1-1-2009

Closing the Achievement Gap: A Social Justice Imperative for School Counseling

Alan W. Burkard
Marquette University, alan.burkard@marquette.edu

Michael J. Martinez
Marquette University, michael.j.martinez@marquette.edu

Casey A. Holtz
Marquette University

43

Closing the Achievement Gap

A Social Justice Imperative for School Counseling

ALAN W. BURKARD, MICHAEL J. MARTINEZ, AND CASEY A. HOLTZ

The current public scrutiny of our school systems is unprecedented. The educational reform movement, legislation action through the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, educational research (Noguera, 2003; Portes, 2005), and commissioned reports (Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges, & Hayek, 2006; National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) have made us abundantly aware that at least some of our children are unsuccessful in schools and that schools are failing many children. Perhaps a natural consequence of such attention is to look for which group or groups are to blame for academically unsuccessful students or the inadequacies of our schools, particularly our public schools. Interestingly, many would contend that we know how to teach children and to help them learn effectively (Darling-Hammond, 2000). So, why do we continue to have problems helping children achieve academically in school? Many believe that the current problems in education are due to social inequality (Noguera, 2003), which manifests as an *academic*

achievement gap. This gap in achievement is based on the unequal performance on academic achievement measures that occurs between students from various ethnic/racial and socioeconomic groups.

There is considerable evidence supporting the existence of social inequality in education and an achievement gap. Academic gaps between ethnic/racial and socioeconomic groups begin to emerge in elementary school, particularly in reading and math, and persist into middle and high school (Portes, 2005). Although African American, Hispanic, and Native American students have made significant gains in math and reading scores in recent years, these scores continue to lag significantly behind Asian American and White students (National Assessment of Educational Progress [NAEP], 2007). Furthermore, over the 16-year period from 1990 to 2005, grade point averages (GPAs) were significantly higher for Asian American and White students in comparison to African American and Hispanic students. Additionally, high school/GED completion

rates are 94% and 90% for Asian Americans and Whites, respectively, but the rates drop to 81% for African Americans and 63% for Hispanics (NAEP, 2004). As a final example, drop-out rates for Hispanic students were 22.4% in 2005, whereas Whites were at 6% and African Americans were at 10.4% (NAEP, 2005). The evidence supporting the social inequalities among these aforementioned groups in our schools is compelling, and suggests that students of color and students from lower economic groups are not provided with adequate educational opportunities (Kuh et al., 2006; Lee, 2005), which may cause one to wonder how to intervene. The solution to closing the achievement gap will necessitate a systemic and collaborative effort by all educational professionals and stakeholders.

Many believe that school counselors are essential professionals in furthering efforts to close the achievement gap (Education Trust, 1997; Hart & Jacobi, 1992; House & Sears, 2002; Martin, 2002). School counselors have a systemic perspective of students and the school, and are the educational professionals best positioned to intervene on behalf of students when barriers to equity and access are present (Martin, 2002). Interestingly, critical reviews of school counseling practice (Education Trust, 1997; Hart & Jacobi, 1992; Rosenbaum, 1976) found that school counselors often were not using their training effectively to advocate for students, were unprepared to provide leadership related to closing the achievement gap, and often served as barriers to student access to relevant and rigorous coursework. Consequently, school counselors essentially helped to maintain the social inequities that were problematic in schools.

A few organizations have emerged to address these concerns and lead reform efforts of school counseling practice. Starting in 1996, the Education Trust embarked on the Transforming School Counseling Initiative to change school counselor preparation (Martin, 2002). The goal of this initiative was to position school counselors as integral educational leaders in school reform, with the long-term intention of closing the achievement gap, particularly for poor and ethnic minority students. In addition to the Education Trust initiatives, the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) published the *National Standards for School Counseling Programs* (Campbell & Dahir, 1997) and later the *ASCA National School Counseling Model* (ASCA, 2005). The

National Standards consist of content standards for students in the academic, career, and personal/social domains, and offer guidelines for the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that all students should acquire through participation in a school counseling program. To support school counselors in the implementation of these standards, the ASCA National School Counseling Model was published. This model provided a comprehensive framework that addressed the philosophical foundation of, delivery of school counseling services to, management of, and accountability-evaluation components of a school counseling program (Bowers, Hatch, & Schwallie-Giddis, 2001). This model was founded on the work of Gysbers and others (e.g., Gysbers & Henderson, 2000; Gysbers & Moore, 1981; Myrick, 1997) and philosophically aligns with the themes of social justice, leadership, collaboration, systemic change, data-driven practice, and advocacy for all students. Finally, the College Board recently formed the National Office of School Counselor Advocacy (NOSCA) to influence school counselor preparation regarding college readiness counseling. NOSCA focuses its efforts on preservice training of school counselors, research on college readiness, and legislative lobby efforts (Martin & Lee, 2007). Although each of the preceding organizations addresses different aspects of school counselor preparation and practice, they all share a common focus on encouraging leadership among school counselors with the intent of creating equal access to opportunities for all students. Closing the achievement gap, then, becomes a social justice imperative for all school counselors.

In this chapter, we are specifically concerned with the role of school counselors in addressing the achievement gap. As context, we focus first on the philosophical beliefs that serve as a foundation for school counselor training and practice. Next, we will concern ourselves with emerging issues affecting school counseling practice as well as training of school counselors. Finally, we will draw some conclusions about important future directions and points of collaboration.

PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATION OF SCHOOL COUNSELING REFORM

At the heart of school counseling reform that is focused on closing the achievement gap is a philosophical

paradigm shift in school counseling practice. Although reform has resulted in several philosophical changes for school counselors, the following three beliefs are specifically important to addressing the achievement gap.

Equity and Access

If school counselors are to address student achievement gaps successfully, equity and access must become the goal of all school counseling programs (House & Martin, 1998). Perhaps at the foundation of this belief is the notion that all students can achieve at high levels and that the role of the school counselor is to ensure that all students have access to educational opportunities to support their potential (Hart & Jacobi, 1992). This social justice perspective suggests that school counselors must correct injustices in our schools by challenging biased school practices such as restricting access to advanced placement courses, placing the lowest performing students with the least skilled teachers, or offering little assistance to students and their parents regarding postsecondary planning. In addition to challenging biased and restrictive practices, school counselors can also increase equity and access by developing guidance curricula that empower students in the classroom (e.g., organizational skills, study skills, test-taking strategies, time management); educate students and their families about academic coursework that ensures that students are college ready (i.e., college awareness, college preparedness); and provide resources to students and their families that would support academic success at elementary, secondary, and postsecondary levels (House & Hayes, 2002; Lee, 2005). Thus, social advocacy becomes the cornerstone skill in ensuring that equity and access have been addressed adequately in our schools (Bailey, Getch, & Chen-Hayes, 2007).

Multicultural Competence

If school counselors are to address student concerns regarding equity and access, they must be culturally competent and provide culturally responsive school counseling services (Lee, 2001). In fact, ASCA (2004) adopted the following position statement on cultural diversity: "Professional school counselors have the skills necessary to collaborate with students, parents and school personnel to identify attitudes and policies that impede the learning process of culturally diverse students" (p. 1). Such a position illustrates the importance of cultural competence to school counseling. The first conceptualization of cultural competence was based on Sue et al.'s (1982) model of awareness, knowledge, and skills. Awareness refers to counselors' understanding of their worldview and the effect that their own cultural conditioning has on their attitudes, behaviors, and interactions with others. School counselors are also expected to be knowledgeable of their students' cultural worldviews and to develop skills that are appropriate for working with culturally diverse students. This original conceptualization of cultural competence served as the foundation for what later became the multicultural counseling competencies adopted by the Association of Multicultural Counseling and Development (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). School counselors use their cultural competencies to lead efforts in educating others on how social, cultural, and systemic barriers impede academic achievement, development, and advancement of marginalized groups (e.g., racial/ethnic minorities; low socioeconomic status students; lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender students; students with disabilities) and use their skills to intervene on students' behalf (Hipilito-Delgado & Lee, 2007).

Systemic Perspective

Finally, a systemic approach to school counseling is important to attain long-term academic and personal success for all students (Behring, 2002). School counselors have to be mindful of the various interconnected systems (e.g., family, school, community) that influence all children's lives (Sink & Stroh, 2003). This perspective is especially important to many schools' mission of academic achievement and represents a commitment to ensuring that all children, regardless of socioeconomic status or race/ethnicity, have the opportunity to achieve (Lee, 2005). School counselors can align themselves with the newly transformed role of school counseling by becoming advocates and leaders for all students and their families (Bemak & Chung, 2005). For example, in addition to partnering with students, school counselors should align with parents to provide them with skills and knowledge on how to gain access to important

resources (Bemak, 2000). School counselors are also in a position to build relationships with teachers (Amatea, Daniels, Bringman, & Vandiver, 2004), principals, and administrators who can assist in working toward social change and decreasing the achievement gap (Bemak, 2000; Lee, 2005), and also collaborate with community agencies that provide important services for children and families (Cox & Lee, 2007). By shifting to a more systemic approach, school counselors are able to be proactive and visible leaders in educational reform (e.g., decreasing the achievement gap) and thereby contribute to the central mission of schools (House & Hayes, 2002).

EMERGING ISSUES FOR SCHOOL COUNSELING PRACTICE

Based on the philosophical changes in school counseling, a new vision of school counseling practice is rapidly emerging in this country. This new perspective encourages school counselors to relinquish their roles as substitute teachers, schedule coordinators, record keepers, and psychotherapists within schools, and to develop roles as educational leaders, social advocates, prevention experts, counselors, collaborators, consultants, and evidence-based practitioners (ASCA, 2005). School counselors use these roles to develop a comprehensive program designed to provide services to *all students* (ASCA, 2005; Gysbers, 1997; Gysbers & Henderson, 2000). Furthermore, the comprehensive school counseling program is based on standards that address students' academic, career, and personal/socio-emotional needs (Campbell & Dahir, 1997), but fundamentally support academic success and student achievement. The attention to supporting student achievement brings into focus the achievement gap that exists for students of color and economically disadvantaged groups. The following discussion describes programmatic changes important to practicing school counselors and closing achievement gaps.

Service to All Students

Traditional models of school counseling have often emphasized duties, processes, or services—paradigms that Gysbers (1997) believes lead to poorly organized

and ineffective services for students and their families. With these traditional models, school counselors often had little rationale or focus for their responsibilities, and consequently, it was exceedingly unclear if school counselors had any effect on student outcomes, particularly in academic achievement. Because of the lack of role clarity, school counselors were vulnerable to being assigned administrative duties that often had little or nothing in common with supporting student growth and development (ASCA, 2005; Burnham & Jackson, 2000; Scarborough, 2005). Under these traditional models, school counselors worked with relatively few students in the school. To address these concerns, theorists (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000; Myrick, 1997) encouraged school counselors to develop comprehensive school counseling programs (CSCPs) that are based upon prevention and standards (i.e., academic, career, personal/social-emotional) (Campbell & Dahir, 1997). CSCPs are designed to reach all students and increase accountability for student achievement outcomes. CSCPs are composed of four components: philosophical foundation, delivery system, management, and accountability (see ASCA, 2005, for a detailed description of each component). Contemporary school counselors, then, stand in sharp contrast to those school counselors who continue to operate as therapists in schools and often reach a minimal number of students. ASCA's (2005) National Model for School Counseling Programs stands as one prominent example of a CSCP, and an increasing number of state departments of education are endorsing comprehensive models for the school counselors in their state.

Emerging research on CSCPs is promising and provides some support for the claim that these programs do indeed increase student academic achievement (Lapan, Gysbers, & Petroski, 2003; Lapan, Gysbers, & Sun, 1997; Sink & Stroh, 2003). Operating on the premise and research that CSCPs support student academic achievement, these programs would appear to be an important social justice initiative that could hold promise for closing the achievement gap. Alarmingly, Lapan, Gysbers, Cook, Bragg, and Robbins (2006) found that schools with high percentages of students of color and economically disadvantaged students had fewer school counselors and had higher school counselor-to-student ratios than did schools with lower percentages of students of color and economically disadvantaged

students. Additionally, in comparison to schools with lower percentages of students of color and economically disadvantaged students, schools with higher percentages of these student groups were less likely to have fully enacted CSCPs. The implications of this research are disturbing and suggest that students who are most in need of service are the least likely to have access to a school counselor or receive assistance through a fully developed school counseling program. These findings are not unlike prior research that indicated that students of color and economically disadvantaged students have difficulty accessing school counselors for assistance (Lee & Ekstrom, 1987). Given the positive outcomes for academic achievement when students experienced a CSCP, it is important that school counselors educate themselves about and seek to implement CSCPs in their schools.

Educational and Career Planning

An important component of the delivery system in a CSCP is educational and career planning. School counselors are positioned to significantly influence students' selection of academically rigorous programs that promote academic achievement, thus addressing the achievement gap. However, school counselors historically have acquired the administrative duty of scheduling student classes, a responsibility that many still have today (Perusse, Goodnough, Donegan, & Jones, 2004). This duty has little to do with academic and career planning, and has placed school counselors in the position of administrative gatekeepers for rigorous academic classes (Hart & Jacobi, 1992). As gatekeepers, school counselors became responsible for assisting students in the selection of their academic track. These decisions were often based on performance in classes and on standardized tests, and test performance determined whether students were encouraged to enroll in either a vocational/noncollege or a precollege track. Research on educational choice suggests that students and their families often made choices about academic tracks with little to no information about the potential implications of such a decision, and that a disproportionately large number of students of color and economically disadvantaged students were placed into noncollege tracks (Oakes & Lipton, 1990; Rosenbaum, 1976).

Consequently, students of color or economically disadvantaged students were not afforded the opportunity nor encouraged to take more rigorous classes. Interestingly, research indicates that rigorous academic course plans, particularly math classes, were better predictors of student success in college than high school rank, GPA, or background variables such as economic status or ethnicity/race (Adelman, 1999). Additionally, completion of math courses was found to be particularly important to postsecondary success for African American and Latina/o students along with those from lower socioeconomic groups. Trusty (2004) and Trusty and Niles (2003) also found a strong connection between students who took extensive math and science classes and postsecondary success. Furthermore, their research revealed the importance of school attendance, extracurricular involvement, and parent involvement. Unfortunately, the disproportionate placement of students of color and economically disadvantaged students into less rigorous academic coursework appears to continue to be present in high schools today (U.S. Department of Education, 2001a), perhaps a reason that students from these groups continue to struggle at the postsecondary level. The evidence appears compelling, then, that assisting students of color and of lower economic groups in selecting more challenging academic programs is one important method school counselors can use to close the achievement gap.

To encourage selection of more rigorous academic programs, school counseling programs should develop a plan to systematically offer educational and career planning to all students as early as middle school, and readiness for educational and career planning should begin in elementary school through developmental guidance activities (Herr & Cramer, 1996). Many states now require that high school students have developed educational plans in ninth grade and that these plans be reviewed periodically with school counselors and parents. For example, schools in Wisconsin that seek federal money through Carl Perkins are required to have educational plans in place for all students. Educational and career planning services for students should include student appraisal, educational advising and counseling, and transition planning (ASCA, 2005). Additionally, workshops should be offered to parents to provide them with knowledge regarding postsecondary educational

and career options to support their child's decision making. In sum, school counselors should have organized services for educational and career planning that help students and their families make informed decisions about their coursework in both middle and high school.

College Readiness

To be work ready today, it is believed that students need, at a minimum, 2 years of postsecondary education (Carnevale & Desrochers, 2003; Hecker, 2001). Furthermore, growth in careers that require postsecondary education degrees, particularly college and advanced degrees, is expected to rise in the foreseeable future (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2007). Relatedly, research on students' interest in attending college indicates that roughly 90% of students plan to go to college, but less than 40% actually meet the college eligibility requirements upon graduation from high school (Kirst & Bracco, 2004) and only 23% go on to receive a degree (American Council on Education, 2002). Additionally, research also suggests that fewer than 12% of students who intend to apply to college are actually familiar with college admission requirements (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2004). So, teachers often become a primary source of college information, but unfortunately, few teachers know accurate information on college admission requirements (Venezia et al., 2004). Further confounding the problems at the postsecondary level, national data indicate that large percentages of students seek remedial education at 2-year (63%) and 4-year (40%) institutions, but only 34% of these students who seek help go on to complete their 2- or 4-year degrees (U.S. Department of Education, 2001a). Degree persistence is also a concern, as only 50% of 2-year degree students and about 25% of 4-year degree students persist beyond the first year of their programs. Such findings indicate that students are often not ready to attend college, and seek information from educational professionals who may not be well informed about important college readiness criteria. Furthermore, the statistics regarding college completion rates are startling and highlight an important achievement gap between racial/ethnic groups that may be partially indicative of college readiness. For instance, college entrance rates for African American,

Latina/o, and White students have increased dramatically since 1971; however, as of 2006, White students were 88% more likely to complete a college education than African American students and 95% more likely than Latina/o students (Baum & Ma, 2007). The achievement gap in college persistence and completion rates suggests that students and families from ethnic/racial and economically disadvantaged groups need college readiness preparation.

As a goal related to closing the achievement gap, college readiness preparation begins with educational and career planning processes; should address educational goal setting, career exploration, and selection of appropriate middle and high school courses; and provide information regarding college admissions requirements, financial aid, and campus life (Tierney, Corwin, & Colyar, 2005). This information should be repeated at several points through students' progression through middle and high school. Families should also be provided with such information, because parents and guardians are particularly influential in students' postsecondary and career decision making (Merchant, 2004). As suggested earlier, the educational and career planning process should specifically address the importance of taking rigorous academic coursework to prepare for college. For additional ideas regarding college readiness preparation, readers are directed to the *College Counseling Sourcebook: Advice and Strategies From Experienced School Counselors* (College Board, 2007).

One group of students that may find college readiness preparation particularly challenging is first-generation college students, and recent figures from the College Board (2007) suggest that 37% of the 2005 Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) cohort were first-generation college students. Many different types of students can be identified as first generation, but the 2005 figures indicated that 46% of the first-generation SAT cohort were ethnic/racial minority students and that a large majority of this SAT cohort were also from economically disadvantaged families. These first-generation students are likely to have multiple needs with regard to college readiness. Similar to all students, first-generation students need assistance with educational planning for college and ensuring that their academic programs completed during high school meet college eligibility requirements. Their families should also be provided

such information through educational planning conferences and workshops designed to provide information and advice about college. First-generation students also may need additional academic assistance with regard to college readiness, for these students indicated intentions of seeking such assistance on college campuses. More specifically, 65% indicated the intention to seek academic assistance, 46% wanted study skills assistance, 41% intended to seek assistance with math, and 33% wanted help with writing skills. These figures regarding intentions for help seeking on campus highlight important areas of intervention for school counselors, particularly with regard to time management, organizational skills, and study skills. School counselors could also support the educational concerns (i.e., math, writing) by encouraging selection of rigorous coursework in high school and by collaborating with teachers to offer tutoring to support skill development and an increased sense of self-efficacy regarding academic abilities. These kinds of services will be essential to college readiness and persistence for first-generation students and their families.

English Language Learners

The current transformation of the professional school counselor's role must also include attention to the significant number of immigrants in U.S. schools and the many challenges they face (Bemak & Chung, 2003), for these students are particularly at risk of being academically unsuccessful in school (Park-Taylor, Walsh, & Ventura, 2007). For example, English Language Learner (ELL) students must contend with English language acquisition; lack of social support networks; racial labeling; and, in some cases, posttraumatic stress disorder (Williams & Butler, 2003). Research also indicates that learning a new language can predispose an ELL student to anxiety and social isolation (Spomer & Cowen, 2001), which may be exacerbated by teachers who have little, if any, formalized training in addressing ELL students' needs (Bemak & Chung, 2003). School counselors potentially could be an important support for ELL students, but research suggests that ELL students had little contact with school counselors, were unable to communicate with counselors in their native language, and generally felt isolated and disconnected

from the rest of the school (Clemente & Collison, 2000). In addition to challenges at school, ELL students often face challenges at home. These students often acculturate more rapidly than their parents, which lead to conflicts as family roles change. Additionally, these students acquire English more rapidly than their parents, a position that leaves these students with little support and feeling further isolated as they seek to navigate the educational system (Bemak & Chung, 2003).

Many states require ELL teachers to achieve and demonstrate cross-cultural competencies in education, but no such requirements exist for school counselors (McCall-Perez, 2000; Schwallie-Giddis, Anstrom, Sanchez, Sardi, & Granato, 2004). Furthermore, school counselors indicated feeling uncomfortable working with culturally and linguistically diverse families and learning to navigate the cultural differences of ELL students (Schwallie-Giddis et al., 2004). Additionally, translators often are not available to assist, further compounding school counselors' frustration in communicating with ELL students and their families (Schwallie-Giddis et al., 2004). Unfortunately, ELL students are less likely to seek out assistance from counselors than English-speaking students (Montgomery, Roberts, & Growe, 2003), even though ELL students have higher needs for school counselor support and services (McCall-Perez, 2000). If school counselors are to be effective in reaching ELL students, they should promote cooperative small group learning, coordinate study skills training, build a climate of respect for cultural diversity, and focus on student strengths rather than lack of English proficiency (Bemak & Chung, 2003). School counselors should seek professional development opportunities related to working with ELL students (Williams & Butler, 2003). Interestingly, when school counselors are prepared to work with ELL students, the students show an increase in English literacy, improvement in mastery of academic content, and better transitions in schools, particularly postsecondary transitions (McCall-Perez, 2000).

School Climate and Safety

In the wake of several school shootings and other violence, there has been an increased emphasis placed on school safety and school climate (Crepeau-Hobson, Filaccio, & Gottfried, 2005). This concern is valid

according to a recent survey of more than 80,000 schools that found that 96% of high schools reported violent crimes (i.e., rape, sexual battery, physical attack with or without a weapon) from 2003 to 2004 (Guerino, Hurwitz, Noonan, & Kaffenberger, 2006); 94% of middle schools and 74% of elementary schools also reported violent crimes. In addition to criminal violence, bullying is one of the most common forms of student aggression in schools (Oliver, Hoover, & Hazler, 1994; Whitted & Dupper, 2005). Bullying includes verbal and physical harassment, isolationism, and cyberbullying (Strom & Strom, 2005). Alarmingly, 42% of middle school students reported being a victim of weekly bullying (Guerino et al., 2006), and to a lesser degree, high school students (21%) and elementary school students (24%) also reported weekly bullying. Furthermore, two thirds of the students surveyed nationally reported they were verbally or physically harassed or assaulted during the past year because of their perceived or actual appearance, gender, sexual orientation, gender expression, socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, disability, or religion (Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network, 2005).

Such violence in schools can negatively affect normal development in students (Becker & Luthar, 2002), and students who do not feel safe in school are more likely to experience depression (Loukas & Robinson, 2004) and decreased self-esteem and self-efficacy (Kuperminc, Leadbeater, & Blatt, 2001). In addition to the psychological and social implications of school climate and school safety, school environment (e.g., perceived cohesion) and perceived safety are directly related to student academic achievement (Kosciw, 2004; McEvoy & Welker, 2000). Bullying and harassment threaten student perceptions of school as a safe place, which creates an aversive environment and disrupts learning in all areas (Newman-Carlson & Horne, 2004). Conversely, students who have a sense of community and belonging to school experience showed increased levels of engagement and academic performance (Loukas & Robinson, 2004). Clearly, addressing student safety is important to academic achievement and quite possibly closing the achievement gap.

School counselors are in a unique position to improve students' feelings of safety at school (Fontes, 2003). For example, school counselors use developmental guidance and small group activities that address conflict

resolution strategies (Flannery et al., 2003), and social skills training (Moote, Smythe, & Woodarski, 1999). Many bullying and violence prevention programs (e.g., Frey et al., 2005; Grossman et al., 1997; Hirschstein, Edstrom, Frey, Snell, & MacKenzie, 2007; Olweus, 2001) were found to be effective in reducing the impact of school violence and decreasing the number of disciplinary problems (see Nation, 2007, for an overview of these programs). Other researchers debate the impact that these programs have on actual bullying behaviors but have discovered that these programs enhance teachers' knowledge and efficacy regarding intervention and enhance student social competence, self-esteem, and peer acceptance (Merrell, Gueldner, Ross, & Isava, 2008). Additionally, school counselors can serve as trainers and consultants for teachers, parents, and staff (Lickona, Schaps, & Lewis, 2003; U.S. Department of Education, 2007), which may include diversity education, social justice education, and problem solving. Finally, school counselors should contribute to the development of school policies and procedures that can improve the safety of the entire school (Fontes, 2003).

Multidisciplinary Collaboration

To address all of the concerns above that are important to closing the achievement gap, school counselors must think of themselves as a part of a multidisciplinary collaboration team within the school. For instance, career exploration and development can and should be a coordinated school effort. To illustrate, one high school in the Milwaukee, Wisconsin, area requires students to write an extensive English paper on a job-shadowing experience that examines roles and responsibilities regarding a career area, likes and dislikes about the job, necessary academic and professional preparation, and labor market projections for future employment. These papers are then used in collaboration with junior and senior year educational planning during sophomore conferences. This example illustrates how an academic assignment can address an important area of career development and represents collaboration between the English department and the school counseling program to achieve this goal. Although there are many areas of potential collaboration, one important area to consider may be the students who come to school struggling with mental health concerns.

For example, it is estimated that 20% of children and adolescents experience a mild to moderate mental health concern, and serious mental health concerns hover around 5% (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2000). Theorists have suggested that student service professionals (e.g., school counselors, social workers, psychologists, nurses) should collaborate to address the mental health concerns in schools (Adelman & Taylor, 2000). Identifying areas for collaboration between these professional groups could improve services where needed. One mechanism for encouraging collaboration would be through the development of an advisory council (ASCA, 2005). The advisory council reviews CSCP goals, interventions, and program outcomes, and ideally would provide assistance in program development and offer recommendations for program improvement. Closing the achievement gap would be enhanced through these types of collaborative efforts.

EMERGING ISSUES FOR SCHOOL COUNSELOR TRAINING

If school counselors are to contribute effectively to closing the achievement gap, graduate programs must change the training of future professionals. At the foundation of this change is the importance of multicultural competency, and many concur that school counselors must be capable of providing services that are sensitive to and appropriate for students from diverse cultural backgrounds (Holcomb-McCoy, 2007; Lee, 2001; Pedersen & Carey, 2003). However, graduate programs must address more than cultural sensitivity training and help school counseling graduates develop specific skills to intervene. As addressed earlier, this approach requires that graduate training programs teach student advocacy, systemic change, prevention, and data-driven and accountability practices, with social justice as the philosophical heart and soul of the program. The next section provides a synthesis of important concerns or trends in the training of future school counselors and offers potential resources for making such changes.

School Counseling for All Students

Future school counselors should be prepared to develop programs that focus on the whole school and provide services to all students (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000; Hart & Jacobi, 1992; House & Sears, 2002; Martin, 2002). Furthermore, closing the achievement gap will require that graduates be trained to provide comprehensive and prevention-based services that are developed and informed by data specific to schools. CSCP models (e.g., ASCA, 2005; Gysbers & Henderson, 2000) offer the most promising approach to achieving these goals, and school counseling training should prepare students with the attitudes, knowledge, and skills to implement programs that meet the needs of individual students while also addressing important school climate concerns (Burkard, Holtz, Martinez, Alexander, & Hyatt, 2008; Holcomb-McCoy, 2007; Lee, 2001). Graduate programs seeking to align their training with this approach should review Education Trust program guidelines (see www2.edtrust.org/EdTrust/Transforming+School+Counseling/current.htm). Additionally, ASCA (2008) recently published the *School Counselor Competencies,* which are an important resource to graduate programs in developing program curricula and refining school counselor training. These competencies align with the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) standards for school counseling programs, and will be an important asset in advancing training for school counseling students. Finally, to implement CSCPs, school counselors will need strong leadership skills. As such, graduate programs will need to provide leadership training, particularly focusing on the politics of education, curriculum development, and school management and finance concerns.

Postsecondary Counseling

There is a great deal of consensus among educational leaders that graduate programs in school counseling must teach postsecondary counseling skills if they are to assist in closing the achievement gap (Kirst & Venezia, 2004; Martin & Lee, 2007; Portes, 2005; Tierney et al., 2005). A recent report by the Joyce Ivey Foundation (2008), however, identified few graduate programs in school counseling that offered such preparation. At this time, few resources are available to assist in preparing school counseling graduate students for postsecondary counseling (Martin & Lee, 2007). Graduate

programs will want to familiarize themselves with College Board (2007) resources and the college counseling competencies developed by the National Association of College Admission Counselors (NACAC, 2000). Additionally, NOSCA (Martin & Lee, 2007) is currently planning to develop a graduate curriculum for postsecondary counseling and eventually hopes to publish a text in this important area. For the foreseeable future, training programs should expect postsecondary decision making, and postsecondary transitions will be important to school counseling program planning and to the development of school improvement goals related to closing the achievement gap. Given this emerging emphasis on PK–16 education, graduate programs in school counseling should develop curricula that support skill development in this important area.

School Safety and Climate

Students, parents, and our communities are demanding that our schools be safe, and school counseling graduates need to be prepared to address school climate and safety concerns. Safe schools that have positive learning environments would seem to be essential to addressing any existing achievement gaps. Important school climate and safety concerns include violence, discrimination, bullying and harassment, and gang activity (Fontes, 2003). Little research is available on graduates' preparedness to address such concerns in schools, although one recent investigation of racial conflicts and harassment suggests that school counselors feel ill prepared to address such concerns (Burkard et al., 2008). It is recommended that graduate programs address assessment, intervention, and prevention of violence in schools. For example, graduate programs should familiarize trainees with early warning signs of violence, prevention and intervention strategies, and crisis response. Trainees should also be taught to integrate prevention strategies into their CSCP through the guidance curriculum, and these programs need to address topics such as communication and decision-making skills, acceptance and appreciation of differences, and conflict resolution skills. Finally, trainees need to develop leadership skills with regard to school safety and climate, specifically learning how to contribute to the development of school and district

policies that promote positive learning environments for all students.

Evidence-Based Practice

Although we have focused on the necessity of closing the achievement gap as a social justice concern for school counselors, it should also be stated that this focus is a federal mandate. In January 2002, the No Child Left Behind Act (U.S. Department of Education, 2001b) was signed into federal law. NCLB mandates regular testing, provides sanctions for schools that do not provide evidence that students are learning, and requires schools to demonstrate that they are making progress toward closing the achievement gap between academically high- and low-performing students. Additionally, educational practices and interventions in schools need to be validated empirically. These criteria require that school counselors develop strong skills in program evaluation and school accountability practices. Graduate programs typically require research and/or statistics classes as core requirements, and CACREP, the primary accrediting body for school counseling programs, has also established clear standards regarding research training for school counselors (www.cacrep.org/2001Standards.html). Despite these requirements, many school counselors have low self-efficacy beliefs regarding their research skills (Astramovich, Coker, & Hoskins, 2005), and accountability components are usually the least developed aspects of a CSCP (Burkard, Gillen, & Martinez, 2008). Furthermore, 75% of school counseling graduates recently indicated that they needed more training in evaluation and accountability practice (Astramovich et al., 2005). Graduate training programs, then, need to provide training regarding empirically based school counseling practices (Dimmitt, Carey, & Hatch, 2007). Several models currently exist that offer guidelines for integrating data-based decision making in school counseling programs (see Dimmitt et al., 2007; Isaacs, 2003; Kaffenberger & Young, 2007; Poynton & Carey, 2006; Reynolds & Hines, 2001; Stone & Dahir, 2007). These models could easily be integrated into research courses. Additionally, it is generally recognized that such training should address needs assessment, evaluation of outcome research, intervention evaluation, and overall program evaluation.

Finally, training programs should introduce students to the National Center for School Counseling Outcome Research as an important resource in promoting accountability practice in school counseling programs.

CONCLUSIONS

In reflecting on this chapter and its content, one may wonder if much has changed in school counseling since Sciarra's (2001) chapter in the second edition of the *Handbook of Multicultural Counseling*. For instance, the role of school counselors remains a concern, the Education Trust continues to address the transforming school counseling initiative, the achievement gap remains a focus, and postsecondary success and preparation are also of concern to the field. We would argue that much has changed. Social justice and closing the achievement gap have moved from being a marginal focus for school counselors to the primary focus. Although some may continue to argue that school counselors should be the mental health experts in schools, ASCA and Education Trust continue to work toward redefining school counselor roles and encouraging their development as educational leaders in the development of a comprehensive school counseling program that is integral to addressing student achievement. This perspective does not abandon the mental health concerns of students; rather, it sharpens the focus of school counseling by encouraging a true prevention-based model of practice with the intent of influencing all students' academic achievement. Similarly, college readiness and preparation counseling are also coming into focus, particularly as the field moves from a PK–12 view toward a PK–16 perspective. Consequently, school counselors are making progress in redefining their professional roles as student advocates and leaders who promote and develop opportunities for all students to attain high academic achievement.

REFERENCES

Adelman, C. (1999). *Answers in the toolbox: Academic intensity, attendance patterns, and bachelor's degree attainment.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

Adelman, C., & Taylor, L. (2000). Shaping the future of mental health in schools. *Psychology in the Schools, 37,* 49–60.

Amatea, E. S., Daniels, H., Bringman, N., & Vandiver, F. M. (2004). Strengthening counselor-teacher-family connections: The family-school collaborative consultation project. *Professional School Counseling, 8,* 47–55.

American Council on Education. (2002). *Minorities in higher education 2001–2002: 19th annual status report.* Washington, DC: Author.

American School Counselor Association. (2004). *Position statement: Cultural diversity.* Retrieved from http://www.schoolcounselor.org/content.asp?contentid=249

American School Counselor Association. (2005). *The ASCA national model: A framework for school counseling programs* (2nd ed.). Alexandria, VA: Author.

American School Counselor Association. (2008). *School counselor competencies* [Brochure]. Washington, DC: Author.

Astramovich, R. L., Coker, J. K., & Hoskins, W. J. (2005). Training school counselors in program evaluation. *Professional School Counseling, 9,* 49–59.

Bailey, D. F., Getch, Y. Q., & Chen-Hayes, S. F. (2007). Achievement advocacy for all students through transformative school counseling programs. In B. T. Erford (Ed.), *Transforming the school counseling profession* (2nd ed., pp. 98–120). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Baum, S., & Ma, J. (2007). *Education pays: The benefits of higher education for individuals and society.* Washington, DC: College Board.

Becker, B. E., & Luthar, S. S. (2002). Social-emotional factors affecting achievement outcomes among disadvantaged students: Closing the achievement gap. *Educational Psychologist, 37,* 197–214.

Behring, S. T. (2002). School counseling in the twenty-first century: A systemic multicultural approach. In C. D. Johnson & S. K. Johnson (Eds.), *Building stronger school counseling programs: Bringing futuristic approaches into the present* (pp. 131–141). Greensboro, NC: ERIC.

Bemak, F., & Chung, R. C. (2003). Multicultural counseling with immigrant students in schools. In P. B. Pedersen & J. C. Carey (Eds.), *Multicultural counseling in schools: A practical handbook* (2nd ed., pp. 84–104). Boston: Pearson.

Bemak, F., & Chung, R. C. (2005). Advocacy as a critical role for urban school counselors: Working toward equity and social justice. *Professional School Counseling, 8,* 196–202.

Bemak, K. (2000). Transforming the role of the counselor to provide leadership in education reform through collaboration. *Professional School Counseling, 3,* 323–331.

Bowers, J., Hatch, T., & Schwallie-Giddis, R. (2001). The brainstorm. *School Counselor, 39*, 16–19.

Burkard, A. W., Gillen, M., & Martinez, M. J. (2008). *The effect of comprehensive school counseling programs on student academic and behavioral outcomes.* Manuscript in preparation.

Burkard, A. W., Holtz, C., Martinez, M. J., Alexander, C. M., & Hyatt, C. (2008, July). *Racial conflict in middle and high schools.* Symposium conducted at the annual meeting of the American School Counselor Association, Atlanta, GA.

Burnham, J. J., & Jackson, C. M. (2000). School counselor roles: Discrepancies between actual practice and existing models. *Professional School Counseling, 4*, 41–49.

Campbell, C. A., & Dahir, C. A. (1997). *The national standards for school counseling programs.* Alexandria, VA: American School Counseling Association.

Carnevale, A. P., & Desrochers, D. M. (2003). Preparing students for the knowledge economy: What school counselors need to know. *Professional School Counseling, 6*, 228–236.

Clemente, R., & Collison, B. (2000). The relationships among counselors, ESL teachers, and students. *Professional School Counseling, 3*, 339–348.

College Board. (2007). *College counseling sourcebook: Advice and strategies from experienced school counselors* (4th ed.). New York: Author.

Cox, A. A., & Lee, C. C. (2007). Challenging educational inequities: School counselors as agents of social justice. In C. C. Lee (Ed.), *Counseling for social justice* (2nd ed., pp. 3–14). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Crepeau-Hobson, M. F., Filaccio, M. L., & Gottfried, L. (2005). Violence prevention after Columbine: A survey of high school mental health professionals. *Children & Schools, 27*, 157–165.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2000). How teacher education matters. *Journal of Teacher Education, 52*, 166–173.

Dimmitt, C., Carey, J. C., & Hatch, T. (2007). *Evidence-based school counseling: Making a difference with data-driven practices.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Education Trust. (1997). *Education watch: The 1997 Education Trust State and National data book.* Washington, DC: Author.

Flannery, D. J., Vazsony, A. T., Liau, A. K., Guo, S., Powell, K. E., Atha, H., Vesterdal, W., & Embry, D. (2003). Initial behavior outcomes for the PeaceBuilders Universal School-Based Violence Prevention Program. *Developmental Psychology, 39*, 292–308.

Fontes, L. A. (2003). Reducing violence in multicultural schools. In P. B. Pedersen & J. C. Carey (Eds.),

Multicultural counseling in schools: A practical handbook (2nd ed., pp. 211–233). Boston: Pearson.

Frey, K. S., Hirschstein, M. K., Snell, J. L., Edstrom, L. V., MacKenzie, E. P., & Broderick, C. J. (2005). Reducing playground bullying and supporting beliefs: An experimental trial of the STEPS TO RESPECT program. *Developmental Psychology, 41*, 479–491.

Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network. (2005). *From teasing to torment: School climate in America: A survey of students and teachers.* New York: Author.

Grossman, D. C., Neckerman, H. J., Koepsell, T. D., Liu, P., Asher, K. N., Beland, K., Frey, K., & Rivara, F. P. (1997). Effectiveness of a violence prevention curriculum among children in elementary school: A randomized controlled trial. *Journal of the American Medical Association, 277*, 1605–1611.

Guerino, P., Hurwitz, M. D., Noonan, M. E., & Kaffenberger, S. M. (2006). *Crime, violence, discipline, and safety in U.S. public schools: Findings from the School Survey on Crime and Safety: 2003–04* (NCES 2007–302). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Gysbers, N. C. (1997). A model comprehensive guidance program. In N. C. Gysbers & P. Henderson (Eds.), *Comprehensive guidance programs that work II* (pp. 1–24). Greensboro, NC: ERIC/CASS.

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

Gysbers, N. C., & Moore, E. J. (1981). *Improving guidance programs.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Hart, P. J., & Jacobi, M. (1992). *From gatekeeper to advocate: Transforming the role of the school counselor.* New York: College Board.

Hecker, D. E. (2001). Occupational employment projections to 2010. *Monthly Labor Review, 124*, 57–84.

Herr, E. L., & Cramer, S. H. (1996). *Career guidance and counseling through the life span: Systemic approaches* (5th ed.). New York: HarperCollins.

Hipilito-Delgado, C., & Lee, C. (2007). Empowerment theory for the professional school counselor: A manifesto for what really matters. *Professional School Counseling, 10*, 327–332.

Hirschstein, M. K., Edstrom, L. V. S., Frey, K. S., Snell, J. L., & MacKenzie, E. P. (2007). Walking the talk in bullying prevention: Teacher implementation variables related to initial impact of the STEPS TO RESPECT program. *School Psychology Review, 36*(1), 3–21.

Holcomb-McCoy, C. (2007). *School counseling to close the achievement gap: A social justice framework for success.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

House, R. M., & Hayes, R. L. (2002). School counselors: Becoming key players in school reform. *Professional School Counseling, 5,* 249–256.

House, R. M., & Martin, P. J. (1998). Advocating for better futures for all students: A new vision for school counselors. *Education, 119,* 284–291.

House, R. M., & Sears, S. J. (2002). Preparing school counselors to be leaders and advocates: A critical need in the new millennium. *Theory into Practice, 41,* 155–162.

Isaacs, M. L. (2003). Data-driven decision making: The engine of accountability. *Professional School Counseling, 6,* 288–295.

Joyce Ivey Foundation. (2008). *The eleven-month challenge: 22 recommendations for improving the transition from high school to college.* Ann Arbor, MI: Author.

Kaffenberger, C., & Young, A. (2007). *Making data work.* Washington, DC: American School Counselor Association.

Kirst, M. W., & Bracco, K. R. (2004). Bridging the great divide: How the K–12 and postsecondary split hurts students, and what can be done about it. In M. W. Kirst & A. Venezia (Eds.), *From high school to college: Improving opportunities for success in postsecondary education* (pp. 1–30). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Kirst, M. W., & Venezia, A. (2004). *From high school to college: Improving opportunities for success in postsecondary education.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Kosciw, J. G. (2004). *The 2003 National School Climate Survey: The school-related experiences of our nation's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth.* New York: Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network.

Kuh, G. D., Kinzie, J., Buckley, J. A., Bridges, B. K., & Hayek, J. C. (2006). *What matters to student success: A review of the literature.* Retrieved May 19, 2008, from http://nces.ed.gov/npec/pdf/kuh_team_report.pdf

Kuperminc, G. P., Leadbeater, B. J., & Blatt, S. J. (2001). School social climate and individual differences in vulnerability to psychopathology among middle school students. *Journal of School Psychology, 39,* 141–159.

Lapan, R. T., Gysbers, N. C., Cook, A., Bragg, S., & Robbins, J. (2006, June). *Improving school counseling programs and school counselor training.* Symposium conducted at the annual meeting of the American School Counselor Association, Chicago.

Lapan, R. T., Gysbers, N. C., & Petroski, G. F. (2003). Helping seventh graders be safe and successful: A statewide study of the impact of comprehensive guidance and counseling programs. *Professional School Counseling, 6,* 186–197.

Lapan, R. T., Gysbers, N. C., & Sun, Y. (1997). The impact of more fully implemented guidance programs on the school experiences of high school students: A statewide evaluation study. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 75,* 292–302.

Lee, C. C. (2001). Culturally responsive school counselors and programs: Addressing the needs of all students. *Professional School Counseling, 4,* 257–261.

Lee, C. C. (2005). *Multicultural issues in counseling.* Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Lee, V. E., & Ekstrom, R. B. (1987). Student access to guidance counseling in high school. *American Educational Research Journal, 24,* 287–310.

Lickona, T., Schaps, E., & Lewis, C. (2003). *Eleven principles of effective character education.* Washington, DC: Character Education Partnership.

Loukas, A., & Robinson, S. (2004). Examining the moderating role of perceived school climate in early adolescent adjustment. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 14,* 209–233.

Martin, P. J. (2002). Transforming school counseling: A national perspective. *Theory into Practice, 41,* 148–153.

Martin, P. J., & Lee, V. E. (2007, November). *Research, training, and legislation for school counseling.* Symposium conducted at the College Board Counselor Education Summit, Washington, DC.

McCall-Perez, Z. (2000). The counselor as advocate for English language learners: An action research approach. *Professional School Counseling, 4,* 13–22.

McEvoy, A., & Welker, R. (2000). Antisocial behavior, academic failure, and school climate: A critical review. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, 8,* 130–140.

Merchant, B. (2004). Roadblocks to effective K–16 reform in Illinois. In M. W. Kirst & A. Venezia (Eds.), *From high school to college: Improving opportunities for success in postsecondary education* (pp. 115–150). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Merrell, K. W., Gueldner, B. A., Ross, S. W., & Isava, D. M. (2008). How effective are school bullying intervention programs? A meta-analysis of intervention research. *School Psychology Quarterly, 23*(1), 26–42.

Montgomery, P. S., Roberts, M., & Growe, R. (2003). *English language learners: An issue of educational equity.* Lafayette: University of Louisiana Press. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 027915)

Moote, G. T., Smythe, N. J., & Woodarski, J. S. (1999). Social skills training with youth in school settings: A review. *Research on Social Work Practice, 9,* 427–465.

Myrick, R. D. (1997). *Developmental guidance and counseling: A practical approach* (3rd ed.). Minneapolis, MN: Educational Media Corporation.

Nation, M. (2007). Empowering the victim: Interventions for children victimized by bullies. In J. E. Zins, M. J. Elias, & C. A. Maher (Eds.), *Bullying, victimization, and peer harassment: A handbook of prevention and intervention* (pp. 239–255). New York: Haworth.

National Assessment of Educational Progress. (2004). *NAEP 2004 trends in academic progress.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

National Assessment of Educational Progress. (2005). *NAEP 2005 trends in academic progress.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

National Assessment of Educational Progress. (2007). *NAEP 2007 trends in academic progress.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

National Association for College Admission Counseling. (2000). *Statement on counselor competencies.* Alexandria, VA: Author.

National Commission on Excellence in Education. (1983). *A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform.* Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.

Newman-Carlson, D., & Horne, A. M. (2004). Bully busters: A psycho-educational intervention for reducing bullying behavior in middle school students. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 82,* 259–268.

Noguera, P. A. (2003). *City schools and the American dream.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Oakes, J., & Lipton, M. (1990). Tracking and ability grouping: A structural barrier to access and achievement. In J. I. Goodlad & P. Keating (Eds.), *Access to knowledge: An agenda for our nation's schools* (pp. 187–204). New York: College Entrance Examination Board.

Oliver, R., Hoover, J. H., & Hazler, R. (1994). The perceived roles of bullying in small-town Midwestern schools. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 72,* 416–421.

Olweus, D. (2001). *Olweus' core program against bullying and antisocial behavior: A teacher handbook.* Bergen, Norway: Research Center for Health Promotion (The HEMIL Center).

Park-Taylor, J., Walsh, M. E., & Ventura, A. B. (2007). Creating healthy acculturation pathways: Integrating theory and research to inform counselors' work with immigrant children. *Professional School Counseling, 11,* 25–35.

Pedersen, P. B., & Carey, J. C. (2003). *Multicultural counseling in schools: A practical handbook* (2nd ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Perusse, R., Goodnough, G. E., Donegan, J., & Jones, C. (2004). Perceptions of school counselors and school principals about the national standards for school counseling programs and the transforming school counseling initiative. *Professional School Counseling, 7,* 152–159.

Portes, P. R. (2005). *Dismantling educational inequality: A cultural-historical approach to closing the achievement gap.* New York: Peter Lang.

Poynton, T. A., & Carey, J. C. (2006). An integrative model of data-based decision making for school counseling. *Professional School Counseling, 10,* 121–130.

Reynolds, S. E., & Hines, P. L. (2001). *Vision-to-action: A step-by-step activity guide for systemic educational reform* (6th ed.). Bloomington, IN: American Student Achievement Institute.

Rosenbaum, J. E. (1976). *Making inequality: The hidden current of high school tracking.* New York: Wiley.

Scarborough, J. L. (2005). The School Counselor Activity Rating Scale: An instrument for gathering process data. *Professional School Counseling, 8,* 274–284.

Schwallie-Giddis, P., Anstrom, K., Sanchez, P., Sardi, V. A., & Granato, L. (2004). Counseling the linguistically and culturally diverse student: Meeting school counselors' professional development needs. *Professional School Counseling, 8,* 15–23.

Sciarra, D. T. (2001). School counseling in a multicultural society. In J. G. Ponterotto, J. M. Casas, L. A. Suzuki, & C. M. Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural counseling* (pp. 701–728). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sink, C. A., & Stroh, H. R. (2003). Raising achievement test scores of early elementary school students through comprehensive school counseling programs. *Professional School Counseling, 6,* 352–364.

Spomer, M. L., & Cowen, E. L. (2001). A comparison of the school mental health referral profiles of young ESL and English-speaking children. *Journal of Community Psychology, 29,* 69–82.

Stone, C. B., & Dahir, C. A. (2007). *School counselor accountability: A measure of student success* (2nd ed.). New York: Prentice-Hall.

Strom, P. S., & Strom, R. D. (2005). Cyberbullying by adolescents: A preliminary assessment. *Educational Forum, 70,* 21–35.

Sue, D. W., Arredondo, P., & McDavis, R. (1992). Multicultural counseling competencies and standards: A call to the profession. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 70,* 477–486.

Sue, D. W., Bernier, J. B., Durran, M., Feinberg, L., Pedersen, P., Smith, E., & Vasquez-Nuttall, E. (1982). Position paper: Cross-cultural counseling competencies. *Counseling Psychologist, 10,* 42–52.

Tierney, W. G., Corwin, Z. B., & Colyar, J. E. (2005). *Preparing for college: Nine elements of effective outreach.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

Trusty, J. (2004). *Effects of students' middle-school and high-school experiences on completion of the bachelor's degree* (Research Monograph no. 1). Amherst: University of Massachusetts, Center for School Counseling Outcome Research.

Trusty, J., & Niles, S. G. (2003). High-school math courses and completion of the bachelor's degree. *Professional School Counseling, 7,* 99–107.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2007). *Employment outlook: 2006–16.* Retrieved April 12, 2008, from http://www.bls.gov/opub/mir/2007/11/content.htm

U.S. Department of Education. (2001a). *The condition of education.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

U.S. Department of Education. (2001b). *PL 107–100, The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.* Retrieved May 14, 2008, at www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/index.html

U.S. Department of Education. (2007). *Mobilizing for evidence-based character education.* Jessup, MD: Author.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2000). *Report of the Surgeon General's Conference on Children's Mental Health: A national action agenda.* Rockville, MD: Author.

Venezia, A., Kirst, M. W., & Antonio, A. L. (2004). *Betraying the college dream: How disconnected K–12 and postsecondary education systems undermine study aspirations.* Retrieved May 19, 2008, from http://www.stanford.edu/group/bridgeproject/betrayingthecollegedream.pdf

Whitted, K. S., & Dupper, D. R. (2005). Best practices for preventing or reducing bullying in schools. *Children and Schools, 27,* 167–175.

Williams, F. C., & Butler, S. K. (2003). Concerns of newly arrived immigrant students: Implications for school counselors. *Professional School Counseling, 7,* 9–14.