepare and submit a report on the Board's strategic efforts to address counseling services in schools.

REVISIONS TO R277-464

In response to House Bill 81, the Board enacted Board rule R277-464, School Counselor Direct and Indirect Services, to establish standards and time limits for direct and indirect services provided by a counselor within a local education agency (LEA).

Direct services are in-person interactions between school counselors and students. Through the direct services of classroom instruction, career literacy,

dropout prevention, social and emotional supports, and individual student planning, school counselors help students develop knowledge, attitudes, and skills to enhance academic achievement and college and career readiness. According to R277-464, an LEA shall ensure 85% of a school program's aggregate time is devoted to providing direct services to students.

Indirect services are services provided on behalf of students as a result of effective program implementation and school counselor's interactions with others. Through indirect services of program management, advocacy and outreach, collaboration, consultation, and referral, school counselors enhance student achievement and promote equity and access for all students. According to R277-464, an LEA shall ensure that no more than 15% of a school program's aggregate time is devoted to indirect services including faculty meetings, administrative duties related to the program, professional learning of a school counselor, and leadership meetings.

The rule also states that "an LEA shall ensure all appropriate and prohibited inappropriate activities are consistent with the School Counselor Services document incorporated by reference in Section R277-464-3, including the elimination of non-school counseling duties such as test coordination and administration." (document in Appendix A) Non-school counseling duties are identified by the ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs as inappropriate to the school counselor's role and take away valuable time from implementing a school counseling program that meets the needs of students. This includes activities such as test coordination and administration, master schedule building, student discipline, and substitute teaching.

However, as a team member within the educational system, school counselors perform "fair share" responsibilities that align with and are equal in amount to the fair share responsibilities provided by other educators on the school site. For example, if the school site is administering the ACT to all juniors, counselors may be asked to perform "fair share" duties on that day that is in equal amount to other educators on site. Nevertheless, counselors should not routinely be assigned sole responsibility for test coordination and administration, master schedule building, or other non-school counseling duties.

LEAs are required to provide an annual assurance of intent to comply with the time allocation described in R277-464 through the annual assurances document.

STRATEGIC EFFORTS AROUND SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICES

Along with the enactment of R277-464, the Board has undertaken numerous strategic efforts to address counseling services in schools. As stated above, the Utah College and Career Readiness School Counseling Program Model strongly emphasizes college and career readiness for each student and the counselor's role in helping students realize positive postsecondary outcomes. The framework is student-centered, data-driven, counselor-implemented, and systemic in nature, and provides the foundation for these strategic efforts. Figure 1 below illustrates the major groupings for these strategic efforts.

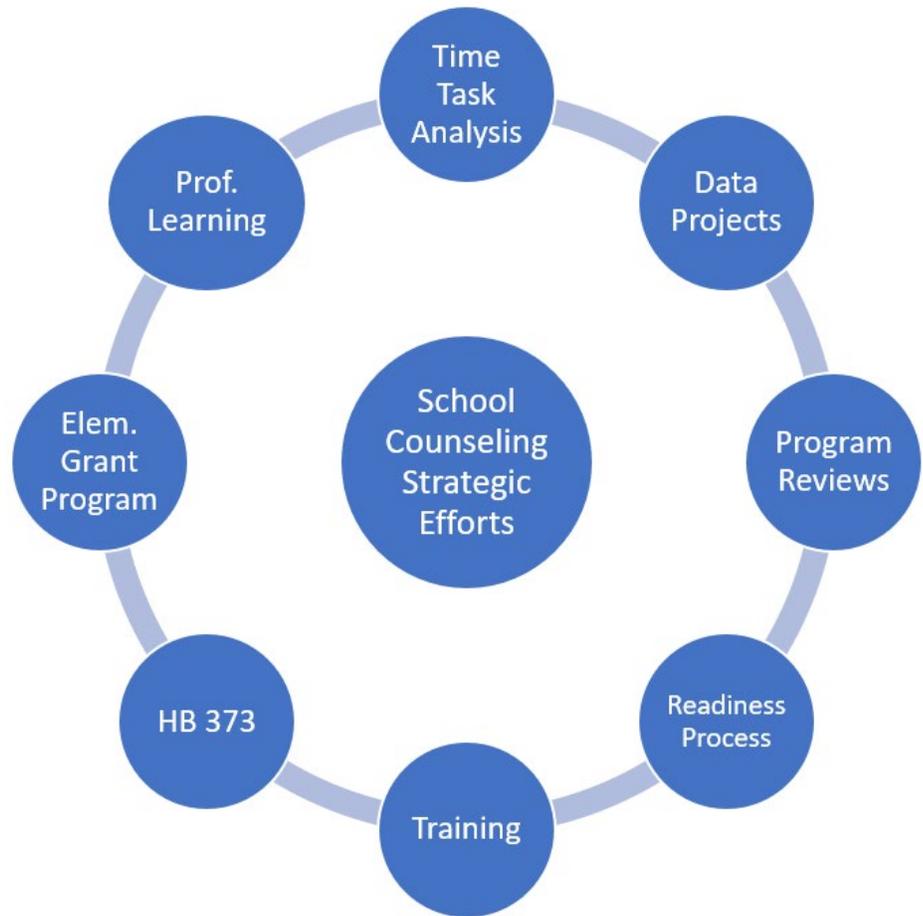


Figure 1. Categories of Strategic Efforts around School Counseling Services

TIME TASK ANALYSIS

Annually, counselors are asked to document between five to ten random sample days during the school year. This time task analysis helps school counselors document how much time is spent in direct and indirect services to students rather than non-school counseling activities. The data collected help to ensure school counselors are focusing on student supports as well as can be used as an advocacy tool to eliminate non-school counseling duties. As stated above, to qualify for funding, a minimum of 85% of counselor time should reflect direct services to students, with a maximum of 15% of counselor time in indirect services to students. See Appendix B for the Time/Task allocation document.

DATA PROJECTS

Data-driven practices help school counselors know where to focus their efforts and impact change. Outcome data is a requirement of systemic practice in the areas of access, attainment, and achievement for student success. School counselors work on many data projects within one school year; however, only one project is reported annually to the Utah State Board of Education using the data project framework (see Appendix C). Data projects submitted to the Utah State Board of Education are only one example of a larger data-driven school counseling program and systemic practice within the educational setting. Data projects are developed and implemented based on the data results to close access, attainment and achievement gaps and evaluate program effectiveness.

SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM REVIEWS

In accordance with R277-462, School Counseling Programs, school counselors are required to be evaluated annually. A formalized accountability process of annual program evaluation is established through program evaluations, interim, and formal on-site reviews. This evaluation framework ensures that the school counseling team has implemented the program elements described in the review standards, including identifying direct and indirect school counselor services. The Utah College and Career Readiness School Counseling Program manual, <https://schools.utah.gov/file/817f17b1-59d8-433c-8530-17d3c3810070>, is a tool to use for these evaluations.

PLAN FOR COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS PROCESS

Title 53E-2-304: School District and Individual School Powers – Plan for College and Career Readiness Definition outlines the details of College and Career Readiness planning meetings and provides guidelines and expectations for LEA policies regarding these meetings. A plan for college and career readiness is developed by a student and the student's parent, in consultation with school counselors, teachers, and administrators that identifies a student's skills and objectives, maps out a strategy to guide a student's course selection; and links a student to post-secondary options, including higher education and careers. The Time/Task document (Appendix B) contains the recommended distribution of total school counseling time on planning for college and career readiness.

UPDATES AND ESSENTIALS TRAINING

School Counseling Updates and Essentials Training is for all counselors and administrators. During this professional learning, school counselors and administration work together to clearly define the role of the school counselor, analyze data, establish school counseling program goals aligned with school improvement plans, and improve program implementation. There are specific Updates and Essentials trainings for elementary, secondary, and new school counseling programs.

HB 373: SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS

During the 2019 General Session, the Utah Legislature passed House Bill 373, Student Support Amendments, which established the School-based Mental Health Qualified Grant Program. This program allocates funding to LEAs to provide, in a school, targeted school-based mental health support, including clinical services and trauma-informed care. This objective can be accomplished by employing or entering into contracts for services provided by qualifying personnel (school counselor or other counselor, school psychologist or other psychologist, school social worker or other social worker, or school nurse). The first year of implementation of the program was the 2019-2020 school year. Based on information reported by LEAs this past school year, most LEAs utilized the program funding to hire additional school counselors (or expand the hours of existing school counselors) (Figure 2).

Hires by Qualified Personnel

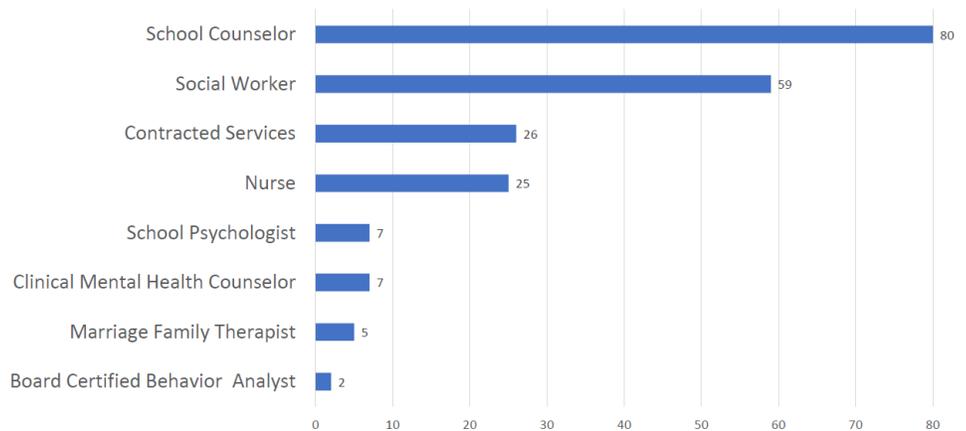


Figure 2. School-based Mental Health Qualified Grant Program Hires by Qualified Personnel, 2019-2020 School Year

R277-461: ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNSELING GRANT PROGRAM

This funding supports grants awarded by the Board to school districts and charter schools to provide targeted school-based mental health support in elementary schools through the hiring of qualifying personnel (a school counselor, school social worker, or a board-licensed school psychologist) who is assigned to a school (53F-5-209 and R277-461). The program receives an appropriation of \$2.1 million ongoing. LEAs that participate in the grant program must provide local funds to match grant funds, equal to one half of the grant funds.

The Board awards grants based on certain statutory criteria. The first priority for grants goes to LEAs that propose to target funds to one or more elementary schools with a high percentage of students exhibiting risk factors for childhood trauma. Second priority is given to LEAs that propose to target funds to elementary schools with a high percentage of students experiencing intergenerational poverty. A grant recipient shall engage in systemic leadership and planning to align efforts in supporting school improvement and school-based mental health, based on the Utah School Counseling Program Model.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

The State Board offers ongoing professional learning opportunities. In the past we have hosted a summer conference for school counselors. Participants of the summer conference learned strategies and resources to support students in becoming academically, behaviorally and emotionally college and career ready. Those who attended, collaborated with other professionals across the state and learn how to increase support for positive student outcomes. Currently, the Board offers professional learning opportunities throughout the year.

SUMMARY

Utah school counselors demonstrate accountability, social justice, and systemic change. Taking a comprehensive, systemic approach offers school counselors, teachers, administrators, other school personnel, and policymakers a range of strategies and practical tips on how to work more effectively in their schools and communities. The data-driven process helps school counselors and other stakeholders select and implement appropriate supports and interventions that close equity gaps, demonstrate program effectiveness, and improve college and career readiness for each student. As detailed above, the Board's strategic efforts to address counseling services in schools is based in this framework.

Additional information and resources on the School Counseling Programs can be found on the Board's website at:

<https://schools.utah.gov/safehealthyschools/programs/schoolcounseling>.

APPENDIX A. R277-464-3: Incorporation of School Counselor Services Document

School Counselor Direct and Indirect Services

School counselors provide activities and services to students and for students. Delivery of services consists of two broad categories: direct and indirect student services.

- **Direct student services** are in-person interactions between school counselors and students. Through the direct services of classroom instruction, career literacy, dropout prevention, social and emotional supports, and individual student planning, school counselors help students develop knowledge, attitudes, and skills to enhance academic achievement and college and career readiness.
- **Indirect student services** are services provided on behalf of students as a result of effective program implementation and school counselor's interactions with others. Through indirect services of program management, advocacy and outreach, collaboration, consultation, and referral, school counselors enhance student achievement and promote equity and access for all students.

Direct Student Services

Direct student services include activities that promote a whole child approach to academic, career, and social/emotional development for all students. School counselors review access, attainment, and achievement data to inform their decisions about what activities they will deliver to create the most significant impact on student outcomes.

Direct student services are delivered in several ways: instruction, individual student planning, dropout prevention, and academic and nonacademic supports. Through each of these direct services, the school counselor and students work together toward a specific goal. The following are examples of direct student services:

- **Plan for College and Career Readiness** ([53E-2-304](#)) means a plan developed by a student and the student's parent, in consultation with the school counselor that:
 - is initiated at the beginning of grade 7;
 - identifies a student's skills and objectives;
 - maps out a strategy to guide a student's course selection; and
 - links a student to post-secondary options, including higher education and careers.

Through the Plan for College and Career Readiness process, school counselors help students explore educational, career and social/emotional opportunities, expectations or requirements. This includes support and recommendations for exploring services and opportunities available at the school and community, making appropriate course selection and changes to course schedule, determining meaningful educational goals and selecting programs of study that support the student's 4-year and next-step plans.

- **Collaborative Classroom Instruction** includes teaching the school counseling curriculum in alignment with Utah Core Standards and College and Career Readiness Student Mindset and Competencies. The school counseling curriculum is a planned, written instructional program that is comprehensive in scope, preventative in nature, and developmental in design. Examples include:
 - Academic lessons on topics such as study skills; goal setting long-term planning; self-motivation; and balancing school, home and activities.
 - Career lessons on topics such as building self-awareness of skills and interests, exploring careers and understanding connections between lifestyle and career choices.
 - Social/emotional lessons on topics such as self-discipline, peer relationships, and coping skills.
- **Systemic Approach to Dropout Prevention with Social/Emotional Supports** is assistance and support provided to a student or small group of students during times of transition, critical change or other situations impeding

student success. It is short-term and based on evidence-based practices that are effective in a school setting to promote academic, career and social/emotional development. Services are proactive as well as responsive and helps students identify problems, causes, potential consequences and benefits, alternatives and outcomes so they can make informed decisions and take appropriate actions.

Indirect Student Services

School counselors provide indirect student services to effectively implement a comprehensive school counseling program and promote equity and access for all students through consultation, collaboration, and referrals. Indirect student services are delivered through the following strategies:

- **Systemic Program Management** consists of management activities that establish, maintain, and enhance the implementation of the school counseling program. Some activities include:
 - **Program management and operations:** This includes the planning and management tasks needed to support activities implemented in a school counseling program.
 - **Management activities:** In order to effectively manage a school counseling program, school counselors oversee and maintain the following: budget, policies and procedures, annual calendaring, research and resource development, and data analysis.
 - **Professional development:** School counselors are regularly involved in updating and sharing their professional knowledge and skills through professional development in such areas as evidence-based practices, data analysis, and curriculum development. They also provide professional development in the school counseling curriculum and other areas of expertise to the school and community.
 - **Professional association membership:** As the school counseling profession continues to change and evolve, school counselors can maintain and improve their level of competence by attending professional conferences and meetings.
 - **State, district, school and community committees:** By serving on site, district, department, and curriculum committees as well as advisory boards, school counselors assist in generating school-wide and district support for the school counseling program and student needs.
 - **Advocacy and outreach** are the actions in which school counselors promote equity and access for all students by identifying and removing systemic barriers that impede the academic success of students. Advocacy and outreach help stakeholders understand how the school counseling program is integral to student achievement and college and career readiness through the following:
 - **Collaboration** is the process in which multiple individuals work toward a common goal and share responsibility for the associated tasks. It occurs in a variety of situations, including teaming and partnering, faculty and leadership meetings, community partnerships, and crisis response.
 - **Consultation** is the process of providing and seeking information and recommendations to or from individuals who can support the student's need. School counselors both provide and seek consultation to identify strategies to promote student success.
 - **Referral** occurs when students' needs extend beyond the training and/or responsibilities of the school counselor role. School counselors provide instructional, advisement and counseling services through brief, targeted approaches. When a student needs support beyond short-term services or counseling, it is a school counselors' ethical duty to refer students and parents to school or community resources for additional assistance or information.

School Counselor Time Allocations

To achieve the most effective delivery of a school counseling program, a minimum of counselor time should reflect at least 85% in direct services to students, with a maximum of 15% of counselor time in indirect services to students. The R277-464: School Counselor Services

time percentages are designed to be programmatic, not counselor specific, but each counselor also maintains a balance of services, even though he or she may have areas of expertise. Counselors are encouraged to allot times based on program priorities and needs. A time/task analysis is charted annually by each counselor (e.g. one day each week or one week per month – at least ten sample days) to determine total school counselor time spent in direct and indirect student services.

Use of time with the 85% may be allocated differently from school to school based on needs identified in school data. All components of direct and indirect student services are necessary for a program to be considered a school counseling program, but decisions about specific time allocation are based on student needs as demonstrated in analysis of school and program data and in alignment with school and annual student outcome goals. Time spent in indirect student services should not exceed 15 percent of school counselor time.

Recommended Distribution of Total School Counselor Time			
Program Delivery Area	Elementary School Percent of Time	Middle School Percent of time	High School Percent of Time
Plan for College and Career Readiness <i>(Direct Services)</i>	5-10%	35-45%	45-55%
Collaborative Classroom Instruction <i>(Direct Services)</i>	35-45%	25-35%	15-25%
Systemic Approach to Dropout Prevention with Social/Emotional Supports <i>(Direct Services)</i>	30-40%	25-30%	15-20%
Systemic Program Management <i>(Indirect Services)</i>	10-15%	10-15%	10-15%

Adapted from Gysbers, N.C. & Henderson P. (Eds.) (2000). *Developing and managing your school guidance program* (3rd ed.), Alexandria, VA: American School Counseling Association.

Figure 7.2

Use of Time: Appropriate and Inappropriate School Counseling Activities

School counselors’ duties are focused on the overall delivery of the school counseling program – direct and indirect student services, program management, and school support. Administrators are encouraged to eliminate or reassign inappropriate tasks, allowing school counselors to focus on the prevention and intervention needs of their program.

Non-School Counseling Duties

Non-school counseling duties are identified by “The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs” as inappropriate to the school counselor’s role and take away valuable time from implementing a school counseling program that meets the needs of students. This includes activities such as test coordination and administration, master schedule building, student discipline, and substitute teaching. The focus of the school counselor’s work must be on leadership, advocacy, consultation, collaboration, referral, and systemic change. In order for the school counselor to maintain focus, it is critical to define appropriate and inappropriate activities.

APPROPRIATE ACTIVITIES (direct and indirect student services)	INAPPROPRIATE ACTIVITIES (non-school counseling duties)
Interpreting cognitive, aptitude, and achievement tests	Administering cognitive, aptitude, and achievement tests. School counselors should not be organizing and administering standardized tests, including AP testing.
Giving input to administrators on the master schedule	Building the master schedule
Individual student academic program planning, including support and guidance in course selection, course scheduling, and class changes that support the student’s educational and postsecondary goals	Data entry and registering (main office in-take) all new students
Providing short-term individual and small/large-group counseling services to students that promotes a whole child approach to academic, career, and social/emotional development	Providing long-term counseling in schools to address psychological disorders in a therapeutic, clinical mode
Counseling students who are tardy, absent, or have disciplinary problems	Disciplining students who are tardy, absent, or have disciplinary problems
Collaborating with teachers to present school counselor curricula lessons	Teaching classes when teachers are absent
Interpreting student records	Maintaining student records
Collaborating with teachers regarding building classroom connections, effective classroom management, and the role of noncognitive factors in school success	Supervising classrooms or common areas
Protecting student records and information per state and federal regulations	Keeping clerical records
Advocating for students at individual education plan meetings, 504 meetings, student study teams, response to intervention plans, MTSS and school attendance review boards, as necessary	Coordinating schoolwide individual education plans, 504 plans, student study teams, response to intervention plans, MTSS and school attendance review boards
Analyzing disaggregated schoolwide and school counseling program data	Doing data entry
In leadership collaboration, assisting the school principal with identifying and resolving student issues, needs, and problems	Assisting with duties in the principal’s office

Adapted from American School Counseling Association (2019). *The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs*, Fourth Edition. Alexandria, VA: Author.

Fair Share Responsibilities

As a team member within the educational system, school counselors perform “fair share” responsibilities that align with and are equal in amount to the fair share responsibilities provided by other educators on the school site. For example, if the school site is administering the ACT to all juniors, counselors may be asked to perform “fair share” duties on that day that is in equal amount to other educators on site. However, counselors should not routinely be assigned sole responsibility for test coordination and administration, master schedule building, or other non-school counseling duties.

Note: As per board rule [R277-462](#), approved school counseling programs are required to implement the [Utah College and Career Readiness School Counseling Model Second Edition, 2016](#).

APPENDIX B. Related Policies and Guidelines to Qualify for Funding Time/Task Allocation

Related Policies and Guidelines to Qualify for Funding School Counselor to Student Ratio and Time/Task Allocation

R277-462-6. School Counselor to Student Ratio.

(1) To qualify for funding described in Section R277-462-6, an LEA shall have at least one school counselor for every 350 students.

Actual Student Ratio – Enter the current school counselor to student ratio

- Current ratio 1 /

R277-462-3. Incorporation of College and Career Readiness School Counseling Program Model

(1) This rule incorporates by reference the College and Career Readiness School Counseling Program Model Second Edition, 2016. To qualify for funding in accordance to Section R277-462-3. A minimum of counselor time should reflect at least 85% in direct services to students, with a maximum of 15% of counselor time in indirect services to students.

Recommended Distribution of Total School Counseling Time

System Area	Elementary School % of Time	Middle School % of Time	High School % of Time
Plan for College and Career Readiness	5-10%	35-45%	45-55%
Collaborative Classroom Instruction	35-45%	25-35%	15-25%
Systemic Approach to Dropout Prevention	30-40%	25-30%	15-20%
Systemic Program Management	10-15%	10-15%	10-15%

Actual Time Allocation – Enter the actual percentage of time spent in each area based on time/task study.

Plan for College and Career Readiness (direct services)

Collaborative Classroom Instruction (direct services)

Systemic Support to Dropout Prevention with Social Emotional Supports (direct services)

Systemic Program Management (indirect services)

APPENDIX C. Data Project Framework

Data Project Framework

Adapted from Vivian Lee (2012)

Strategic Planning is a step by step process of using data to drive school counselor goal development, program planning and development for measurable results that align with the school improvement process in schools. Strategic planning maximizes counselor time and resources, and provides results measured in student outcomes. The following steps will assist the completion of the data project and electronic Accountability and Data Project Report.

Step One: Collect and Analyze Data

Questions to think about: What data is collected? How is the data disaggregated? What are the equity gaps between student groups? What data elements are priorities? What data elements are relevant to my program goals, school improvement plan, and College and Career Readiness goals? Is there a pattern or trend to help guide your choice in a data project? Which one of the four Mindsets and Competencies (check page 69-74 of the Utah Model for student outcomes) will I use in my data elements?

Include the following:

1a. Data by student group – example: race, gender, grade, student with disabilities, etc.

1b. Data element – example: graduation rates, dropout rates, attendance, disciplinary referrals, early college enrollment, test scores, etc.

1c. Write a data dialogue (this is a comparative question) – example: How do enrollment and completion rates in AP classes compare for male and female students?

Step Two: Write a Measurable Goal

Parts of the Goal: (1) Direction, (2) Group, (3) Data Element(s), (4) Expected Outcome, (5) Date of the Outcome

Write a measurable goal with ALL five parts of the goal. Example: Increase Latino students FAFSA completion rate by 10% by the end of the year.

Increase Latino students FAFSA completion rate by 10% by the end of the year.
Direction(1) Group(2) Data Element(3) Expected Outcome(4) Date of Outcome(5)

Step Three: Create Intervention(s) based on Gap Analysis

Develop potential multi-level intervention for goal.

Select and prioritize interventions, identify staff responsibilities, benchmarks, and timelines.

Questions: What do the interventions measure? Do the interventions correspond to identified student need?

Step Four: Identify Systemic Interventions

What interventions will be implemented at each of the following systemic levels?

- Individual
- Student group
- Classroom
- Grade
- School
- Parents/Families
- District
- Community

Step Five: Accountability Using Data

Questions to think about for the results/outcomes statement:

What was the desired outcome? How was the outcome demonstrated? How was the outcome data used to address inequities? How do the outcomes support the overall school improvement plan goals?

Reporting:

School counselors track the data elements regularly and report results at the end of the school year using the electronic Accountability and Data Project Report. The principal and LEA leadership signatures verify that the data project aligns and supports the school improvement plan and overall goals of the school.

Additional Helps and Reminders

Review the College Board National Office for School Counselor Advocacy Counselor: **School Counselor Strategic Planning Tool**

Resources: USOE Data Gateway: **Student Outcome Accountability Report (SOAR)** data provided by the school district.

Results Data: Answer the question, “What impact did the activity or program have on student performance in the areas of access, attainment, and/or achievement?” This type of data answers the “So what?” question—did the activity make a difference on the target goal? Results data might include:

- Grades
- Discipline referrals
- Attendance
- Test Scores
- Graduation rates
- Dropout rates

Accountability and Data Project Report
School Counseling Programs - Access, Attainment, Achievement

School District/Charter:

Does this project support your school improvement plan?

Area of Focus:
 Access Attainment Achievement

Baseline Data:

Review Step 1: Collect and analyze data

Goal Statement:

Review Step 2: Write a measurable goal

Systemic Interventions

Individual	
Student Group	
Classroom	
Grade	
School	
Parents/Families	
District	
Community	

Review Step 3 & 4: Systemic Interventions

School:

Graph
 Graph results including legend or key

Legend

Review Step 5 : Results statement

*Principal and LEA leadership-By typing your name, you verify that you have reviewed the School Counseling Program Data Project and that it aligns with the school's overall goals.

(taken from statewide data training Fall 2012, Vivian Lee)

Example