

University of Memphis

University of Memphis Digital Commons

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

2021

The Roles and Functions of the Virtual School Counselor

LaTraci Aldridge

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.memphis.edu/etd>

Recommended Citation

Aldridge, LaTraci, "The Roles and Functions of the Virtual School Counselor" (2021). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. 2404.

<https://digitalcommons.memphis.edu/etd/2404>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by University of Memphis Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of University of Memphis Digital Commons. For more information, please contact khhgerty@memphis.edu.

THE ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL COUNSELOR

by
LaTraci Aldridge

A Dissertation
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Major: Counselor Education and Supervision

University of Memphis
May 2021

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated in memory of my father, who I know is looking down on me and has been with me every step of the way.

I would also like to dedicate this to my mother (The Biblical Counselor), my husband (Big Brandon), and my sons (Lil Brandon and Tristan). Thank you all for being there for every step of this journey from the beginning. You all have been my sounding board a time or two during this journey, and for that, I thank you.

Acknowledgements

First, I would like to give honor to God, who has guided me from the moment I completed my application and every step of the way since then. For without your guidance, none of this would be possible.

I would like to acknowledge my committee members, Dr. Stephen Zanskas, Dr. Michelle Brasfield, Dr. Steve West, and Dr. Jasmine Johnson. You all have helped me through this process and didn't hesitate to answer the many questions I had along this journey.

Dr. Zanskas, I would like to thank you for your guidance through this process and working to understand the school counseling side of things that weren't familiar to you. Thank you for not getting tired of my multiple emails and willingness to help me get to the finish line and keeping me encouraged along the way.

Dr. Brasfield, thank you for being willing to be on a committee of a random graduate student that you barely knew that just accosted you in the hallway one day asking you to take on this task.

Dr. West, thank you for jumping in when I needed you to and coming in towards the end of my journey. I also want to thank you for encouraging me during your class to stick with my topic when it seemed like I may have had to change my topic. Thank you for providing alternatives that allowed me to stay the course I had been working on since I started this process.

Dr. Johnson, my soror, thank you for taking a random inbox from a soror that you didn't know and agreeing to be a part of my committee. I told you from day one that stats were not my thing, and you have worked with me every step of the way. Thank you for always providing me with courage whenever I needed it. It was and is truly appreciated.

I would also like to thank Dr. James, my former chair before he retired. You were the first to suggest that I research virtual school counseling in the middle of my admissions interview. You told me I was “sitting on a gold mine and didn’t know it.” Who would have thought that the world would be going virtual by the time I finished?

I would like to thank my family for being there for me and encouraging me along the way. To my husband and my children, I know you may not have always understood why I would be locked away in the room or when I said I couldn’t do whatever you may have asked at that moment, but I want you to know I appreciate you all. Thank you for checking in with me and asking me how it was going or how much longer. Or my favorite from my boys, “So are you a doctor yet?”

To my momma, probably one of my biggest cheerleaders, I don’t think I truly have the words to describe how much I appreciate you. Thank you for helping out around the house at times, helping me with the boys, or taking them off my hands for a few hours so I could focus on writing. Thank you for being willing to proof my papers and attending conferences with me, and learning right along with me. I wouldn’t be who I am or where I am without you and Daddy.

I would also like to thank the many other family members, sorors, and friends who have encouraged me along the way. Thanks for always checking in to see how the process was going and pushing me to get it done. I would especially like to thank the best School Counseling team in the land, the entire Counseling Department of Cordova High School #LLLC. I couldn’t have asked for a better group to work with every day. I love you all!

Abstract

As technology increases, so does the integration of technology in educational settings. That integration also extends to school counseling and the field of counseling in its entirety. The purpose of this study is to compare the role and functions of an online and traditional setting school counselor. Due to virtual/online school counseling still being in the early stages, there is limited research about what a virtual school counseling program looks like or the academic outcomes for students enrolled in virtual schools. As more virtual schools emerge, it is imperative that we investigate the best practices for online school counseling. Should online school counselors follow the same standards as school counselors in a traditional counseling program? Or should virtual school counselors have their own standards? Increased research will help states determine how online schools should be operated. Since online schooling is still fairly new in the K-12 setting, there are some misconceptions about virtual school. Further research into the best practices for online education, may help to dispel some of these misconceptions. Lastly, further research can lead to discussions about how school counselor education should or should not change as an increase of virtual school counselors may arise. Additionally, what should Professional Development look like for current and future counselors, both in the virtual and traditional setting. The current research found that there are some differences between the activity rates of virtual school counselors and traditional school counselors. Traditional school counselors spent more time completing various activities than virtual school activities. Further research is needed to investigate the reasons for the differences.

Table of Contents

Chapter	Page
List of Tables	x
1. Introduction	1
Rationale of the Study	2
The ASCA National Model	3
Purpose of the Study	3
Research Questions	4
Definition of Terms	5
2. Literature Review	7
Virtual Education	7
A Day in the Life of a Virtual Student	9
Telehealth Counseling	10
Ethical Dilemmas in Telehealth Counseling	13
The Online Therapeutic Alliance	14
School Counseling	15
ASCA National Model	19
Technology Usage in School Counseling Programs	29

	Virtual School Counseling	30
	The Virtual School Counselor-Pilot Study	31
	COVID-19 Effect on Education	32
3.	Methodology	33
	Research Design	33
	Research Procedures	34
	Respondents and Sampling	35
	Instruments	35
	Data Analysis	38
	Ethical Concerns with the Study	38
	Summary	39
4.	Results	39
	Respondents	39
	Demographics	40
	Licensed vs. Non-Licensed	40
	American School Counseling Association	41
	Research Questions	41
	Research Question One	41

	Research Question 2-4	43
	Research Question Five	48
	Changes due to COVID-19	50
5.	Discussion	54
	Overview of the Study	54
	Findings	55
	Counselor Mindsets and Beliefs	56
	Professional Foundation	57
	Ethics	58
	Student Services	58
	Planning and Assessment	59
	Indirect and Direct Services	60
	Counseling Activities	61
	Consultation Activities	61
	Curriculum Activities	62
	Coordination Activities	63
	Other Activities	64
	Connectedness	65

COVID-19	65
Future Research	67
Implications	68
School Counselor Training Programs	68
The Future of School Counseling	69
School Counselor Identity	70
Limitations	71
Convenience Sampling	71
Snowballing Technique	71
Self- reported data	72
Data Gathering during COVID-10	72
References	73
Appendix	81

List of Tables

Table	Page
1. Means for Other Activities- Actual Time vs. Preferred Timed	48
2. Connectedness	49
3. Means Before and After COVID-19 on Counseling Activities	50
4.Means Before and After COVID-19 on Consultation Activities	51
5. Means Before and After COVID-19 on Curriculum Activities	52
6.Medians Before and After COVID-19 on Coordination Activities	53
7. Medians Before and After COVID-10 on Other Activities	54

Chapter 1: Introduction

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) compiled a report of virtual schools and found there are over 30 states that have fully online schools with a student enrollment of approximately 312,000 (Keeping with the Pace Digital Learning, 2019). The field of school counseling has evolved over the years (American Counseling Association [ACA], 2014; Rayle & Adams, 2007; Schimmel, 2008). In its inception, school counselors were referred to as vocational guidance counselors or guidance counselors and focused on helping students identify career goals (ACA, 2014; Gysbers, 2001). The role of guidance counselors was to prepare students to become laborers in the world of work. School counselors were employed only in secondary schools due to their focus being on the world of work (ACA, 2014). During the 1940s, school counselors in elementary settings were not considered as a need (Gysbers, 1997). The 1950s and 1960s marked the beginning of comprehensive guidance programs that went beyond just helping students step into the world of work (Gysbers, 1997; Schimmel, 2008). School counselors today work with students in every level of education in three life domains: career, social/emotional, and academic (Fye et al., 2018). Comprehensive school counseling programs are based on data (American School Counselor Association [ASCA], 2019; Rayle & Adams, 2007), which helps to shape the trends and roles within school counseling.

As the role of counselors in schools changed so have the options for how students attend school. Academic counselors have gone from being called guidance counselors to now being referred to as school counselors (ACA, 2014; Lambie & Williamson, 2004). Schools have evolved from being one-room schoolhouses that housed all grades to virtual schools that allow students, teachers, school counselors, and administrators to attend class from any location

(Greenway & Vanourek, 2006). Virtual education has changed from being solely in the college sector to all levels of education (Toppin & Toppin, 2016).

Rationale for the Study

The National Education Policy Center (NEPC) reported the number of students enrolled in virtual schools increased by more than 2,000 students between the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school years (Molnar et al., 2019). Furthermore, they reported there were over 500 full-time virtual schools and 300 blended schools. Although there has been an increase in students attending school virtually, there has been negligible research on virtual schools and virtual school counselors.

Current research about virtual school counseling has focused on the use of technology within school counseling programs rather than the role and function of school counselors in virtual schools (Osborn et al., 2015; Steele et al., 2014). Osborn et al. (2015) began the investigation into the roles of virtual school counselors and how they utilized technology. The study focused on one school and included four respondents. Osborn et al. (2015) found that the functions of the virtual school counselors at the study site were aligned with ASCA standards. However, the student to counselor ratio in their sample was 3,000:1, far higher than the ASCA recommendation of 250:1 and the national average of 430:1 (ASCA, 2019; National Association for College Admissions Counseling [NACAC], 2015). Osborn et al.'s (2015) research is an excellent start to defining the roles and responsibilities of virtual school counselors. However, due to a small sample size from one school, the results are likely not generalizable. The small sample size from one institution reflects the need for further research to be conducted to define further the roles and responsibilities of virtual school counselors as well as help to shape future school counselor training programs.

Before the roles and functions of the virtual school counselors can be defined, it is imperative to review the roles and functions of traditional school counselors. As the role of school counselors has evolved, there has been some confusion regarding what school counselors should or should not do (Gysbers, 2001; Rayle & Adams, 2007; Scarborough, 2005). ASCA has defined four areas that counselors should operate under: define, deliver, manage, and assess. These four domains are the basis for the fourth edition of the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2019).

Additionally, with the world of education moving to virtual platforms due to COVID-19, the current research can also help schools ease into this transition. Schools had to make the transition to virtual learning without notice and without much guidance of how to make that transition.

The ASCA National Model

The ASCA National Model is comprised of four components (ASCA, 2019). The first component is *Define*. This component defines three sets of standards for school counseling: Student Standards, Professional Standards, and Ethical Standards. The second component is *Manage*. This component informs school counselors on program planning and program focus. The third component is *Deliver*. This component explains how school counselors are to deliver their program through direct and indirect services. The fourth component is *Assess*. This component describes how school counselors should assess and evaluate their school counseling program (ASCA, 2019). A more in-depth synopsis of the ASCA National Model will be addressed in the Literature review.

Purpose of the Study

Currently, the roles and functions of virtual school counselors are undifferentiated from traditional school counselors (ASCA, 2017). ASCA released a position statement stating virtual school counselors are no different than traditional school counselors and should still abide by the ASCA standards (ASCA, 2017). Similarly, the 2016 standards set forth by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) do not address standards for providing training in school counselor preparation programs for virtual school counseling (CACREP, 2019).

The purpose of this pilot study is to begin the process of defining the roles and functions of virtual school counselors and their alignment with the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2019). For the purposes of this study, a school counselor's role is defined as what the counselor does within their school. Functions are defined as the activities that counselor may participate in such as classroom guidance or individual counseling within the school.

Research Questions

To address the gap in the literature regarding the roles and functions of school counselors in virtual school settings, the following research questions were used to guide this study:

RQ1: How does the virtual school counselor's role align with the ASCA school counseling standards?

RQ2: How frequently are school counselors engaged in direct services as measured on the SCARS scales (i.e., individual counseling, group counseling, classroom guidance, etc.)?

RQ3: How frequently are school counselors engaged in indirect services as measured on the SCARS scales (administrative, making referrals, consulting, and collaborating with others, etc.)?

RQ4: How does the amount of time virtual school counselors devote to completing tasks compare to the amount of time traditional school counselors devote to completing tasks?

RQ5: What method or platforms are utilized by virtual school counselors to connect with their students and families?

RQ6: How has COVID-19 affected the reported actual frequency virtual and traditional school counselors engage in direct and indirect tasks as measured on the SCARS?

Definition of Terms

ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors: Statements of ethical behavior necessary to maintain the highest standard of integrity.

ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success- K-12 College- and Career- Readiness Standards for Every Student: Statements that guide the development of effective school counseling programs around three domains: academic, career and social/emotional development.

ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies: Statements of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes school counselors need to meet the profession's rigorous demands. (ASCA, 2019)

Asynchronous classes/learning: Students can attend/watch classes on their own schedule by viewing recordings or completing lessons at their own pace.

Blended school: A school that is part online and part in a brick-and-mortar setting.

Students will attend school via a computer part of the time and part in face-to-face settings with teachers.

Direct services: Direct services are in-person interactions between school counselors and students and include school counseling core curriculum, individual student planning, and responsive services.

Functions: The activities a school counselor does within their counseling programs.

Indirect services: Indirect services are provided on behalf of students because of the school counselors' interactions with others, including referrals for additional assistance, consultation, and collaboration with parents, teachers, other educators, and community organizations.

Non-school-counseling- activity: Any activity or duty not related to the design, implementation, or assessment of the school counseling program.

Role: The part a school counselor plays in a school. The way in which they collaborate with teachers, administrators, students, and families.

School counseling curriculum: K-12 course of study presented systematically through structured, developmental classroom, group, and individual activities designed to assist students in attaining the ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success.

Synchronous classes/learning: Students attend/watch classes live as the teachers are teaching.

Virtual school: A school that is 100% online. Students attend all classes via the computer.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Virtual Education

Virtual education in K-12 schools began during the 1990s (Toppin & Toppin, 2016) and has continued to grow in the field (Waddell, 2017). The emergence of virtual schools in the K-12 setting started for several reasons. For some, it was due to the convenience of the virtual setting, for medical reasons, or to escape peer pressure and/or bullying (Toppin & Toppin, 2016). Enrollment in virtual schools has increased tremendously in the past 15 years (Belair, 2012; Cavanaugh, 2010; Waddell, 2017). Between the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school years, enrollment in virtual schools increased by more than 200 students, and by more than 16,000 students in blended learning environments (Molnar et al., 2019). Cavanaugh (2010) described six types of virtual schools in his study of virtual schools.

The first is (a) state-ran virtual schools. These schools are overseen by the state education board or another organization through the state. The next type of virtual school of virtual school is the (b) multi-district virtual school. These schools are operated by agencies such as K12 or Connections Academy. Next is the (c) single district virtual schools. These schools are operated by major school districts and are generally supplemental to the primary source of education in that district. Then there are (d) consortium programs. These schools are run by districts within the state and offer supplemental courses to students. Another type is (e) university programs. These schools are operated by universities and can be a full-time option or supplemental option for students. The last type of virtual school is (f) private and local virtual schools. These schools are an extension of an already established school (Cavanaugh, 2010).

The first recorded virtual school opened in 1995 in Oregon with the Cyber School Project. The school offered supplemental classes to an on-ground high school. (Greenway & Vanourek, 2006). From there, other schools were formed. Some virtual schools were only supplemental, and others offered full-time options for students to attend school online. With more schools opening, there was a misconception about what virtual schools were and how they should be classified. Virtual schools were often considered homeschools because their students attended school from their homes on the computer. Greenway and Vanourek (2006) defined virtual schools as a, “hybrid of public, charter, and homeschooling, with ample dashes of tutoring and independent study thrown in, all turbocharged by Internet technology” (p. 36).” Virtual schools are not traditional. The overseer of the virtual school (local school board, state school board, for-profit organization, etc.) determines how the school is run. The school must still abide by the state mandates and must meet academic standards and state testing requirements regardless of how the school operates.

Although students attending school virtually or in blended classroom settings are expected to meet the same academic standards as their counterparts attending strictly brick and mortar settings, it is not a simple task to compare grades or test scores to evaluate virtual schools’ effectiveness. Gulosino and Miron (2017) indicated that it is impossible to know how students would have performed if they were in a brick and mortar school. There is no way to account for the differences in a virtual setting and a traditional setting. However, research has shown that student outcomes are better when instruction is in a blended learning format (Means et al., 2010). In blended learning models, students have time on the computer as well as face-to-face instruction with teachers to help bridge learning. It allows students to receive one-on-one help as needed.

Extant research has compared the achievement of virtual and traditional students. Hughes et al. (2007) conducted a study on algebra achievement in virtual and traditional school students. They found that virtual students outperformed traditional students in algebra and the understanding of algebra. Additionally, Barbour and Reeves (2009) found that virtual students had better outcomes and were more proficient with technological advances that could help them in the next stage of life.

A Day in the Life of a Virtual Student

Greenway and Vanourek (2006) described how virtual education is delivered at different types of virtual schools. The typical day for a virtual student varies from school to school and can vary depending on whether the school uses a blended model, charter school, or full-time setting. Some students may spend only an hour or two online completing interactive lessons and complete the rest of their work offline with minimal interaction with their teachers (Greenway & Vanourek, 2006). In some schools, teachers may send out recordings to students to watch and then have the students turn in assignments based on the recordings, a process known as asynchronous learning (Barbour & Reeves, 2009). Teachers in such settings are available to assist students through email or phone as needed.

On the other end is synchronous learning which is a live instructional session (Barbour & Reeves, 2009). Teachers and students are both online at the same time in an online platform such as Blackboard or Canvas. In this setting, students can ask questions live in real time and receive on the spot help just as they would in a traditional classroom. Teachers can see what students are doing and can identify where students may be struggling and provide live feedback. These sessions can also be recorded for students who may have missed the live session. In this

case, students could go back to review a recorded session, or parents can use it when they help their children with homework or other assignments.

Baugh (2015) identified six different methods of instruction delivery. The first is the *face-to-face driver*. Teachers provide all instruction face-to-face with students, and online delivery is only used as needed. The second model is the *Rotation*. Students have a set time with the teacher delivering instruction and a set time with online learning. Teachers still monitor and review the work students complete online. The third model is the *Flex model*. Students receive most instruction online, but teachers are available to assist students as needed. This model takes place in a computer lab. The fourth model is the *Online Lab*. This model also takes place in a computer lab with certified teachers providing instruction online. There are also non-certified monitors that are in the lab with the students but do not provide instruction. The fifth model is the *Self-Blend*. This model is mostly for single courses. Students receive web-based instruction at their home or other location that is in addition to the classes they take during the regular school day in a traditional setting. This model can be used to help students get ahead or make-up courses they are lacking without interrupting their regular school day or having to attend summer school. The final model is *Online*. In this model, all learning is online. Instruction is delivered through web-based platforms. Teachers and students communicate through email or other messaging applications such as Zoom or Skype. Although instruction is 100% online, there may be face-to-face opportunities for field trips, meet-the-teacher events, or tutoring. Furthermore, face-to-face will be needed to administer state testing that would require direct oversight by certified teachers.

Telehealth Counseling

Research regarding the use of technology in other counseling specialties was examined due to the lack of research regarding virtual school counseling (Osborn et al., 2015). Face-to-face counseling has been the sole delivery of services since the inception of counseling. As the needs of clients and therapists and the access to services changes, there has been a need to reconsider strictly face-to-face delivery of service. There are different reasons why a counselor may consider utilizing virtual/remote services in working with clients. Dowling and Rickwood (2013) cited cost and accessibility as the primary reasons counselors provide virtual services. Virtual services are also employed when a client needs specialized services or a credentialed counselor is unavailable where the client resides (Rummell & Joyce, 2010).

Virtual counseling has been referred to as online counseling, cybertherapy, internet counseling, e-therapy, computer-mediated therapy, and web-based interventions (Dowling & Rickwood, 2013). Mallen and Vogel (2005) defined online counseling as:

Any delivery of mental and behavioral health services, including but not limited to therapy, consultation, and psychoeducation, by a licensed practitioner to a client in a non-face-to-face setting through distance communication technologies such as the telephone, asynchronous e-mail, synchronous chat, and videoconferencing (p. 764).

Previously, the most frequently used method for contacting clients outside of the therapy office was via telephone (Riemer-Reiss, 2000). Working with clients over the phone allows opportunities for follow-up and progress updates between face-to-face sessions that are inexpensive. Another prevalent form of communication that therapists use is email (Rochlen et al., 2004). By utilizing email, clients and therapists can communicate or send messages at any time. If a therapist is actively at their computer, response time can be almost instantaneously. However, if a client sends an email after hours or while a therapist is on a live session, the

response time can be hours later. Consequently, email may not be the best communication option to conduct therapy especially in a crisis.

Another method that therapists use is online chat messages (Dowling & Rickwood, 2013; Mallen & Vogel, 2005; Rochlen et al., 2004). Online chatting can be done through various platforms such as Skype, AOL Messenger, Lync, or other instant messaging systems. Instant messaging allows the client to receive feedback immediately as it requires the client and the therapist to be online at the same time. One barrier to instant messaging is that one's tone can be misinterpreted or missed. Additionally, any facial cues that a therapist may pick up on in a face to face session will also be missed (Rochlen et al., 2004). This could also potentially cause clients to hide their true feelings. However, they may be some clients who will be more open since the therapist can't see them. Engaging in counseling behind the screen can offer a form of safety for clients that allow them to let their guards down and be more open as well as the convenience of online chatting (King et al., 2006; Skinner & Latchford, 2006).

Videoconferencing is another method that counselors can use to conduct sessions with their clients online (Mallen & Vogel, 2005; Riemer-Reiss, 2000). Videoconferencing allows the client and therapist the ability to see each other as well as hear each other speak during sessions. Utilizing video enables a therapist to still have the ability to pick up on some of the client's nonverbal cues (Riemer-Reiss, 2000). This method may be best for those who may not be able to physically go to see a therapist face-to-face due to medical reasons, geographical reasons, or fear of being seen in therapy. Although video conferencing is convenient, for this method to be effective, both client and therapist must have the access to technology (Mallen & Vogel, 2005), such as a webcam, microphone, and high-speed internet (Zack, 2011). Not having adequate technology could cause delays during classes due to buffering or being dropped from a class

session unexpectedly. The type and speed of the internet one uses could also affect how well a session goes. Slower internet speed could cause delays in the session (Richardson et al., 2009; Zack, 2011)

Ethical Dilemmas in Telehealth Counseling

Although telehealth counseling is convenient to both therapist and client, there are ethical concerns that must be taken into consideration. Clinicians of all disciplines are taught about ethics in training. However, the ethics of online counseling have not routinely been taught in training programs as it still relatively a new area of practice (Kraus, 2011). Without established guidelines for online counseling, clinicians are left with the predicament of how to handle ethical dilemmas when working with clients online. It begs the question of whether clinicians should follow the ethical guidelines already in place for their professions, or if there should be a separate set of guidelines when working with clients online. There is a need for ethical guidelines specifically for online counseling because there are new issues that may arise with online counseling (Norman, 2006; Riemer-Reiss, 2000; Rochlen et al., 2004). The organization of a set of virtual counseling guidelines began in 2000 by the Internet Healthcare Coalition, World Health Organization, and Pan-American Health Organization (Rippen & Risk, 2000).

The ACA (2014) has developed a code of ethics that covers distance counseling. The ACA Code of Ethics outlines that counselors should have the proper training to conduct counseling online. The American Psychological Association also states that therapist should receive training before conducting online counseling (Rummell & Joyce, 2010) The code of ethics indicates that counselors must adhere to both the laws of the state in which they practice as well as the state in which the client resides (Zack, 2011). Additionally, a therapist must be licensed in the state that the client lives and the state that they reside (ACA, 2020). Distance

counseling allows therapists to reach clients that are not in their direct vicinity, but also creates other ethical and legal issues that would not otherwise be present. Clients have the right to choose if they want to participate in online counseling. Confidentiality and how to maintain it is the primary concern with online counseling. In traditional counseling, confidentiality is straightforward. What is shared between a client and counselor is confidential except for instances when the client discloses that they want to harm themselves, harm someone else, or when there is a report of abuse.

Additionally, client files can be locked away in the therapist's office. When working with clients online, it may not be as simple. One of the ways a therapist communicates with their clients is through email and it also an easy way to have a client's confidentiality breached. One way to do this is to ensure that emails and all technology systems are encrypted. (ACA, 2014; Kraus, 2011). Therapists should utilize software that is guarded by firewalls to prevent access from outside interferences. Although measures can be put in place to prevent a breach of confidentiality, it cannot be 100% prevented in online counseling (Shaw & Shaw, 2006). Furthermore, therapists should also do what they can to ensure that they verify a client's identity before engaging in online therapy. A therapist may choose to have an intake session in the office before starting counseling online if possible. Therapists should have safeguards in place to ensure that clients are representing themselves truthfully.

The Online Therapeutic Alliance

One component of online counseling that should not differ from face-to-face counseling is the development and maintenance of the therapeutic alliance (Dowling & Rickwood, 2013; Prado & Meyer, 2020). The therapeutic alliance is the relationship between the counselor and the client (Dowling & Rickwood, 2013; Prado & Meyer, 2020). The relationship between the

counselor and client can help foster a client's growth in therapy. Although some may feel that rapport and relationship building may be difficult to achieve online, research has shown that therapeutic alliance can be as effective online as in face-to-face counseling (Dilkes-Frayne et al., 2019; Rummell & Joyce, 2010). Although counseling is taking place online, non-verbal cues can still be read and interpreted. Furthermore, online counseling can sometimes allow clients to let their guards down more than they would in a traditional counseling session.

School Counseling

The profession of school counseling started during the 1900s (Lambie & Williamson, 2004). At its inception, the professional title was vocational guidance as the focus was on helping students to determine their next steps after high school and into the world of work (Gysbers, 2001; Lambie & Williamson, 2004). The vocational guidance movement was started by Frank Parsons (Jones, 1994; Lambie & Williamson, 2004). He used interviewing to help clients identify their abilities and interests and match them with careers that align with those interests and skills. During the 1930s, E.G. Williamson expounded on Parsons' work by creating the trait-and-factor theory (Lambie & Williamson, 2004). In the 1950s, the profession began to move more to the social services side of education alongside school psychologists, nurses, and social workers (Cinotti, 2014). Even as the profession continued to grow, role ambiguity continued to be an issue that allowed counselors to continually be assigned tasks that were not counseling related (Chandler et al., 2018; Cinotti, 2014; Lambie & Williamson, 2004; Rayle & Adams, 2007). Counselors have been tasked with being backup administrators, substitute teachers, or in charge of bus duty, cafeteria duty, and testing. It was the formation of the ASCA, formerly the American Personnel and Guidance Association, that helped to start shaping a more defined role for school counselors (Lambie & Williamson, 2004; Schimmel, 2008). Even still,

there is still some role ambiguity today. ASCA has defined a list of appropriate and inappropriate activities for school counselors. Some appropriate tasks for school counselors include interpreting student records, analyzing grade-point-averages in relationship to achievement, and providing counseling to students with disciplinary problems or chronic absenteeism. Inappropriate tasks include building the master schedules, supervising classrooms, or assisting with duties in the principal's office (ASCA, N.D.).

As the profession has grown, the roles and tasks of school counselors have changed. What school counselors should and should not be doing has continued to evolve. Jessie Davis, who is considered the first school counselor, presented at the National Vocational Guidance Association conference about how to incorporate vocational guidance into classrooms (Cinotti, 2014; Pope, 2009), the equivalent of classroom guidance into today's school counseling program. He had the idea to implement guidance through English classes, which even today is still how some counselors implement classroom guidance since the majority, if not all, students are in an English class. Jessie Davis' lessons addressed behavior issues, character education, and was tied to academic needs (Chandler et al., 2018).

During the 1950s, meeting with students one-on-one in counseling was introduced (Lambie & Williamson, 2004). School counselors today still utilize one-on-one meetings with students, but at times that can be difficult due to the large counselor caseloads. ASCA recommends that school counselors maintain a caseload of 250:1 student to counselor ratio. The U.S. Department of Education's most recent report on student-to-counselor ratios reported the national average of 442:1, which is almost double the recommended ratio (U.S. Department of Education, 2018). School counselor effectiveness can be impacted by multiple duties and caseloads the size of their caseloads.

The 1958 National Defense Education Act (NDEA) helped propel the profession of school counseling and give it a boost (Baker, 2001; Chandler et al., 2018; Gysbers, 2001; Lambie & Williamson, 2004; Schimmel, 2008). The NDEA was implemented to help school counselors identify those students that were high achieving in math and science to help advise them on postsecondary plans (Gysbers, 2001; Lambie & Williamson, 2004). The NDEA also provided funding to school counseling programs in schools as well as funding for school counselor preparation programs (Chandler et al., 2018; Lambie & Williamson, 2004; Schimmel, 2008). The increase in funding also allowed for an increase in the number of school counselors (Schimmel, 2008).

During the 1960s and 1970s, there continued to be a change in the profession. Many changes were based on what was going on nationally such as the rise in mental health issues, drug addiction, and an increase in violence in schools and the community's students live (Gysbers, 2001). Even with an increase in school counselors, there was still some confusion on appropriate roles for school counselors. There was also no unified approach to what school counselors should do (Schimmel, 2008). Due to continued role ambiguity and a lack of data outcomes to show the correlation between the work of school counselors and student outcomes, there began a decline in school counselor positions which threatened the future of the profession (Lambie & Williamson, 2004; Schimmel, 2008). During this time, school counseling started to move to a service-driven profession, meaning that school counselors focused on clear and defined goals for the whole student (Cinotti, 2014; Gysbers, 1990; Schimmel, 2008). This push began the start of comprehensive school counseling programs during the 1980s (Baker, 2001). According to Galassi and Patrick (2004) Comprehensive School Counseling Programs are needed to, "deemphasize administrative and clerical tasks as well as crisis-centered modes of

intervention and promotes guidance activities and structured group experiences designed to support students in productive citizens” (p. 146).

The transition from guidance counselor to school counselor began in 1990 (Lambie & Williamson, 2004). The title change was a way to show how the profession has changed and expressed the scope of practice for school counselors. No longer was the sole focus to provide students with career guidance and assessment. Now, they help students with concerns in every aspects of their life: academic, personal/social, and career/college readiness. Additionally, the addition of various federal programs, such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) have helped to shape the work of school counselors. The NCLB Act of 2001 was designed to ensure that students identified as at-risk were not left behind and to hold schools accountable to this charge (Dollarhide & Lemberger, 2006; U.S. Department of Education , 2005). Dollarhide & Lemberger (2006) reported that due to NCLB that school and school counselors were pushed to improve their work with at risk students. They utilized data to make improvements to ensure all students were successful. In 2016, NCLB was replaced by ESSA (ASCA, 2020). ESSA was enacted due NCLB being difficult for schools to maintain (U.S Department of Education , 2020). ESSA provides all students the opportunity to learn at high standards to be prepared for college and their careers. Additionally, it ensures that students, parents, and educators are well informed of student progress to guarantee the needs of students are being met. Furthermore, if there is a trend of low academic performance or graduation rates, there will be accountability and action taken to make positive changes.

Cinotti (2014) expressed five foundations of the comprehensive guidance program. First, school counseling is a program that draws from other aspects of education that include standards that can be measured for accountability purposes. Second, it aids in student growth from a

developmental perspective in the academic, personal/social, and career/college readiness areas. Additionally, it is comprehensive as school counselors service various needs of students. Third, it is not a program that stands solely at the school counselor's responsibility, but a collaborative effort between the school counselor, administrators, teachers, and other stakeholders. Fourth, the program should be intentional. School counselors should utilize interventions, planning, and data to guide their program. Fifth, school counselors should be leaders in the field and advocate for the profession. The adaptation of the ASCA National Model helped to mold the profession that it is today. The first iteration of the National Model was in 2003 and it is now in its fourth edition (ASCA, 2019).

ASCA National Model

As the role of school counselors evolved, there was confusion about what school counselors should and should not do. Additionally, school counselors being pulled in multiple directions does not allow for a clear and concise role to be defined for school counselors (Neyland-Brown et al., 2019). It can lead to counselors completing non-counselor related tasks, because there are not clear and defined roles for school counselors (Pyne, 2011). To help with role ambiguity and confusion, ASCA developed guidelines that school counselors should follow to direct their program (Neyland-Brown et al., 2019; Pyne, 2011). The ASCA National Standards (2004) for Students was later developed into the ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for Students Success (2014) and the ASCA National Model (2003, 2005, 2012, 2019).

The first domain of the ASCA National Model is *Define* (ASCA, 2019). According to the ASCA (2019), "School counseling standards for students and professional practice serve as the defining documents of the school counseling profession" (p. 1). There are three sets of standards outlined by ASCA that help to guide school counseling program implantation. ASCA

provides professional and student standards that counselors should use as guidelines in developing their comprehensive school counseling programs. The first standard is Student Standards. These standards include mindsets and behaviors for student success as it relates to making sure all students are college and career ready. There are 35 mindsets and behaviors students should be capable of due to the implementation of a successful school counseling program. These standards are broken up into two categories: mindset standards and behavior standards. The mindset standards that school counselors should encourage students to have are:

1. Belief in the development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/emotional and physical well-being
2. Self-confidence in ability to succeed
3. Sense of belonging in the school environment
4. Understanding that postsecondary education and life-long learning are necessary for long-term career success
5. Belief in using abilities to their fullest to achieve high-quality results and outcomes
6. Positive attitude toward work and learning

(ASCA, 2019, p. 3)

There are three subcategories under Behavior standards: Learning strategies, self-management skills, and social skills. These standards outline what students should be able to demonstrate through classroom guidance, individual and group counseling, and other activities.

Learning strategies:

1. Demonstrate critical-thinking skills to make informed decisions
2. Demonstrate creativity
3. Use time-management, organizational and study skills

4. Apply self-motivation and self-direction to learning
5. Apply media and technology skills
6. Set high standards of quality
7. Identify long- and short-term academic, career and social/emotional goals
8. Actively engage in challenging coursework
9. Gather evidence and consider multiple perspectives to make informed decisions
10. Participate in enrichment and extracurricular activities

Self-management Skills

1. Demonstrate ability to assume responsibility
2. Demonstrate self-discipline and self-control
3. Demonstrate ability to work independently
4. Demonstrate ability to delay immediate gratification for long-term rewards
5. Demonstrate perseverance to achieve long- and short-term goals
6. Demonstrate ability to overcome barriers to learning
7. Demonstrate effective coping skills when faced with a problem
8. Demonstrate the ability to balance school, home, and community activities
9. Demonstrate personal safety skills
10. Demonstrate ability to manage transitions and ability to adapt to changing situations and responsibilities

Social Skills

1. Use effective oral and written communication skills and listening skills
2. Create positive and supportive relationships with other students

3. Create relationships with adults that support success
 4. Demonstrate empathy
 5. Demonstrate ethical decision-making and social responsibility
 6. Use effective collaboration and cooperation skills
 7. Use leadership and teamwork skills to work effectively in diverse teams
 8. Demonstrate advocacy skills and ability to assert self, when necessary
 9. Demonstrate social maturity and behaviors appropriate to the situation and environment
- (ASCA, 2019, p. 3)

In addition to these mindsets and standards, ASCA also outlines professional standards for school counselors. These standards include items such as having an understanding of the educational system, legal issues, policies, research, and trends in education. Essentially, school counselors should be able to explain how the education system works, how current research can shape education, and show how school counseling relates to and differs from other avenues of counseling. School counselors should be advocates of the profession by being able to explain to stakeholders the needs and benefits of a comprehensive school counseling program. In total, there are nine professional standards counselors should adhere to. Additionally, there are ethical standards that school counselors must adhere to. There are seven mindsets school counselor should believe:

1. Every student can learn, and every student can succeed
2. Every student should have access to and opportunity for a high-quality education
3. Every student should graduate from high school prepared for post-secondary opportunities
4. Every student should have access to a comprehensive school counseling program

5. Effective school counseling is a collaborative process involving school counselors, students, families, teachers, administrators, other school staff and education stakeholders
6. School counselors are leaders in the school, district, state, and nation
7. Comprehensive school counseling programs promote and enhance student academic, career and social/emotional outcomes

(ASCA, 2019, p.6)

Three categories fall under the behavior standards for counselors: professional foundation, direct and indirect student services, and planning and assessment.

Professional Foundation:

1. Apply developmental, learning, counseling, and education theories
2. Demonstrate understanding of educational systems, legal issues, policies, research, and trends in education
3. Apply legal and ethical principles of the school counseling profession
4. Apply school counseling professional standards and competencies
5. Use ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success to inform the implementation of a comprehensive school counseling program
6. Demonstrate understanding of the impact of cultural, social, and environmental influences on student success and opportunities
7. Demonstrate leadership through the development and implementation of a comprehensive school counseling program
8. Demonstrate advocacy in a comprehensive school counseling program

9. Create systematic change through the implementation of a comprehensive school counseling program

Direct and Indirect Student Services

1. Design and implement instruction aligned to ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success in large- group, classroom, small-group, and individual settings
2. Provide appraisal and advisement in large- group, classroom, small-group, and individual settings
3. Provide short-term counseling in small-group and individual settings
4. Make referrals to appropriate school and community resources
5. Consult to support student achievement and success
6. Collaborate with families, teachers, administrators, other school staff, add education stakeholders for student achievement and success

Planning and Assessment

1. Create school counseling program beliefs, vision, and mission statements aligned with the school and district
2. Identify gaps in achievement, attendance, discipline, opportunity, and resources
3. Develop annual student outcome goals based on student data
4. Develop and implement action plans aligned with program goals and student data
5. Assess and report program results to the school community
6. Use time appropriately according to national recommendations and student/school data
7. Establish an agreement with the principal and other administrators about the comprehensive school counseling program

8. Establish and convene an advisory council for the comprehensive school counseling program
9. Use appropriate school counselor performance appraisal process

(ASCA, 2019, p. 7)

ASCA has defined the responsibilities that school counselors are to follow, as outlined in the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors (ASCA, 2016). The first responsibility of school counselors is to the students. School counselors should work to ensure that all students are treated fairly and with respect. They should be aware of the laws that help support students' rights. Additionally, they should be a support to students and their families while not stepping outside the school counselor's realm of responsibilities. Referral to outside resources should be made when needed. School counselors are to uphold the standards of confidentiality when working with students and their records. School counselors are to make sure students are aware of when their confidentiality may be breached when there has been a disclosure of abuse or threat to harm oneself or someone else. There should be measures in place to keep student data and records secured.

Furthermore, school counselors should utilize and analyze data to help guide their comprehensive counseling programs. This should be a collaborative effort between school counselors, administrators, teachers, and other stakeholders. Comprehensive school counseling programs should address the three domains of academic, career, and social/emotional. School counselors work with students on identifying their interests, developing career goals and help students to determine post-secondary plans (ASCA, 2016).

The second responsibility of school counselors is to parents, the school, and themselves. School counselors should work with parents to provide support to students and help to keep

parents informed about the ways they can help their students. School counselors should collaborate with administrators, teachers, and staff to ensure they are aware of the purpose and goals of comprehensive school counseling programs. School counselors help to educate those outside of school counseling about what we do. School counselors should ensure that they have been adequately trained to do the work of school counselors. They should continue to learn and stay abreast of new interventions and research in school counseling by attending professional development sessions and attending state and local conferences. School counselors should also seek consultation and supervision when they are faced with potential ethical dilemmas. When faced with ethical dilemmas, school counselors should follow the STEPS model. The STEPS model was introduced by ASCA originally in 2001. STEPS stands for Solutions to Ethical Problems in Schools. The STEPS model consists of nine steps:

1. Define the problem emotionally and intellectually
2. Apply the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors and the law
3. Consider the students' chronological and developmental levels
4. Consider the setting, parental rights, and minors' rights
5. Apply the ethical principles of beneficence, autonomy, nonmaleficence, loyalty, and justice
6. Determine potential courses of actions and their consequences
7. Evaluate the selected action
8. Consult
9. Implement the course of action

(ASCA, 2016, 2019, p. 28).

The second domain of the ASCA National Model is *Manage*. School counselors should, “organize and allocate resources to best address the goals, strategies, and activities of the school counseling program” (ASCA, 2019, p. 29). School counselors should have a defined mission statement and vision statement for their counseling program. These statements should help guide their program and be reflected in the lessons they teach and the interventions they use. School counselors should use data to help shape their program and to determine the needs of their students in their school. A calendar should outline the various activities the school counselor plans to do for the year. The data should also help to determine action plans for the year as well as what classroom lessons and groups the counselor should run for the year. A data-driven school counseling program allows counselors to monitor student progress, identify at-risk students, understand student behavior, assess the effectiveness of the school counseling program, and make changes backed by data.

There are various types of data school counselors should collect to run an effective, comprehensive school counseling program. The first type of data is primary data. This data identifies who, what, and why. Who is being served? Knowing this information can assist counselors in identifying which students aren’t being served. What skills, attitudes, and knowledge are being taught to the students? This data can help counselors to determine if there are students that need elevated services. Why does a counselor do what they do? Are their interventions effective? What student outcomes are being met (ASCA, 2019)? Student outcomes are the data that stakeholders will be interested in knowing. The next type of data is participation data. School counselors should be able to identify what students are participating in counseling activities. The next type of data is mindsets and behaviors data. This data informs counselors about the effectiveness of their counseling program. The last type of data is outcome

data. Outcome data answers the question, “How did the learning affect students’ achievement, attendance, or discipline?” (ASCA, 2019, p. 36). That data can provide information about test results, GPA, or graduation rates.

The third domain is *Deliver*. School counselors are to utilize components of the ASCA National Model, predominately direct student services (e.g. counseling, instructions, appraisal, and advisement) and indirect student services (e.g. collaborations, consultation, and referrals) (ASCA, 2019). This domain addresses how school counselors implement their services. There are two ways services are delivered: direct and indirect. Direct services are services that school counselors have direct contact with students. These include activities such as individual sessions, groups, and classroom guidance. Individual sessions can work with a student on learning better study skills. Groups can teach students how to cope with family issues. Classroom guidance can teach students how to identify bullying and how to respond and report it. ASCA recommends that school counselors spend 80% of their time in direct and indirect services. Indirect services are the activities school counselors do that impact student and student planning but are not done in direct contact with students. For example, finding resources or referring students to outside services. Additionally, it includes collaborating with outside agencies and community supporters to help with student planning. A school counselor may collaborate with a local cosmetology school to have someone come in and talk with cosmetology students about how to open their own salon. Additionally, school counselors can work with other agencies that can provide additional services that can help students with ACT prep.

The fourth domain is *Assess*. School counselors should, “develop, implement, and assess their school counseling program based on clearly defined priorities reflecting student needs” (ASCA, 2019, p. 29) and continually evaluate the effectiveness of their comprehensive school

counseling program. The ASCA National Model states that school counselors should evaluate their programs to determine its efficacy, inform improvements to their program design and delivery, and show how student outcomes have changed due to the school counseling program. (ASCA, 2019). School counselors should be assessed on their professional beliefs and responsibilities.

Technology Usage in School Counseling Programs

With the evolution of school counseling, education, and technology, it is a natural progression that more technology is being used in school counseling programs. How school counselors utilize technology in their programs varies. Additionally, there has been limited research on how exactly school counselors utilize technology in their programs (Mason et al., 2019; Steele et al., 2014). Mason et al. (2019) stated that, “technology, when used with intentionality and purpose, can expand the school counselor’s reach and efficiency in serving all students and increase access to resources, thus contributing to overall student achievement” (p. 1). Therefore, the utilization of technology should be done with purpose and not just for the sake of using technology.

School counselors can use technology in many ways. Sabella (2003) expressed that counselors could use technology to provide information and resources, communicate with parents and students outside of class, or other stakeholders, to be interactive, more productive, and to provide cyber counseling to students. Steele et al. (2014) conducted a study evaluating the utilization of technology in school counseling programs. They found that school counselors use technology for professional development, program management, consultation, collaboration, and operations more than any other services. Additionally, 26% of respondents surveyed occasionally used technology for individual and group counseling, referrals, psychoeducation,

and consultations with stakeholders. Mason et al. (2019) conducted a study that surveyed what kind of technological devices that counselors used. The study found that 84.4% of respondents used desktop computers, laptops, and smartphones, while 67.5% of respondents had a website or dedicated page on their school's website. A study done by Beidoglu et al. (2015) found that school counselors viewed having a webpage as very useful.

In contrast, only 22.7% of respondents use Twitter, 12.2% use Facebook, and 3.9% use Instagram. These platforms can be used to send out information about events, reminders about important dates, or information about colleges and scholarships. Although there has been an increase in technology usage, there is still some divide between counselors and student usage of technology (Gallo et al., 2017). While counselors may utilize technology one way, students may not use technology the same way and counselors should keep this in mind.

Virtual School Counseling

As trends continue to change in education, there are also changes in school counseling. Virtual schools started in the 1990s (Toppin & Toppin, 2016). As virtual schools become more widely available, it is only a natural progression that virtual school counseling becomes a reality. Virtual school counseling is still a newer phenomenon, but there has been limited research on the roles and functions of the virtual school counselor. The majority of the current research focuses on how school counselors utilize technology in their comprehensive guidance programs (Osborn et al., 2015; Steele et al., 2014).

A study conducted by Steele et al. (2014) surveyed virtual counselors working in Florida Virtual School to help identify the roles of virtual school counselors. The study was a mixed-methods, sequential exploratory design. The researchers surveyed the counselors about their

day-to-day activities. They found that virtual school counselors opted to work in virtual schools due to convenience as well as being on the edge of something new in the field. The school counselors indicated that they communicated with students and families via phone and email, primarily to provide academic advising to students. One significant difference that was noted was the student-to-counselor ratio of the virtual school counselors in comparison to their brick and mortar counterparts. ASCA recommends a ratio of 250:1. The national average for the 2018 school year was 442:1 (Department of Education, 2018). On the contrary, the virtual school counselors at the Florida Virtual School ratio was 3000:1, which is well over the national average.

Currie (2010) described the various ways virtual school counselors provide services. Most comparable to face-to-face counseling, school counselors videoconference with students that allows them to see and hear students. Email is also used and can be synchronous and asynchronous. Chat messaging might also be used to communicate with students. Counselors can also utilize interactive websites to work with students (e.g. career exploration websites). One crucial point Currie (2010) expressed was the need to evaluate how the increase of technology usage fits into school counselor preparation programs.

The Virtual School Counselor-Pilot Study

Aldridge (2019) conducted an unpublished pilot study to investigate the roles and functions of virtual school counselors. The pilot study consisted of 15 respondents. Twenty-two respondents started the survey, but six dropped and did not complete the survey. All respondents were female. The questionnaire used in the pilot study was aligned with the ASCA National Model (2016) and asked respondents about their daily activities. Additionally, the questionnaire

asked respondents how they connected with students and families as well as what kind of technology they used. The SCARS was not a part of the pilot study.

Eleven respondents worked in a virtual setting, and four worked in a blended setting. The time counselors spent performing virtual and non-virtual activities varied between respondents. They reported that they spent 15%-95% of their time on virtual tasks, with an average of 63.75% of their time spent virtually. Eight respondents worked in schools that served K-12th grade, three served grades 9-12, one served 7th- 12th grade, one served K- 2nd, one served 10th-12th, and another served 1st -12th. The average counselor-to-student ratio for the respondents was 1:545.

Thirteen of the respondents felt that their school counseling program promotes and supports academic achievement, personal and social development, and career planning for every student. Exactly, 53.4% of the respondents felt that they adhered to ASCAs recommendation of performing direct and indirect services to students 80% of the time. Respondents used one of the following platforms: Blackboard, Canvas, Adobe Connect, Google for Education, Live Lesson, and Connexus. All of the respondents used email, phone, and online meetings to communicate with students and families. Forty percent of the respondents utilized face-to-face visits to connect with students and families. When asked about how much time they spent doing individual, group, and classroom guidance, much of the time spent was on doing individual sessions. Only four counselors had group sessions. Nine counselors conducted classroom guidance. As a pilot, the small sample size does not allow for generalizations to the population. Therefore, the current study is needed to expound on this data to be able to make generalizations about the roles and functions of the virtual school counselors.

COVID-19 Effect on Education

As COVID-19 began to spread, schools across the nation began to close (Bouznad & Ibourk, 2020). Schools closed as a way to help curve the spread of COVID-19 (Cooper, et al., 2020). However, the abrupt closing left schools, children, and parents in an unexpected and unprepared place. For schools, they had to determine how to finish out the school year. For parents, depending on their job, there may have been some struggle with daycare services during this time. The school closures also led to a large increase in distance/virtual learning. Bouznad and Ibourk (2020) stated that one of the advantages to distant learning is the ability to provide education in places or for those who otherwise may not have access to education. However, this takes on the assumption that all students are digitally equipped to attend school virtually. Therefore, schools should ensure they are working to close the digital divide for socioeconomically disadvantaged students.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Research Design

The roles and functions of virtual school counseling have yet to be clearly defined. The purpose of this study was to begin the process of defining these roles and functions and to examine their alignment with the ASCA National Model. This study was also designed to assess how the virtual school counselor's role aligns with ASCA National Model standards, specifically as it relates to how virtual school counselors spend their time providing direct and indirect services. Lastly, this study aimed to examine how virtual school counselors connect with their students and families. A cross-sectional survey design utilizing a snowball sampling technique was used in this research.

The data collection instruments included a researcher-created questionnaire for the demographic questions, open-ended questions created by the researcher, and the School Counselor Activity Rating Scale (SCARS, 2005).

Research Procedures

A snowball technique was used to obtain respondents. Questionnaires were distributed through three avenues: Facebook, State school counseling associations, and ASCA Aspects. There are several different Facebook groups specific to school counselors, as well as some groups for virtual school counselors. The researcher reached out to the group administrators to ensure permission to post the survey for dissertation purposes. Upon approval, the researcher posted a link to the survey in the various groups. The questionnaire was posted with a brief description of the research study and qualifications to participate.

Additionally, emails were sent to state school counseling and counselor associations to get approval to have the survey sent to their listserv. A link to the survey was sent to those associations who agreed to distribute the request to their listserv. The email included a brief description of the research study as well as the qualifications to participate. Lastly, the survey was sent to the ASCA Aspects Director of Research Media to distribute the questionnaire via a link in ASCA Aspects. ASCA Aspects is a monthly newsletter sent out by the association that provides school counseling news and updates to school counselors on their mailing list.

The survey was sent out multiple times during the data collection period which lasted 6 weeks to ensure that an adequate number of respondents were obtained. Additionally, this allowed for potential respondents who may have missed the initial post/email to see the survey in a subsequent post/email. The survey was posted three times in each Facebook group.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and many counselors working virtually during the time of data collection, the researcher opened the survey to all school counselors. The researcher differentiated between counselors solely working virtually due to COVID-19 and true virtual school counselors by including a question that asked if their online presence was normal or due to modifications made necessary by the pandemic.

Respondents and Sampling

According to the *ASCA 2017-2018 Student-to-Counselor Ratio Report*, there are over 115,000 school counselors across the United States. There is no differentiation between virtual school counselors and traditional school counselors. Therefore, there was no way to account for how many school counselors are virtual school counselors. Respondents are currently or have worked in K-12 virtual and blended schools as a school counselor for any amount of time. The researcher reached out to counselors in different areas of the United States to gather data from different regions. Respondents were both male and female. There was a total of 94 respondents 89 of whom were female. Respondents ranged in age from 24-62 years old. Forty-five of the respondents worked in a virtual or blended setting, 49 worked in a traditional setting.

Instruments

The questionnaire was based on the domains of the ASCA National Model (2019). To determine if respondents were eligible for inclusion in the current study, respondents were first asked if they were working virtually solely due to COVID-19. The first part of the questionnaire collected demographic data including race, age, gender, the respondent's work experience, their type of school (100% virtual/blended or traditional), what grade levels they are working with, and their student-to-counselor ratio. The next section consisted of six Likert-type closed-ended

questions that asked respondents about their perceptions of their Comprehensive School Counseling Program (CSCP) and its alignment to the ASCA National Model. One question asked respondents if they felt that they teach students according to the standards ASCA outlines in the National Model. The respondents were asked about their perceptions of their CSCP, such as, do you feel that all students can learn. One question asked respondents if they encourage their students to believe in themselves while fostering a positive school culture/climate for all students through a comprehensive guidance program focused on academic, personal/social, and career readiness.

The next section of the questionnaire was the School Counseling Activity Rating Scale (SCARS). The SCARS was created by Janna Scarborough (Neyland-Brown et al., 2019; Scarborough, 2005). The purpose of the SCARS is to evaluate the difference between how much time school counselors spend doing various activities and how much they prefer doing those same activities. The SCARS was created based on the ASCA National Model of 2003 (Scarborough, 2005) and asked task-related questions with potential responses on a five-point Likert-type scale (never, rarely, occasionally, frequently, and routinely). The SCARS was created based on the 2013 ASCA National Model. To ensure applicability with the newer ASCA standards, the researcher emailed the instrument's developer to inquire about the reliability of the scale in the current context (Scarborough, 2020). According to Scarborough (2020), the scale remained relevant as it, "is really focused on the services school counselors provide and those remain: curriculum, counseling, individual planning, consultation, and coordination." The SCARS consists of five sections: (a) counseling activities, (b) consultation activities, (c) curriculum activities, (d) coordination activities, and (e) other activities. Under the counseling activities section, the SCARS asked how often a school counselor counsels students on

personal/family concerns as well as how much time they would prefer to counsel students on personal/family concerns. Under the consultation activities section, the SCARS asked how often a school counselor consults with school staff on a student's behavior and how often they would prefer to consult with school staff on student behavior. Under curriculum activities, the SCARS asked how often a counselor conducts classroom lessons on career development and the world of work and how often they would prefer to conduct classroom lessons on career development. Under the coordination activities section, the SCARS asked how often a school counselor coordinates special events and programs for school around career, academic, or personal/social issues. Under the other activities section, the SCARS asked how often a school counselor coordinates standardized testing and how often they would prefer to coordinate standardized testing. Vaughn et al. (2007) found that the SCARS had content validity, construct validity, and reliability coefficients ranging from .75 to .93.

The last two sections helped to answer Research Question Four (What methods does the virtual school counselor utilize to connect with their students and their families?). The first section asked about connectedness. The Oxford dictionary (2020) defines connectedness as a feeling of belonging to or having an affinity with a particular person or group. In this section, respondents were asked if they feel they have a rapport with their students and if they feel they can get to know their students in a virtual setting. Asking these questions helped to affirm or deny the belief that virtual school counselors can develop relationships with their students as well as their brick and mortar counterparts. The last section asked about the respondents' technology usage. The respondents were asked what online platform their school uses, such as Blackboard Collaborate or Google classroom. They were also asked to identify what percentage

of their time they use contacting students through email, face-to-face visits, phone, online meetings, and skype or other online messengers weekly.

Data Analysis

The data was exported into SPSS for analysis. Descriptive statistics and central tendencies were performed to detail the demographic information of the respondents. Furthermore, Independent T-tests and central tendency were used to analyze the activity levels of respondents and to determine their significance level. Chi-square was also used to determine the significance between the two groups on their beliefs about their school counseling programs alignment with the ASCA National Model and their connectedness to their students. The goal of the data is to establish a baseline of the activity rates of school counselors and their alignment with the ACSA National Model. Differences between the two groups (virtual and traditional school counselors) were examined using Independent T-tests, which were conducted to determine if differences existed in terms of how each group spends their work time and the tasks they complete through their guidance programs.

Ethical Concerns with the Study

Respondents provided informed consent which noted the confidential nature of the study, their right to not answer questions, and the fact that there was no penalty for not completing the survey. There was minimal contact with respondents and there was no identifying information was asked or kept. The procedure for survey distribution and data collection ensured there was not a way for the researcher to link any respondent to their survey. There was no additional follow-up or contact with respondents.

Summary

A cross-sectional survey design utilizing a snowballing technique was used to conduct the current study. Independently created demographic questions and the SCARS were used to collect information to determine the roles and functions of virtual school counselors. Links to the questionnaire were posted on various social media platforms including Facebook groups designed for school counselors. Additionally, the questionnaire was sent to state school counselor associations to distribute. Lastly, the questionnaire was distributed through the ASCA monthly newsletter.

The results of this study were analyzed using central tendency and using the mean, median, and standard deviation to establish a baseline for the activities of virtual school counselors. Additionally, Chi-square was run to determine significance between both groups. The results will help to determine if the tasks that virtual school counselors perform daily align with the ASCA National model. To analyze the data for after COVID-19, central tendency was used to determine the differences within both groups on their activity rates before and after COVID-19. There was no analysis on how they preferred to spend their time, but only their actual time spent before and after COVID-19. A Chi-square was run to determine significance between both groups on their actual time spent after COVID-19.

Chapter 4: Results

Respondents

A total of 231 respondents completed at least part of the survey. A total of 137 respondents did not complete the survey in its entirety. Any respondents who did not answer all of the survey questions about their activity rates before the COVID pandemic were omitted.

Additionally, those who only answered the demographic questions were removed. Incomplete responses were not included in the study. Data cleansing procedures yielded a sample of 94 completed surveys. There were 45 virtual school counselors (those working in a 100% virtual school and those who worked at a blended school) and 49 traditional school counselors.

Demographics

Of the 94 respondents, around 5% were males. The respondents were from varying ethnic backgrounds. Of all the respondents, 57.4% identified as White or Caucasian, 35.1% Black or African American, 4.3% Latino/Hispanic, 1.1% Asian, and 2.1% other. Geographically, respondents were from 32 different states. The average age of the respondents was 42.04, with the youngest being 24 and the oldest being 62. Counselors worked with various grade levels. Approximately 34% of the respondents reported working with students in grades 9-12. Only 17% of respondents worked with grades K – 5th, 11.7% of respondents worked with 6th – 8th grade and the remaining respondents worked in various other grade levels. Respondents reported that they worked with 75 to over 5000 students in which their caseloads ranged from 1:75 to 1:800. There were 74.5% who reported that they worked in a school within their local school district. Of the remaining respondents, 12.8% worked for one virtual school and the other 12.5% worked for eight other schools. States with the most respondents were from Tennessee and Florida, 13.5% and 11.5%, respectively.

Licensed vs. Non-Licensed

School counselors are licensed through state educational boards (ASCA, 2020). Each state has its own set of requirements. For example, to be licensed in Tennessee as a school counselor, one must complete a graduate program approved for school counseling preparation.

Additionally, one may hold a degree in clinical counseling but must be enrolled in an approved school counseling preparation program. One must also complete an internship in a K-6 setting and a 7-12 setting. Lastly, one must take and receive a passing score of at least a 580 on the Praxis II: School Guidance & Counseling (ASCA, 2020). Of the respondents, 80.9% were licensed school counselors. Only 3.2% were not licensed. There were 16% who did not disclose whether or not they were licensed.

American School Counseling Association

The ASCA is an organization that was formed to help define the role of school counselors (Lambie & Williamson, 2004; Schimmel, 2008). According to ASCA's website, their mission is to provide representation for school counselors and to promote professionalism and ethical practices. (ASCA, 2020). ASCA provides professional development to help school counselors stay abreast of the profession's changes and learn new counseling techniques. There were 61.7% of the respondents who are a part of the National ASCA organization, 22.3% are not a part of ASCA, and 16% did not state if they were members or not. Additionally, 59.6% of the respondents are a part of the state school counseling association, 24.5% are not part of their state school counseling association, and 16% did not identify if they were a part of their state school counseling association.

Research Questions

Research Question One. How does the virtual school counselor's role align with ASCA school counselor standards? To answer this question, respondents were asked questions about their mindsets and beliefs related to the ACSA National Model. The first section of the National model focuses on student behaviors and the counselor's mindsets. One example of the type of

questions that respondents were asked include the following: Do you encourage your students to believe in themselves while fostering a positive school culture/climate for all students through a comprehensive guidance program focused on academic, personal/social, and career readiness? The possible responses were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1- strongly disagree to 5- strongly agree. A Chi-square test was run to compare the two groups: virtual school counselors ($n= 45$) and traditional school counselors($n=49$). An alpha level of .05 was used for all statistical tests. Chi-square was selected for this analysis as nominal data was collected and independent of each other. A chi-square test of independence was conducted between virtual and traditional school counselors for encouraging their students. There was no statistically significant association between virtual and traditional school counselors on encouraging their students, $\chi^2(2) = 1.77$, $p = .563$. Due to the small sample size, the cell frequencies were below five. Therefore, the Fisher's exact test was analyzed to determine significance. There was no statistically significant association between virtual and traditional school counselors on their belief that they encourage their students as assessed by Fisher's exact test, $p = .563$. Therefore, both groups felt they held the beliefs that school counselors should have a comprehensive school counseling program based on ASCA National Model Standards.

The second section of the ASCA National Model under Define are the professional standards counselors should follow. Under this section, there are three categories: (1) professional foundation, (2) direct and indirect student services, and (3) planning and assessment. A Fisher's exact test showed that there was a significant difference between virtual and traditional school counselors on teaching critical thinking, time management, and goal setting, $p = .021$, teaching self-management skills, $p = .018$ and teaching effective communication skills, positive relationships, and empathy, $p < .001$.

The last category in the Define section of the ASCA National Model covers the counselor's ethics. A chi-square test of independence was conducted between virtual and traditional school counselors on their adherence to ASCA Ethical standards. There was no statistically significant association between virtual and traditional school counselors on adherence to ASCA Ethical Standards, $\chi^2 (3) = 1.30, p = .728$. Due to the small sample size, the cell frequencies were below five. Therefore, the Fisher's exact test was analyzed to determine significance. There was no statistically significant association between virtual and traditional school counselors on their adherence to ASCA Ethical Standards as assessed by Fisher's exact test, $p = 1.0$. There was no statistically significant association between virtual and traditional school counselors on familiarity with the STEPS Model, $\chi^2 (4) = 4.44, p = .35$. Due to the small sample size, the cell frequencies were below five. Therefore, the Fisher's exact test was analyzed to determine significance. There was no statistically significant association between virtual and traditional school counselors on their adherence to ASCA Ethical Standards as assessed by Fisher's exact test, $p = .366$. There was no statistically significant association between virtual and traditional school counselors on adherence to ASCA Ethical Standards, $\chi^2 (4) = 2.8, p = .59$. Due to the small sample size, the cell frequencies were below five. Therefore, the Fisher's exact test was analyzed to determine significance. There was no statistically significant association between virtual and traditional school counselors on their adherence to ASCA Ethical Standards as assessed by Fisher's exact test, $p = .63$. Therefore, both groups felt that they adhered to ASCA Guidelines and were familiar with the Ethical Model.

Research Questions Two, Three and Four.

How frequently are school counselors engaged in direct services as measured on the SCARS scales (i.e., individual counseling, group counseling, classroom guidance, etc.)? How

frequently are school counselors engaged in indirect services as measured on the SCARS scales (administrative, making referrals, consulting and collaborating with others, etc.)? How does the amount of time virtual counselors devote to completing tasks? The School Counseling Activity Rating Scale (SCARS) was utilized to answer these questions. The SCARS asked respondents how often they complete tasks in five different categories: Counseling activities, Consultation activities, Coordination activities, Curriculum activities, and Other activities. The scale is in two parts. The first part asked respondents how much time they devoted to completing a task, and the second part asked how much time they would have preferred to do those same tasks. Respondents responded on a Likert scale ranging from “I never do this” (1) to “I routinely do this” (5). An Independent t-test was conducted to compare the means between the virtual school counselors and traditional school counselors. An alpha level of .05 was used for all statistical tests. Independent t-test was chosen due to the independent variable being two categorical, independent groups (virtual and traditional school counselors and the SCARS being a verbal frequency scale (Scarborough, 2005).

The first section of the SCARS asked about counseling activities. This section asked respondents about counseling students regarding personal issues, school behavior, crisis/emergency issues, relationships, small group counseling on various topics, following up with group respondents, and academic issues. An independent-samples t-test was run to determine if there were differences in the activity rates on counseling activities between virtual and traditional school counselors. There was homogeneity of variances, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ($p = .108$). The activity rate was higher for traditional school counselors ($M = 3.6$, $SD = 0.55$) than virtual school counselors ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 0.73$), a statistically significant difference, $t(92) = -3.08$, $p = .003$. When comparing the rate school

counselors would prefer to complete counseling activities, traditional school counselors had higher activity rates ($M = 3.9$, $SD = .46$) than virtual school counselors ($M = 3.45$, $SD = .74$), a statistically significant difference, $t(76) = -3.27$, $p = .002$. There was homogeneity of variances, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ($p = .058$).

The second section of the SCARS asked about consultation activities. This section asked respondents about consulting with other staff, community leaders, other agencies, and parents. An independent-samples t-test was run to determine if there were differences in activity rates for consultation activities between virtual and traditional school counselors. There was homogeneity of variances, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ($p = .606$). The activity rates for consultation activities was higher for traditional school counselors ($M = 3.5$, $SD = 0.76$) than virtual school counselors ($M = 3.1$, $SD = 0.85$), a statistically significant difference, $t(87) = -2.39$, $p = .019$. When comparing the rate school counselors would prefer to complete consultation activities, traditional school counselors had higher activity rates, ($M = 3.76$, $SD = .72$) than virtual school counselors ($M = 3.38$, $SD = .58$), a statistically significant difference, $t(76) = -2.48$, $p = .015$. There was homogeneity of variances, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ($p = .429$).

The third section asked respondents about curriculum activities. Curriculum activities include conducting classroom lessons to introduce the counselor, lessons on career development, personal issues relating to others, personal growth, conflict resolution, substance abuse, and personal safety issues. An independent-samples t-test was run to determine if there were differences in activity rates for curriculum activities between virtual and traditional school counselors. There was homogeneity of variances, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ($p = .971$). The activity rates for curriculum activities was higher for traditional school

counselors ($M = 3.11$, $SD = 1.15$) than virtual school counselors ($M = 2.47$, $SD = 1.16$), a statistically significant difference, $t(69) = -2.31$, $p = .024$. When comparing the rate school counselors would prefer to complete curriculum activities, traditional school counselors had higher activity rates, ($M = 3.85$, $SD = .85$) than virtual school counselors ($M = 3.44$, $SD = .93$), which was not statistically significant difference, $t(60) = -1.8$, $p = .076$. There was homogeneity of variances, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ($p = .393$).

The fourth section asked respondents about coordination activities. Coordination activities include tasks such as planning events, having a comprehensive school counseling program, and providing in-service to teachers and staff. An independent-samples t-test was run to determine if there were differences in activity rates for coordination activities between virtual and traditional school counselors. There was homogeneity of variances, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ($p = .68$). The activity rates for coordination activities was higher for traditional school counselors ($M = 3.08$, $SD = .71$) than virtual school counselors ($M = 3.0$, $SD = .82$), which was not a statistically significant difference, $t(63) = -.414$, $p = .68$. When comparing the rate school counselors would prefer to complete coordination activities, traditional school counselors had higher activity rates, ($M = 3.86$, $SD = .70$) than virtual school counselors ($M = 3.53$, $SD = .63$), which was not a statistically significant difference, $t(54) = -1.8$, $p = .067$. There was homogeneity of variances, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ($p = .809$).

The fifth section asked respondents about their time spent completing tasks not related to school counseling. These tasks are tasks that school counselors should not be doing per ASCA Standards. Non- counseling related tasks include tasks such as coordinating testing, bus duty, and disciplining students. An independent-samples t-test was run to determine if there were

differences in activity rates for other activities between virtual and traditional school counselors. There was homogeneity of variances, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ($p = .467$). The activity rates for other activities was higher for traditional school counselors ($M = 2.74$, $SD = .72$) than virtual school counselors ($M = 2.49$, $SD = .66$), which was not statistically significant different, $t(58) = -1.39$, $p = .170$. When comparing the rate school counselors would prefer to complete other activities, traditional school counselors had higher activity rates, ($M = 2.13$, $SD = .60$) than virtual school counselors ($M = 2.03$, $SD = .40$), which was not statistically significant different, $t(58) = -1.39$, $p = .456$. There was homogeneity of variances, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ($p = .140$).

Because other activities are the activities that school counselors should not do, a deeper look was taken to compare the actual activity rates and the preferred activity rates on other activities.

Table 1 shows the means of the actual time spent and the preferred time spent for both groups on other activities. The means were used to show the difference within the groups on their actual time spent completing other activities and the time they would have preferred to spend on the same activities. Virtual School Counselors would prefer to spend less time responding to health issues, scheduling students, and maintaining records. For traditional school counselors, they would prefer to spend more time organizing outreach and maintaining the records. They would have preferred less time scheduling students for classes, disciplining students, and performing cafeteria, hall, and bus duty

Table 1**Means for Other Activities- Actual Time Vs. Preferred Time Spent**

Virtual School Counselors		Traditional School Counselors	
Actual	Preferred	Actual	Preferred
2.49	2.74	2.03	2.13

Research Question Five. What method or platforms are utilized by virtual school counselor in order to connect with their students and families? Do counselors feel they are connected to their students? The last section of the survey helped to answer the research question on connectedness. First, respondents were asked about the platform they used to connect/communicate with students and families. Twelve respondents used Google classroom, and 11 respondents used Google classroom in conjunction with other platforms. Seven respondents used Microsoft teams, and three respondents used Microsoft teams in conjunction with another platform. The other platforms used were: Canvas, Connexus, Dojo, Edgenuity, Edsby, Schoology, Maestro, Haiku, Moodle, PowerSchool, Schooltool, Skyward, Veracross, and WebEx.

A chi square test indicated that there was no significant difference between the groups on their feelings of having rapport with their students, that their students could reach them, or that their students knew them. An alpha level of .05 was used for all statistical tests. There was a significance difference on if respondents felt if they were as effective in a virtual setting as they were in a traditional setting, $X^2(4, N = 47) = 9.73, p = .045$. The association was moderately strong (Cohen, 1998), Cramer's $V = .455$. Based on these results, most respondents do not feel that they are effective in a virtual setting. Table 2 show the percentages of the respondents on

their feelings of being connected to their students.

Table 2				
Connectedness				
	Feels they have a good rapport with their students	Feels their students can reach them	Feels that they know their students	Feels that they are as effective in a virtual setting as they are in a traditional setting
Strongly disagreed	0	0	14.9	17
Somewhat disagreed	0	0	14.9	19.1
Neither agreed nor disagreed	0	1.1	6	2.1
Somewhat agreed	8.5	14.9	9	8.5
Strongly agreed	41.5	34	4	3.2
No response	50	50	50	50
*In percentages				

Changes due to COVID-19

Due to the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic had on education, data was also collected about how school counselors spent time completing tasks after COVID-19. There was a decrease in the time spent for each activity for both groups. Means were used to compare both groups activity rates completing counseling activities before and after COVID-19. For this section, only those respondents that answered yes that their activity rates changed after COVID-19 were included. Table 3 shows the means for both groups, before and after COVID-19. For virtual school counselors, there was a decrease in the activity rates for most counseling activities after COVID-19. There was a decrease in activity rates for traditional school counselors as well. A Welch t-test was run to determine if there were differences in activity rates for Counseling activities after COVID-19 between virtual and traditional school counselors due to the assumption of homogeneity of variances being violated, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ($p = .014$). The activity rates for counseling activities after COVID-19 was higher for traditional school counselors ($M = 2.54, SD = 0.94$) than virtual school counselors ($M = 2.29, SD = 0.66$), which was not statistically significant different, $t(56.42) = -1.11, p = .022$.

Table 3

Means Before and After COVID-19 on Counseling Activities

Virtual School Counselors		Traditional School Counselors	
Before	After	Before	After
3.19	2.29	3.6	2.5

For virtual school counselors, there was an increase in time spent completing consultation activities for consulting with parents, admin, and conducting team meetings. For traditional

school counselors, there was a decrease in the amount of time they consulted with the community, coordinating referrals to community agencies, and helping to identify students in need of special education services. Table 4 shows the means for both group on their consultation activity rates before and after COVID-19. Further analysis was run to determine the significance level between virtual and traditional school counselors on their consultation activity rates after COVID-19. An independent-samples t-test was run to determine if there were differences in activity rates on consultation activities after COVID-19 between virtual school counselors and traditional school counselors. The activity rates were higher for virtual school counselors ($M = 3.64, SD = 0.60$) than traditional school counselors ($M = 3.49, SD = 0.80$), which was not statistically significant different, $t(34) = .461, p = .647$.

Table 4

Means Before and After COVID-19 on Consultation Activities

Virtual School Counselors		Traditional School Counselors	
Before	After	Before	After
3.11	3.6	3.52	3.49

Table 5 shows the means for both groups on the actual time completing curriculum activities before and after COVID-19. There was an increase in curriculum activities for virtual school counselors on conducting lessons on growth and development issues, conflict resolution, and personal safety. There was a decrease in the amount of time spent completing all curriculum activities for traditional school counselors.

Further analysis was run to determine the significance level between virtual and traditional school counselors on their curriculum activity rates after COVID-19. A Welch t-test was run to determine if there were differences in activity rates for curriculum activities after COVID-19 between virtual and traditional school counselors due to the assumption of homogeneity of variances being violated, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ($p = .015$). The activity rates for curriculum activities after COVID-19 was higher for virtual school counselors ($M = 2.78, SD = 1.61$) than traditional school counselors ($M = 1.81, SD = 1.06$), which was not statistically significant different, $t(7.52) = 1.5, p = .173$.

Table 5

Means Before and After COVID-19 on Curriculum Activities

Virtual School Counselors		Traditional School Counselors	
Before	After	Before	After
2.47	2.7	3.11	1.81

Table 6 shows the means for both groups on their actual time spent completing coordination activities before and after COVID-19. There was an increase in virtual school counselors' activities on tracking time of activities and attending professional development. For traditional school counselors, there was a decrease in time spent on multiple activities.

Further analysis was run to determine the significance level between virtual and traditional school counselors on their coordination activity rates after COVID-19. An independent-samples t-test was run to determine if there were differences in activity rates on coordination activities after COVID-19 between virtual school counselors and traditional school counselors. The activity rates were higher for virtual school counselors ($M = 2.75, SD = 0.57$)

than traditional school counselors ($M = 2.65, SD = 1.05$), which was not statistically significant different, $t(24) = .251, p = .804$.

Table 6

Means Before and After COVID-19 on Coordination Activities

Virtual School Counselors		Traditional School Counselors	
Before	After	Before	After
3.00	2.75	3.08	2.65

Table 7 shows the means for both groups on time spent on other activities before and after COVID-19. There was an increase in time spent conducting standardized testing for virtual school counselors. For traditional school counselors, there was an increase in the amount of time spent organizing outreach for low-income families.

Further analysis was run to determine the significance level between virtual and traditional school counselors on their activity rates on other activities after COVID-19. An independent-samples t-test was run to determine if there were differences in activity rates on other activities after COVID-19 between virtual school counselors and traditional school counselors. The activity rates were higher for virtual school counselors ($M = 2.2, SD = 0.80$) than traditional school counselors ($M = 2.03, SD = 0.85$), which was not statistically significant different, $t(16) = .343, p = .736$.

Table 7**Means Before and After COVID-19 on Other Activities**

Virtual School Counselors		Traditional School Counselors	
Before	After	Before	After
2.49	2.2	2.74	2.03

Chapter 5: Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore an initial analysis of the roles and functions of virtual school counselors and their alignment with the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2019). Additionally, with the emergence of COVID-19 and all counselors working virtually in some capacity, research was expanded to include how all counselors worked virtually before and after COVID-19. This chapter will provide a review of the research, the methodology, and the findings, furthermore, an interpretation of the results. Lastly, there will be a discussion of the study's limitations and the implications for future research

Overview of the Study

To date, no role and functions study of virtual school counselors has appeared in the literature. ASCA has stated that virtual school counselors should operate the same as traditional school counselors (ASCA, 2017). Many schools having to move to virtual platforms due to the sudden impact of COVID-19, shows a high need to define virtual school counselors' roles and functions more than before. It was hypothesized that virtual school counselors would complete counseling activities such as classroom guidance, individual and group counseling, on average, in the same manner as traditional school counselors. Additionally, it was hypothesized that

virtual school counselors would spend less time completing non-counseling activities such as bus duty or administrative tasks. The data shows there are some counseling activities to which traditional school counselors devoted more time to than virtual school counselors. It was found that virtual school counselors spent less time completing non-counseling activities than traditional school counselors.

The study's main objective was to identify the roles and functions of virtual school counselors and their alignment to the ASCA National Model. Second, the study investigated how traditional school counselors devoted their time compared to virtual school counselors. Lastly, time devoted to activities before COVID-19 was compared to how much time they devoted to the same tasks after COVID-19. Although the research's initial focus was solely on identifying the roles and functions of virtual school counselors given the current climate of education and increase in counselors working virtually, given the gravity of the pandemic and the opportunity to study in this environment this needed to be explored as well.

Findings

Both virtual and traditional school counselors reported that they felt students can learn and be prepared for post-secondary opportunities upon graduation. For school counseling to be effective, it must be a collaborative approach. Both groups had some understanding of the ethical guidelines and what steps to take should they be faced with an ethical dilemma. Both groups also felt that they encouraged students to believe in themselves by fostering positive school cultures.

Counselor Mindsets and Beliefs

The first section of the ASCA National Model describes the mindsets that school counselors should have (ASCA, 2019). These mindsets are the belief that: All students can learn and should have access to high-quality education. All students should graduate from high school prepared for post-secondary opportunities. Effective school counseling is a collaboration between school counselors, administrators, students, and others. My comprehensive guidance program promotes and enhances student academic, career, and social/emotional outcomes. (ASCA, 2019).

Both groups strongly agreed 100% that they believed that all students can learn, and that effective school counseling is a collaboration between school counselors and other stakeholders. Although not at 100%, most counselors in both groups also strongly agreed that they believed that all students should graduate ready for post-secondary options. Traditional school counselors held this belief at higher rates with an average of 4.94, while virtual school counselors had an average of 4.66. A more in-depth analysis of why virtual school counselors do not believe this as much as traditional school counselors is needed. To help foster better outcomes in the students, counselors must adhere to these mindsets and are at the forefront of their work. Therefore, it was not surprising but reassuring that counselors felt that they held these beliefs. Given the current climate of the world, students are dealing with more than they ever have. Moreover, these issues/concerns can cause interruptions in their education. Therefore, counselors should hold certain beliefs that are for the betterment of all students in the academic, personal/social, and career domains. Counselors should help students for today and for their future.

The next section of the Define domain of the ASCA national model defines how a comprehensive school counseling program should look and the behaviors that school counselors should have. There are three categories: (1) professional foundation, (2) direct and indirect student services, and (3) planning and assessment.

Professional Foundation

Professional foundation for school counselors includes behaviors such as advocating for your program, knowing and understanding the legal and ethical issues as it relates to education, applying developmental learning, counseling, and education theories (ASCA, 2019).

Furthermore, school counselors should understand how social, cultural, and environmental factors influence students (ASCA, 2019). Both groups strongly agreed on a Likert scale, with 5 being the highest agreeability rate, that their comprehensive guidance programs have these characteristics. Of the three categories (professional foundation, indirect and direct student services, and planning and assessment), the professional foundation had the highest agreeability rate and the lowest rate of difference between both groups, with averages for both groups ranging from 4.81 to 4.96. The most considerable difference between the groups was .15 for applying developmental learning, counseling, and educational theories. The first steps to a comprehensive guidance program is having a strong foundation (ASCA, 2019; Cinotti, 2014). Both groups had the highest rates in the professional foundation area with averages above 4.81 and higher by advocating for their program, understanding legal and ethical issues related to education, and applying developmental learning to counseling and educational theories.

A robust professional foundation helps keep the "why" at the forefront of a school counselor's program. School counselors should acknowledge and understand how culture and other factors influence students' behaviors, thoughts, and beliefs. Furthermore, school

counselors should advocate for their program by promoting their programming and educating stakeholders on their benefits.

Ethics

The final section of school counselor professional standards in the ASCA National model refers to school counselor ethics. All school counselors should adhere to the ethical guidelines set forth by ASCA to stay in compliance (ASCA, 2019). Additionally, school counselors should always review ethical guidelines as the profession continues to grow (ASCA, 2019). An example is the addition of virtual school counseling. Virtual school counseling is a relatively recent development. However, in response to virtual school counselors' advancement, ASCA has had to determine what guidelines should be added to ensure school counselors are still compliant even in a virtual setting. Both the virtual and traditional school counseling groups felt that they adhere to the ASCA National Model ethical standards. However, both groups were only somewhat familiar ASCA's model for resolving ethical dilemmas, the Solution to Ethical Problems in Schools (STEPS) model (ASCA, 2019). By following the STEPS model, a school counselor can ensure that they are within guidelines.

Working in a school setting intersects ethical guidelines from two different professions counselors should be aware of and be aware of how to navigate any ethical issues that may arise. Working in a school there can be issues of abuse, underage drinking, drug use, and a number of other issues that will prompt a school counselor to act. Being aware of these ethical dilemmas on the front end can help counselors be better prepared when faced with ethical issues.

Student Services

Student services has two components: indirect student services and direct student services (ASCA, 2019). Direct student services are those services provided directly to the student, such as providing individual and group counseling or classroom guidance. As ASCA standards state, school counselors should be providing direct students services 80% of the time and indirect services 20% of the time (ASCA, 2019). Indirect student services are those services that counselors provide indirectly to students, such as collaborating with community partners or making referrals to outside agencies when needed.

The services are the actions behind the "why" of what a school counselor does. A comprehensive guidance program is how school counselors reach their students and help foster better humans (ASCA, 2019). Student services had the most considerable difference between both groups, with differences ranging from .39 to .67. Traditional school counselors had averages ranging from 4.82 to 5 and virtual school counselors had averages ranging from 4.25 to 4.57. Teaching effective communication had the highest difference, with traditional school counselors having an average of 5 and virtual school counselors having an average of 4.33. Having high averages in these areas supports the notion that 80% of a counselor's time spent completing direct services for students set forth by ASCA. Additionally, counselors preferring to spend more time completing these activities implies that counselors prefer to do tasks aligned with ASCA guidelines.

Planning and Assessment

Planning and assessment are how school counselors evaluate if their services are effective (ASCA, 2019). An effective, comprehensive guidance program should be data driven. How can one know if the lessons taught through classroom guidance have helped change the school culture or curve negative school behaviors if they are not evaluated? Additionally, a

comprehensive guidance program should have program beliefs, mission, and vision statements. Having these helps guide your program and provides direction on how counselors should or should not make changes within their program. Both groups strongly agreed that they utilize data in their school counseling program. However, traditional counselors reported they devoted the smallest portion of their time to using data. Traditional school counselors had a higher rate of having program beliefs, vision, and mission statements with an average of 4.96 compared to virtual school counselors average of 4.5 and developing student outcome goals and action plans with an average of 4.72 compared to virtual school counselors average of 4.35. Assessing why traditional school counselors have higher rates of having program beliefs and developing action plans would be another area that should further be researched.

Indirect and Direct Services

The ASCA standards state that school counselors should spend 80% of their time doing direct services with students (ASCA, 2019). Direct services include activities such as classroom guidance, individual counseling, and group counseling. Traditional school counselors spent more time providing direct services to students with averages between 3.64 and 4.56 compared to virtual school counselor's averages being between 3 and 3.87 on the same activities. However, both groups expressed that they would prefer to spend more time providing direct services to their students. Providing direct services to students is how counselors connect with students and know them better (Cinotti, 2014; Lambie & Williamson, 2004; Pope, 2009). Additionally, it helps students get to know the counselor better, especially in larger schools where counselors may not always have the opportunity to meet every student individually. Classroom guidance is one tool counselors can use to reach a large number of students. Furthermore, it gives the counselor the opportunity to show students that they are available for various reasons and not

just social/emotional issues. In some cases, it may also show that the counselor is also available to assist students with their social/emotional concerns as there are some who still feel school counselors only operate in the older role of guidance counselors.

Counseling Activities

Counseling activities include tasks such as individual counseling and group counseling. Traditional school counselors completed counseling activities at a higher rate than virtual school counselors. Both groups indicated that they preferred to spend more time counseling students. There are school counselors who have a desire to do more counseling but are not able to due to being pulled in multiple directions or fulfilling duties that were not aligned with school counseling. No one goes into school counseling to do schedules or to cover classes for a teacher, but it happens. School counseling leaders should work with Education leaders to ensure school counselor are given the space to do the things they have been trained to do. School counselors having the space to help students in more ways that address all three domains can have a positive effect for entire schools. Traditional school counselors also would prefer to complete counseling activities at a higher rate than virtual school counselors. Working with students on their personal and social issues needs to be addressed as these issues can affect a student's academics. If a student is struggling emotionally, it will be difficult for them to function academically. A student's academics may continue to suffer until the outside emotional issues are alleviated.

Consultation Activities

Consultation activities refer to the activities that involve school counselors contacting other staff members or community agencies for the sake of students' needs, well-being, or

behavior (ASCA, 2019). However, there are times when a student's needs are outside of the school counselor's scope of practice. Working with students takes a team approach in a school building, and it works best when everyone is on the same page. Traditional school counselors had higher averages on time spent completing consultation activities than virtual school counselors. Just as with counseling activities, both groups also preferred to spend more time completing consultation activities.

It is important that counselors are aware of their scope of practice and reach out to other resources when needed for the betterment of their students. School counselors should be aware of the various community resources in their school's community to assist when families are in need. Having knowledge of community resources also allows school counselors to foster positive relationships in the community and allow for continuum of services, if needed.

Curriculum Activities

Curriculum activities refer to the lessons school counselors teach through classroom guidance. Of the five sections, curriculum activities had the lowest overall means for both groups. Therefore, it appears that there is not as much time spent conducting classroom guidance. Traditional school counselors spent more time completing curriculum activities. Although the actual time spent completing these activities was lower than in other areas, both groups preferred to spend more time conducting curriculum activities. As mentioned earlier, classroom guidance is a tool counselor use to get to know their students and introduce themselves. However, if a counselor cannot provide these services due to other school-related duties, it can hinder relationship building on a broader scale. It can limit the relationship building to only those referred to the counselor or those who seek out the counselor on their own. The activity that had the lowest rate of activity was conducting lessons about substance abuse.

The highest rate of activity was conducting classroom lessons on introducing the counselor. When asked how much time counselors would prefer to complete curriculum activities, they expressed that they would have liked to devote more time completing these activities.

Therefore, it can be implied that school counselors would like more opportunities to teach students on various topics such as personal relationships or substance abuse. Not only can classroom guidance serve as a way for school counselors to get to know their students it can also be a preventive measure for issues that effect students individually or the school as a whole. Furthermore, it can be a way for school counselors to address issues that arise that effect school climate such as bullying

Coordination Activities

Coordination activities include coordinating programs, informing stakeholders about the school counselor's role, providing training, attending professional development, evaluating their school counseling program, and other activities related to coordinating their program.

Coordination activities of the respondents in this study were reported to be similar between both groups of counselors. Among the coordination activities, both counseling groups reported that they would prefer to devote more time attending professional development. Considering the findings of this study, both virtual and traditional school counselors indicated that they would benefit from additional professional development. Both groups would have preferred to spend more time completing the coordination activities. Giving that a lot of the professional development schools counselors are provided within the school system is not geared towards the work of school counselors, this is not surprising. The professional development school counselors receive through the school system is more likely to be geared towards teachers or

even administrators. To receive professional development focused on school counseling, school counselors generally must seek outside resources.

Having more professional development opportunities for school counselors that help to increase their skillsets will benefit not only the profession, but their perspective schools. Additionally, if the school systems provided school counselors with more professional development aligned with school counseling it would lessen the need for school counselors to seek outside training. However, it does not mean that school counselors should stop seeking outside training, but just add another level of training for school counselors.

Other Activities

Other activities are those tasks that ASCA has deemed as inappropriate tasks for school counselors. That includes bus duty, cafeteria duty, standardized testing, maintaining records, disciplining students, and substitute teaching. The activity that had the highest activity level for both groups was participating in committees in the school. When looking at the time they would prefer to complete other tasks, both groups would have preferred to spend more time organizing outreach for low-income families. Although this is listed under other activities, it is not surprising that school counselors would want to seek help for their low-income families. Although in some schools, there may be a social worker that assist in these tasks. Traditional school counselors spent more time completing other activities than virtual school counselors. The activities that both groups would have preferred to do rarely were disciplining students and coordinating standardized testing. This is most likely because of the role counselors play in students' lives, having them in a disciplinarian role can confuse their role and cause division between counselors and students. Both groups would have preferred to spend less time completing other activities. Other activities had the lowest rate for preferred activities.

School leaders should look at the role the school counselor plays in their school and determine how their training can best support the goal of the school. School counselors play a major role in helping to educate school leaders on their role and their training. School counselors should show how completing non-counseling activities can take away from other pressing concerns that school counselors could be spending their time working on for the betterment of student and to improve school climate and culture.

Connectedness

The relationship between a student and a counselor plays a significant role in student development. In a traditional school setting, relationships are built through the counselor being in the hallways and in their classrooms. In a virtual setting, relationship building is more intentional since counselors do not see students daily. Some school counselors might feel that establishing a rapport with students in a virtual setting is unlikely. Although both groups of counselors reported they developed a rapport with their students, they did not feel that they knew their students or that they were as effective in a virtual setting as they are in a traditional setting. Since rapport and relationship building is at the core of being effective as a counselor, it does seem confusing that they feel they have a good rapport yet are lacking effectiveness.

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted every aspect of our daily life. The pandemic has forced educators to reconsider how to meet the educational needs of children. Educators and students have been thrust into the world of virtual learning, some prepared, but most not. Although this researcher's original intent was to focus solely on the roles and functions of virtual school counselors, with more counselors working virtually, it was a natural progression to

investigate how the pandemic impacted counselors who typically work in traditional settings. Furthermore, it provided some insight into the similarities and differences between school counselors in virtual and traditional settings. Both groups saw an increase in the amount of time required to provide counseling activities. An implication can be made that the increase in counseling needs could be due to the emotional effects of COVID-19 and being home daily. As schools also provide support to students through nutrition, healthcare, and social services (Cooper et al., 2020), there was a void left for some students due to COVID-19. Conducted during the abrupt changes in education due to COVID-19, the findings in the current study can help schools and school counselors adapt to the transition to a virtual setting.

Furthermore, there are students where the school was their safe place, and due to COVID-19, that was no longer available. In an interview done in March at the onset of school closures, Dr. Nathaniel Beers, president of the Health Care System, a subsidiary of Children's National Hospital, stated that "the behavioral health needs of our kids are often supported in our schools...and those are critical pieces to families survival" (WBUR, 2020). For traditional school counselors, they spent more time consulting with administrators after COVID-19. As the pandemic hit, it left administrators and other stakeholders in a state of uncertainty that set up a need for more collaboration between all parties. The largest increase for virtual school counselors under counseling activities was counseling students on relationships. For traditional school counselors, there was a large increase in counseling students on relationships and student behavior. Given that students were more isolated during the initial shutdown, some students could have more behavior problems, even online, and struggle with emotions about the pandemic or just having to be in one place for most of the time.

Not surprisingly, more traditional school counselors had a change in their activity rates after COVID-19. Between the two groups, there was very little difference in time spent completing activities after COVID-19. However, when looking at the time spent completing activities before and after COVID-19 for both groups, there was major differences in the time spent completing activities. Following the outbreak of COVID-19, virtual school counselors reported devoting more time to providing classroom guidance, while traditional school counselors reported a decrease in engaging in classroom guidance. One explanation for this difference could be that the pandemic did not stop or disrupt virtual school counselors' schools. Although virtual students' education was not disrupted, it does not mean that students attending virtual schools weren't affected in other ways due to the pandemic. Further research would need to be conducted to determine how students, both traditional and virtual, have been affected by COVID-19.

Virtual school counselors reported that since the pandemic, there has been an increase in attending professional development, coordinating crisis management, in-service training, parent education classes, and tracking activities. Future research is needed to explore the amount and types of professional development virtual school counselors attended before COVID-19 and after COVID-19. In comparison, traditional school counselors reported an overall decrease in coordination activities. Due to the disruption caused by COVID-19, some of their daily activities may have been placed on hold. Additionally, traditional school counselors may not have been able to deliver those services they would routinely provide due to COVID-19.

Future Research

An in-depth look at the differences between traditional school counselors and virtual school counselors is required. ASCA's position is that virtual school counselors should operate

the same as traditional school counselors (ASCA, 2017). However, the current research shows that there are some differences. Additionally, investigating these differences will be accurate when not compared during a pandemic. Beyond just identifying the differences, it would be beneficial to determine the reasons behind the differences. For example, virtual school counselors reported devoting more time to conducting small groups than traditional school counselors in this study. Perhaps virtual school counselors have more time to devote to small groups is related to the efficiency of group techniques or because virtual school counselors are not required to perform other duties that traditional school counselors. Future research employing a mixed-methods design could help developing a better understanding of the similarities and differences between the virtual and traditional school counselors' perceptions of their role and functions.

Implications

The current research has implications for shaping training programs and shaping the profession of school counseling in the future. It can help further educate stakeholders on the roles of school counselors, virtual and traditional.

School Counselor Training Programs.

Current school counselor education programs train future school counselors to work in an elementary, middle, or high school setting. One of the reasons for this broad level of education is school counselors might work with any of these grade levels upon graduation. Therefore, they should be prepared to work in any school. With virtual schools expanding, it will be imperative that future school counselors can work in either traditional or virtual setting. Preparing future school counselors to work in traditional and virtual settings can make them

more marketable. Developing graduate coursework, curricula review and revision, and offering professional development for current school counselors about the use of technology and practice in virtual settings would increase the depth and breadth of understanding the roles and functions of the virtual school counselor. Although ASCA's stance is that virtual school counselors should operate no differently than traditional school counselors, it is not as simple as it seems. The current pandemic has shown that moving to a virtual setting requires new skill sets in addition to those used in a traditional setting.

Future school counselor training programs would benefit reviewing and revising their curriculum to include preparation for school counselors to learn how they can develop rapport with students in a virtual setting, as well deliver classroom guidance and counseling services in a virtual setting. In a traditional school setting, a school counselor is in front of students; there is an interaction between student and counselor. In virtual settings, a school counselor may or may not see their students. It may be the case that only students see the school counselor. Therefore, virtual school counselors must learn to evaluate their programs to ensure the delivery of their services are engaging and that students are benefitting from the services.

The Future of School Counseling.

The profession has evolved from vocational guidance to school counseling (ACA, 2014; Gysbers, 2001; Schimmel, 2008), and it continues to evolve. We must adapt and change how we operate. The pandemic has shown all of us that we must adapt and may need to make rapid changes. School counseling must also be responsive. Although we cannot predict when or if we will ever be faced with something like this pandemic in the future, we must be prepared if we face this magnitude of disruption again. The findings in the current study can help schools and

school counselors plan for transition to a virtual setting with less disruption to the day-to-day activities.

Additionally, it is recommended that school counseling associations, training programs, and other education stakeholders consider virtual school counseling as a model to help guide where the profession is headed. Before the pandemic, more virtual schools emerged, but now there has been an increase in virtual school enrollment due to COVID-19 (Education Week, 2020). As student enrollment in virtual school increases, so will the need for virtual school counselors. Virtual school administrators and school counseling programs in a virtual setting should ensure that their school counselors are still adhering to the guidelines set forth by ASCA for all school counselors.

ASCA's stance on virtual school counseling is that virtual school counselors should operate in the same manner as traditional school counselors. However, the current study demonstrates that there are both similarities and differences between the roles, functions, and beliefs of virtual school counselors and traditional school counselors. The similarities and differences between the two settings requires additional exploration. Aspirational statements about the nature of the work performed by virtual and traditional school counselors is not sufficient. Although the core beliefs and values between school counselors in a virtual and traditional setting are fundamentally similar. How they operate appears to differ.

School Counselor Identity.

The role of traditional school counselors has changed over time and this has contributed to the confusion about their work (Gybers, 2001; Rayle & Adams, 2007; Scarborough, 2005). It is imperative that we establish the functions of virtual school counselors in virtual settings.

Although their fundamental role, does not differ from that of traditional school counselors, how they accomplish the functions of school counseling vary from traditional setting, regardless of setting. A major way to ensure that virtual school counselors are operating in the same fashion as traditional school counselors is to follow the ASCA National Model.

Furthermore, school counselors, traditional and virtual, should always advocate for the profession and continue to educate education stakeholders on school counselors' role. School counselors need to continue to educate administrators about their training and what their training can offer the students they serve. Additionally, school counselors should educate their administrators, students, and families about the benefits of a comprehensive guidance program and how its implementation can help achieve the schools' goals and enhance student academics, career development, and personal/social lives.

Limitations

There were several limitations to this study. Some of the limitations include convenience sampling, snowballing technique, minimal prior research, self-reported data, and data gathering during a pandemic.

Convenience Sampling.

A small convenience sample limits the ability to generalize the results. There could also be some bias in the sample. Respondents from various regions were eligible to participate. However, the majority of the respondents were from the same geographical region as the researcher. There were limited respondents from other areas of the country.

Snowballing technique.

Snowballing was used to recruit study respondents. Respondents who began but did not complete the study could not be re-contacted due to the anonymous nature of the study. Using this technique allowed for several respondents to see the questionnaire, but also resulted in a number of incomplete responses.

Self-reported data.

Respondents were asked to self-report their beliefs and activity rates. There was not a method to verify that they completed these tasks at the rates they reported. Respondents might have responded how they felt the researcher wanted them to respond or in a way to make themselves look “good.” Additionally, the scale being a verbal frequency scale, it does not assess the actual time spent completing these activities (Scarborough, 2005).

Data gathering during COVID-19.

Finally, it is possible that conducting the study during the pandemic affected the results. Respondents were instructed to respond to the first part of the questionnaire based on their activity rates, some Traditional school counselors, could have answered based solely on how they completed activities since the pandemic rather than before the COVID-19 outbreak. Capturing this data during COVID-19 could have caused some of the data to be misleading.

References

- Aldridge, L. (2019). *The Virtual School Counselor: Roles and Functions*. Unpublished manuscript, The University of Memphis: Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology, and Research.
- American Counseling Association. (2014). *ACA Code of Ethics*. Alexandria, VA.
- American Counseling Association. (2014, September 18). *ACA School Counselor Infographic Educates Public on Changing Roles*. Retrieved from American Counseling Association: <https://www.counseling.org/news/updates/by-year/2014/2014/09/18/aca-school-counselor-infographic-educates-public-on-changing-roles>
- American Counseling Association. (2014). *How does the school counselor of 20 years ago compare to the school counselor today?* Retrieved from <https://www.counseling.org/news/updates/by-year/2014/2014/09/18/aca-school-counselor-infographic-educates-public-on-changing-roles>
- American Counseling Association. (2020, April 1). *Distance counseling, technology, and social media information*. Retrieved from American Counseling Association: Your Passion, Your Profession, Our Purpose: <https://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/licensure-requirements/distance-counseling-technology-and-social-media>
- American School Counseling Association . (2020). *State Certification Requirements*. Retrieved from American School Counseling Association Web site: <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/school-counselors-members/careers-roles/state-certification-requirements>
- American School Counseling Association. (2017). *American National Model*. Retrieved from American School Counseling Association.
- American School Counseling Association. (2020, July 16). *About ASCA*. Retrieved from American School Counseling Association: [https://www.schoolcounselor.org/school-counselors-members/about-asca-\(1\)](https://www.schoolcounselor.org/school-counselors-members/about-asca-(1))

American School Counselor Association . (n.d.). *Appropriate and Inappropriate Activities for School Counselors*. Retrieved from American School Counselor Association : <https://schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/home/appropriate-activities-of-school-counselors.pdf>

American School Counselor Association. (2016). *ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors*.

American School Counselor Association. (2017). *The School Counselor and Virtual School Counseling* .

American School Counselor Association. (2019). *The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs* (4th ed.). Alexandria, VA.

American School Counselor Association. (2019). *The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs* (4th ed.). Alexandria, VA: American School Counselor Association.

American School Counselor Association. (2020). *Every Student Succeeds Act*. Retrieved from Legislative Act : <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/school-counselors-members/legislative-affairs>

American School Counselor Association. (n.d.). *ASCA National Model: Templates and Resources* . Retrieved from <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/school-counselors/asca-national-model/templates-and-resources>

American School Counselor Association. (n.d.). *Who are School Counselors?* Retrieved November 11, 2019, from School Counseling Association: <https://schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Careers-Roles/RoleStatement.pdf>

American School Counselor Association; National Association for College Admissions Counseling . (2015). *State-By-State Student-To-Counselor Ratio Report*.

Anni, C. T., Sunawan, & Haryono. (2018). School Counselors' Intention to Use Technology: The Technology Acceptance Model. *The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 120-124.

- Baker, S. B. (2001). Reflections on Forty Years in the School Counseling: profession: Is the Glass Half Full or Half Empty? *Professional School Counseling*.
- Barbour, M. K., & Reeves, T. C. (2009). The reality of virtual schools: A review of the literature. *Computers & Education*, 402-416.
- Baugh, D. (2015). Florida Virtual School: Blended learning. *Distance Learning*, 17-22.
- Beidoglu, M., Dincyurek, S., & Akintug, Y. (2015). The opinions of school counselors on the use of information and communication technologies in school counseling practices: North Cyprus schools. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 466-471.
- Belair, M. (2012). An Investigation of Communication in Virtual High Schools. *The international review of research in open and distance learning*, 105-123.
- Bouznad, S., & Ibourk, A. (2020). School Closures, Equality of Opportunity: Some Recommendations. *Revista Romaneasca pentru Educatie Multidimensionala*, 103-110.
- Cavanaugh, C. (2010). The Evolving Online Landscape. *School Administrator*, 22-25.
- Chandler, J. W., Burnham, J. J., Reiechel, M. E., Dahir, C. A., Stone, C. B., Oliver, D. F., . . . Bledsoe, K. G. (2018). Assessing the Counseling and Non-Counseling Roles of School Counselors. *Journal of School Counseling*, 1-33.
- Cinotti, D. (2014). Competing Professional Identity Models in School Counseling: A Historical Perspective and Commentary. *The Professional Counselor*, 417-425.
- Cooper, D. M., Guay-Woodford, L., Blazar, B. R., Bowman, S., Byington, C. L., Dome, J., . . . Wright, R. J. (2020). Reopening Schools Safely: The case for collaboration, constructive disruption of Pre-Coronavirus 2019 Expectation, and Creative Solutions. *The journal of pediatrics*, 183-185.

- Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs. (2019, October 5th). *2016 CACREP Standards*. Retrieved from CACREP: <https://www.cacrep.org/for-programs/2016-cacrep-standards/>
- Currie, N. S. (2010). Virtual Counseling for Students Enrolled in Online Educational Programs. *Educational Considerations*, 22-26.
- Dilkes-Frayne, E., Savic, M., Carter, A., Kokanovic, R., & Lubman, D. I. (2019). Going Online: The Affordances of Online Counseling for Families Affected by Alcohol and Other Drug Issues. *Qualitative Health Research*, 2010-2022.
- Dixon Rayle, A., & Adams, J. R. (2007). An exploration of 21st century school counselors' daily work activities. *Journal of School Counseling*, 1-45.
- Dollarhide, C. T., & Lemberger, M. E. (2006). "No Child Left Behind": Implications for school counselors. *Professional School Counseling*, 295-304.
- Dowling, M., & Rickwood, D. (2013). Online Counseling and Therapy for Mental Health Problems: A Systematic Review of Individual Synchronous Interventions Using Chat. *Journal of Technology*, 1-21.
- Fye, H. J., Miller, L. G., & Rainey, J. S. (2018). Predicting School Counselors' supports and challenges when implementing the ASCA National Model. *Professional School Counseling*, 1-11.
- Gallo, L. L., Rausch, M., Smith, C. K., & Wood, S. (2017). School Counselors' Experiences Working With Digital Natives: A Qualitative Study. *Professional School Counseling*, 14-24.
- Greenway, R., & Vanourek, G. (2006). The Virtual Revolution: Understanding Online Schools. *Education Next*, 35-41.
- Gulosino, C., & Minn, G. (2017). Growth and Performance of Fully Online and Blended K-12 Public Schools. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 1-38.

- Gysbers, N. (1997). A Model Comprehensive Guidance Program. In N. Gysbers, & P. Henderson, *Comprehensive Guidance Programs that work - II* (pp. 1-24). Greensboro, NC: ERIC Clearinghouse on Counseling and Student Services.
- Gysbers, N. C. (1990). A Model Comprehensive Guidance Program. In N. C. Gysbers, *Comprehensive Guidance Programs that Work* (pp. 1-24). Washington, DC: ERIC Clearinghouse on Counseling and Personnel Services.
- Gysbers, N. C. (2001). School Guidance and Counseling in the 21st Century: Remember the past into the future. *Professional School Counseling*, 96-105.
- Hughes, J. E., McLeod, S., Brown, R., Maeda, Y., & Choi, J. (2007). Academic Achievement and Perceptions of the Learning Environment in Virtual and Traditional Secondary Mathematics Classrooms. *The American Journal of Distance Education*, 199-214.
- Jones, L. K. (1994). Frank Parsons' Contribution to Career Counseling. *Journal of Career Development*, 287-294.
- Keeping with the Pace Digital Learning. (2019). *Snapshot 2019: A review of K12 online, blended, and digital learning*. Digital Learning Collaborative .
- King, R., Bambling, M., Lloyd, C., Gomurra, R., Smith, S., Reid, W., & Wegner, K. (2006). Online counseling: The motives and experiences of young people who choose the Internet instead of face to face or telephone counselling. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*, 103-108.
- Kraus, R. (2011). Ethical Issues in Online Counseling. In C. Speyer, G. Stricker, & R. Kraus, *Online Counseling: A Handbook for Mental Health Professionals* (pp. 85-106). Amsterdam: Academic Press.
- Lambie, G., & Williamson, L. (2004). The challenge to change from guidance counseling to professional school counseling: A historical proposition. *Professional School Counseling*, 124-131.
- Leedy, P. D., & Ormrod, J. E. (2016). *Practical Research: Planning and Design*. Pearson.

- Mallen, M. J., & Vogel, D. L. (2005). Introduction to the Major Contribution: Counseling Psychology and Online Counseling. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 761-775.
- Mason, E. C., Griffith, C., & Besler, C. T. (2019). School Counselors' Use of Technology from program Management. *Professional School Counseling*, 1-10.
- Means, B., Toyama, Y., Murphy, R., Bakia, M., & Jones, K. (2010). *Evaluation of Evidence-Based Practices in ONline Learning: A Meta- Analysis and Review of Online Learning Studies*. Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.
- Molnar, A., Miron, G., Elgeberi, N., Barbour, M., Huerta, L., Shafer, S., & Rice, J. (2019). *Virtual Schools in the U.S. 2019*. Boulder, CO: National Education Policy Center.
- Neyland-Brown, L., Francis, J. D., & Burns, G. (2019). Role Responsibilities, Time Commitments, and Counseling Activities of Ohio Licensed School Counselors. *Journal of Counselor Practice*, 1-18.
- Norman, S. (2006). The use of telemedicine in psychiatry. *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, 771-777.
- Osborn, D. S., Peterson, G. W., & Hale, R. R. (2015). Virtual School Counseling. *Professional School Counseling*, 18(1), 179-190.
- Pope, M. (2009). Jesse Butterick Davis (1871-1955) Pioneer of Vocational Guidance in the Schools. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 248-259.
- Prado, O., & Meyer, S. (2020). Evaluation of the Working Alliance in Asynchronous Therapy Via Internet. 1-29.
- Pyne, J. R. (2011). Comprehensive School Counseling Programs, Job satisfaction, and the ASCA National Model. *Professional School Counseling*, 88-97.
- Rayle, A. D., & Adams, J. R. (2007). An Exploration of 21st Century School Counselors' Daily Work Activities. *Journal of School Counseling*, 1-45.

- Richardson, L. K., Frueh, B. C., Grubaugh, A. L., Egede, L., & Elhai, J. D. (2009). Current Directions in Videoconferencing Tele-Mental Health Research. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, 323-338.
- Riemer-Reiss, M. L. (2000). Utilizing Distance Technology for Mental Health Counseling. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*, 189-203.
- Rippen, H., & Risk, A. (2000, February 18). *e-Health Ethics Draft Code*. Retrieved from Journal of Medical Research: <http://www.jmir.org/2000/2/e9/>
- Rochlen, A. B., Zach, J. S., & Speyer, C. (2004). Online Therapy: Review of Relevant Definitions, Debates, and Current Empirical Support. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 269-283.
- Rummell, C. M., & Joyce, N. R. (2010). "So what do you want to work on today?": The Ethical Implications of Online Counseling. *Ethics & Behavior*, 482-496.
- Sabella, R. (2003). *Schoolcounselor.com: A Friendly and practical guide to the World Wide Web* (2nd ed.). Minneapolis, MN: Educational Media Corporation.
- Saleh, A., & Bista, K. (2017). Examining Factors Impacting Online Survey Response Rates in Education Research: Perceptions of Graduate Students. *Journal of MultiDisciplinary Evaluation*, 63-74.
- Scarborough, J. (2005). The school counselor activity rating scale: An instrument for gathering process data. *Professional School Counseling*, 274-283.
- Scarborough, J. (2020, March 8). School Counseling Rating Scale. Retrieved from Email Message
- Schimmel, C. (2008). *School Counseling: A brief historical overview*. 2008: West Virginia Department of Education.
- Shaw, H., & Shaw, S. (2006). Critical ethical issues in online counseling: Assessing current practices with an ethical intent checklist. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 41-53.

- Skinner, A. E., & Latchford, G. (2006). Attitudes to counselling via the Internet: A comparison between in-person counselling clients and Internet support group users. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research* , 158-163.
- Steele, T. M., Jacokes, D. E., & Stone, C. B. (2014). An Examination of the Role of Online Technology in School Counseling. *Professional School Counseling*, 18(1), 125-135.
- Toppin, I. N., & Toppin, S. M. (2016). Virtual Schools: The changing landscape of K-12 education in the U.S. *Educational Information Technology*, 1571-1581.
- U.S Department of Education . (2020). *Update: ESSA Consolidated State Plans*. Retrieved from Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): <https://www.ed.gov/essa?src=rn/>
- U.S. Department of Education . (2005). *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001: Executive Summary*. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/nclb/overview/intro/index.html>
- U.S. Department of Education. (2018). *Student-to-School Counselor Ratio 2017-2018*. Retrieved from American School Counselor Association.
- Waddell, S. (2017). Examining the relationship between virtual school size and student achievement. *The Quarterly Review of Distance Education* , 23-35.
- Zack, J. S. (2011). The Technology of Online Counseling. In R. Kraus, G. Stricker, & C. Speyer, *Online Counseling: A Handbook for Mental Health Professionals* (pp. 67-84). Amsterdam: Academic Press.

Roles and Functions of the Virtual School Counselor- The School Counselor Activity Rating Scale

Start of Block: Informed Consent

Consent to Participate in a Research Study Pilot Study: Roles and Responsibilities of the Virtual School Counselor

WHY ARE YOU BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH? You are being invited to take part in a research study about the role and responsibilities of the Virtual School Counselor. You are being invited to take part in this research study because you have been identified as a Virtual School Counselor. If you volunteer to take part in this study, you will be one of about 50 people to do so.

WHO IS DOING THE STUDY? The person in charge of this study is LaTraci Aldridge, MS, Doctoral Student (*Lead Investigator, LI*) of University of Memphis Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology & Research. She is being guided in this research by Dr. Steve Zankas. There may be other people on the research team assisting at different times during the study.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY? By doing this study, we hope to learn what the main roles and responsibilities are of the virtual school counselor. Virtual School Counseling is still fairly new and should be explored how and if his role differs from that of the traditional school counselor.

ARE THERE REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD NOT TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY? *If you have not worked as a virtual school counselor, you should not participate in this survey. Virtual school counselor is defined as a school counselor who works for a K-12 school that is 100% online. School Counselors for blended schools will also be considered. A blended school is defined as a school that is partly online and partly held in a brick and mortar setting.*

WHERE IS THE STUDY GOING TO TAKE PLACE AND HOW LONG WILL IT LAST? The research procedures will be conducted online through an online questionnaire. The total amount of time you will be asked to volunteer for this study is 15-20 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

WHAT WILL YOU BE ASKED TO DO? *You will be asked to complete a questionnaire based on your current role as a virtual school counselor. You will be asked about your time spent completing certain tasks during your day.*

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS? To the best of our knowledge, the things you will be doing have no more risk of harm than you would experience in everyday life.

WILL YOU BENEFIT FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY? There is no guarantee that you will get any benefit from taking part in this study. Your willingness to take part, however, may, in the future, help society as a whole better understand this research topic. You will also help to define the roles and responsibilities of a growing field.

DO YOU HAVE TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY? If you decide to take part in the study, it should be because you really want to volunteer. You will not lose any benefits or rights you would normally have if you choose not to volunteer. You can stop at any time during the study and still keep the benefits and rights you had before volunteering. If you decide not to take part in this study, your

decision will have no effect on your current job placement. **IF YOU DON'T WANT TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY, ARE THERE OTHER CHOICES?** If you do not want to be in the study, there are no other choices except not to take part in the study. **WHAT WILL IT COST YOU TO PARTICIPATE?** There are no costs associated with taking part in the study. **WILL YOU RECEIVE ANY REWARDS FOR TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?** You will not receive any rewards or payment for taking part in the study. **WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION THAT YOU GIVE?** We will make every effort to keep private all research records that identify you to the extent allowed by law. Your information will be combined with information from other people taking part in the study. When we write about the study to share it with other researchers, we will write about the combined information we have gathered. You will not be personally identified in these written materials. We may publish the results of this study; however, we will keep your name and other identifying information private. This study is anonymous. That means that no one, not even members of the research team, will know that the information you give came from you.

CAN YOUR TAKING PART IN THE STUDY END EARLY? If you decide to take part in the study you still have the right to decide at any time that you no longer want to continue. You will not be treated differently if you decide to stop taking part in the study. The individuals conducting the study may need to withdraw you from the study. This may occur if you are not able to follow the directions they give you, if they find that your being in the study is more risk than benefit to you, or if the agency funding the study decides to stop the study early for a variety of scientific reasons. **WHAT IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS, CONCERNS, OR COMPLAINTS?** Before you decide whether to accept this invitation to take part in the study, please ask any questions that might come to mind now. Later, if you have questions, suggestions, concerns, or complaints about the study, you can contact the investigator, LaTraci Aldridge, MS at ltallen1@memhis.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact the Institutional Review Board staff at the University of Memphis at 901-678-2705. We will give you a signed copy of this consent form to take with you.

ELECTRONIC CONSENT: Please select your choice below. You may print a copy of this consent form for your records. Clicking on the "Agree" button indicates that

- You have read the above information
- You voluntarily agree to participate
- You are 18 years of age or older

Agree (1)

Disagree (2)

End of Block: Informed Consent

Start of Block: Experience

Q51 Are you working as a virtual school counselor solely due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Skip To: Q6 If Are you working as a virtual school counselor solely due to the COVID-19 pandemic? = Yes

Q13 How long (in years) have you worked as a virtual School Counselor? If less than a year, use 0. Do not use decimals.

Q6 How long (in years) did you work as a traditional School Counselor? If less than year, use 0. Do not use decimals.

End of Block: Experience

Start of Block: Demographics

Q9 Choose one or more races that you consider yourself to be:

- White or Caucasian (1)
 - Black or African American (2)
 - American Indian or Alaska Native (3)
 - Asian (4)
 - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (5)
 - Latino/a or Hispanic (12)
 - Other (13)
-

Q11 What is your sex?

- Male (1)
 - Female (2)
 - Other (3) _____
-

Q12 What is your age? Enter number only. Ex: 34

Q59 Are you licensed/ certified as a school counselor?

Yes (30)

No (31)

Q60 Are you a member of ASCA?

Yes (42)

No (43)

Q61 Are you a member of your State School Counseling Association

Yes (23)

No (24)

End of Block: Demographics

Start of Block: School Info

Q1 What grades does your school serve? Select all that apply

Kindergarten (1)

1st (2)

2nd (3)

3rd (4)

4th (5)

5th (6)

6th (7)

7th (8)

8th (9)

9th (10)

10th (11)

11th (12)

12th (13)

Q2 What state is your school located?

▼ Alabama (1) ... I do not reside in the United States (53)

Q62 What type of school is your school classified as?

- Public (1)
 - Private (2)
 - Charter (3)
 - Other (4) _____
-

Q7 What is your school's total student population?

Q37

What is your student to counselor ratio? Only use 1:1 ratio. For example, ASCA standard is 1: 250. Meaning 1 counselor to every 250 students. Only use numbers.

Q14 What company/district is your school under?

- K12 (1)
 - Connections Academy (2)
 - Local School District (3)
 - Other (4) _____
-

Q8 Is your school 100% online or blended. Blended is defined as a school that has virtual and face to face components for classes and other activities.

- 100% Online (1)
- Blended (2)
- Traditional Brick and mortar setting (4)

Skip To: Q63 If Is your school 100% online or blended. Blended is defined as a school that has virtual and face t... = 100% Online

Display This Question:

If Is your school 100% online or blended. Blended is defined as a school that has virtual and face t... = Blended

Q38 If your school is blended, what percentage of your time is spent virtually and blended?

- Virtual (1) _____
 - Blended (2) _____
-

Q63 What are your typical work day hours? What time are you expected to be working? Ex: 8 AM - 4 PM

End of Block: School Info

Start of Block: Comprehensive Guidance Program

Q47 The next section will ask you about your Comprehensive Guidance Program (CPG) as it relates to the ASCA National Model.

Q48 I encourage my students to believe in themselves while fostering a positive school culture/climate for all students through a comprehensive guidance program focused on academic, personal/social, and career readiness

- Strongly agree (13)
 - Somewhat agree (14)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (15)
 - Somewhat disagree (16)
 - Strongly disagree (17)
-

Q49 My CPG teaches students standards in:

	Strongly agree (6)	Agree (7)	Somewhat agree (8)	Neither agree nor disagree (9)	Somewhat disagree (10)
Learning strategies: critical thinking, creativity, time management, and goal identification (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Self-management skills: assume responsibility, self-discipline, effective coping skills, and personal safety skills (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social skills: effective oral and written communication skills, positive relationships, empathy and effective collaboration (13)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q50

This question is about mindsets school counselors should have per the ASCA National Model. Answer based on how you feel you have listed mindset

I believe:

	Strongly agree (7)	Agree (8)	Somewhat agree (9)	Neither agree nor disagree (10)	Somewhat disagree (11)
All students can learn and should have access to high-quality education (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
All students should graduate from high school prepared for post-secondary opportunities (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Effective school counseling is a collaboration between school counselors, administrators, students, families, teachers, other school staff, and stakeholders (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My CGP promotes and enhances student academic, career, and social/emotional outcomes (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q51 I align my program with Professional foundation by:

	Strongly agree (7)	Agree (8)	Somewhat agree (9)	Neither agree nor disagree (10)	Somewhat disagree (11)
Applying developmental learning, counseling and education theories (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Understanding legal and ethical issues in education and applying them (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advocating for my program (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q52 My school counseling program:

	Strongly agree (7)	Agree (8)	Somewhat agree (9)	Neither agree nor disagree (10)	Somewhat disagree (11)
Utilizes data to identify gaps in achievement, attendance, discipline, opportunity, and resources (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develops student outcome goals and action plans are developed to achieve outcomes (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Has program beliefs, vision and mission statements aligned with the school and district (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q53 The follow section refers to the ASCA Ethical Standards

	Strongly agree (14)	Somewhat agree (15)	Neither agree nor disagree (16)	Somewhat disagree (17)	Strongly disagree (18)
I follow and adhere to ASCA National Model Ethical Standards (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am familiar with the Solutions to Ethical Problems in Schools Model (STEPS) (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I use the STEPS model when faced with ethical dilemmas (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Comprehensive Guidance Program

Start of Block: School Counselor Rating Scale

Q39

Below is a list of functions that may be performed by school counselors.

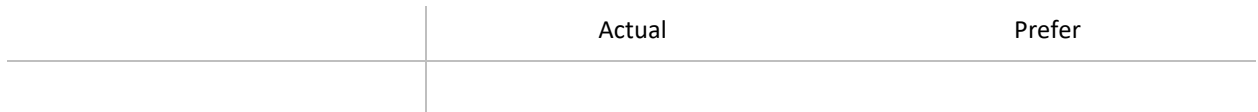
In Column 1, please write the number that indicates the frequency with which you ACTUALLY perform each function. In Column 2, please write the number that indicates the frequency with which you would PREFER to perform each function.

Please place the corresponding number in each box.

- Ratings: 1 = I never do this; I would prefer to never do this
 2 = I rarely do this; I would prefer to rarely do this
 3 = I occasionally do this; I would prefer to occasionally do this
 4 = I frequently do this; I would prefer to frequently do this

5 = I routinely do this; I would prefer to routinely do this

Q40
Counseling Activities



Counsel with students regarding personal/family concerns (1)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Counsel with students regarding school behavior (2)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Counsel students regarding crisis/emergency issues (3)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Counsel with students regarding relationships (e.g., family, friends, romantic) (4)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Provide small group counseling addressing relationship/social skills (5)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Provide small group counseling for academic issues (6)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Conduct small groups regarding family/personal issues (e.g., divorce, death) (7)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Conduct small group counseling for students regarding substance abuse issues (own use or family/friend use) (8)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Follow-up on individual and group counseling participants (9)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Counsel students regarding academic issues (10)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Q65 Has your actual time spent completing the previous listed counseling activities changed due to COVID-19?

Yes (1)

No (2)

*Skip To: Q41 If Has your actual time spent completing the previous listed counseling activities changed due to CO...
= No*

Q67

Counseling Activities after COVID-19 Pandemic

	Actual	Prefer
--	--------	--------

Counsel with students regarding personal/family concerns (1)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Counsel with students regarding school behavior (2)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Counsel students regarding crisis/emergency issues (3)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Counsel with students regarding relationships (e.g., family, friends, romantic) (4)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Provide small group counseling addressing relationship/social skills (5)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Provide small group counseling for academic issues (6)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Conduct small groups regarding family/personal issues (e.g., divorce, death) (7)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Conduct small group counseling for students regarding substance abuse issues (own use or family/friend use) (8)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Follow-up on individual and group counseling participants (9)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Counsel students regarding academic issues (10)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Q41 Consultation Activities

	Actual	Prefer

Consult with school staff concerning student behavior (1)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Consult with community and school agencies concerning individual students (2)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Consult with parents regarding child/adolescent development issues (3)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Coordinate referrals for students and/or families to community or education professionals (e.g., mental health, speech pathology, medical assessment) (4)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Assist in identifying exceptional children (special education) (5)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Provide consultation for administrators (regarding school policy, programs, staff and/or students) (6)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Participate in team / grade level / subject team meetings (7)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Q68 Has your actual time spent completing the previous listed consultation activities changed due to COVID-19?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Skip To: Q47 If Has your actual time spent completing the previous listed consultation activities changed due to... = No

Q69 Consultation Activities after COVID-19 Pandemic

	Actual	Prefer
Consult with school staff concerning student behavior (1)	▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Consult with community and school agencies concerning individual students (2)	▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Consult with parents regarding child/adolescent development issues (3)	▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Coordinate referrals for students and/or families to community or education professionals (e.g., mental health, speech pathology, medical assessment) (4)	▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Assist in identifying exceptional children (special education) (5)	▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Provide consultation for administrators (regarding school policy, programs, staff and/or students) (6)	▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Participate in team / grade level / subject team meetings (7)	▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Q47 Curriculum Activities

	Actual	Prefer

Conduct classroom activities to introduce yourself and explain the counseling program to all students (1)

▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Conduct classroom lessons addressing career development and the world of work (2)

▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Conduct classroom lessons on various personal and/ or social traits (e.g., responsibility, respect, etc.) (3)

▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Conduct classroom lessons on relating to others (family, friends) (11)

▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Conduct classroom lessons on personal growth and development issues (12)

▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Conduct classroom lessons on conflict resolution (13)

▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Conduct classroom lessons regarding substance abuse (14)

▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Conduct classroom lessons on personal safety issues (15)

▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Q71 Has your actual time spent completing the previous listed curriculum activities changed due to COVID-19?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Skip To: Q43 If Has your actual time spent completing the previous listed curriculum activities changed due to CO... = No

Q70 Curriculum Activities after COVID-19

	Actual	Prefer
Conduct classroom activities to introduce yourself and explain the counseling program to all students (1)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Conduct classroom lessons addressing career development and the world of work (2)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Conduct classroom lessons on various personal and/ or social traits (e.g., responsibility, respect, etc.) (3)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Conduct classroom lessons on relating to others (family, friends) (11)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Conduct classroom lessons on personal growth and development issues (12)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Conduct classroom lessons on conflict resolution (13)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Conduct classroom lessons regarding substance abuse (14)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Conduct classroom lessons on personal safety issues (15)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Q43 Coordination Activities

	Actual	Prefer

Coordinate special events and programs for school around academic, career, or personal/social issues (e.g., career day, drug awareness week, test prep) (1)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Coordinate and maintain a comprehensive school counseling program (2)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Inform parents about the role, training, program, and interventions of a school counselor within the context of your school (3)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Conduct or coordinate parent education classes or workshops (27)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Coordinate school-wide response for crisis management and intervention (24)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Inform teachers / administrators about the role, training, program, and interventions of a school counselor within the context of your school. (4)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Conduct or coordinate teacher in-service programs (5)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Keep track of how time is being spent on the functions that you perform (6)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Attend professional development activities (e.g., state conferences, local in-services) (7)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Coordinate with an advisory team to analyze and respond to school counseling program needs (22)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Formally evaluate student progress as a result of participation in individual/group counseling from student, teacher and/or parent perspectives (25)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Conduct needs assessments and counseling program evaluations from parents, faculty and/or students (31)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Coordinate orientation process / activities for students (30)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Q73 Has your actual time spent completing the previous listed coordination activities changed due to COVID-19?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Skip To: Q48 If Has your actual time spent completing the previous listed coordination activities changed due to... = No

Q72 Coordination Activities after COVID-19

	Actual	Prefer

Coordinate special events and programs for school around academic, career, or personal/social issues (e.g., career day, drug awareness week, test prep) (1)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Coordinate and maintain a comprehensive school counseling program (2)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Inform parents about the role, training, program, and interventions of a school counselor within the context of your school (3)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Conduct or coordinate parent education classes or workshops (27)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Coordinate school-wide response for crisis management and intervention (24)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Inform teachers / administrators about the role, training, program, and interventions of a school counselor within the context of your school. (4)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Conduct or coordinate teacher in-service programs (5)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Keep track of how time is being spent on the functions that you perform (6)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Attend professional development activities (e.g., state conferences, local in-services) (7)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Coordinate with an advisory team to analyze and respond to school counseling program needs (22)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Formally evaluate student progress as a result of participation in individual/group counseling from student, teacher and/or parent perspectives (25)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Conduct needs assessments and counseling program evaluations from parents, faculty and/or students (31)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Coordinate orientation process / activities for students (30)

▼ I never do this; (1 ... I routinely do this (5)

▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Q48 "Other" activities

Actual

Prefer

Participate on committees within the school (1)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Coordinate the standardized testing program (2)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Organize outreach to low income families (i.e., Thanksgiving dinners, Holiday families) (3)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Respond to health issues (e.g., check for lice, eye screening, 504 coordination) (4)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Perform hall, bus, cafeteria duty (5)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Schedule students for classes (6)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Enroll students in and/or withdraw students from school (7)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Maintain/Complete educational records/reports (cumulative files, test scores, attendance reports, drop-out reports) (8)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Handle discipline of students (9)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Substitute teach and / or cover classes for teachers at your school (10)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Q75 Has your actual time spent completing "other" activities changed due to COVID-19?

Yes (4)

No (5)

Q74 "Other" activities after COVID-19

	Actual	Prefer
Participate on committees within the school (1)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Coordinate the standardized testing program (2)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Organize outreach to low income families (i.e., Thanksgiving dinners, Holiday families) (3)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Respond to health issues (e.g., check for lice, eye screening, 504 coordination) (4)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Perform hall, bus, cafeteria duty (5)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Schedule students for classes (6)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Enroll students in and/or withdraw students from school (7)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Maintain/Complete educational records/reports (cumulative files, test scores, attendance reports, drop-out reports) (8)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Handle discipline of students (9)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)
Substitute teach and / or cover classes for teachers at your school (10)	▼ I never do this (1 ... I routinely do this (5)	▼ I would prefer to never do this (1 ... I would prefer to routinely do this (5)

Start of Block: Connectedness

Q54 I feel I have a good rapport with my students

- Strongly agree (11)
 - Somewhat agree (12)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (13)
 - Somewhat disagree (14)
 - Strongly disagree (15)
-

Q55 My students know they can reach me and talk to me about whatever they need

- Strongly agree (11)
 - Somewhat agree (12)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (13)
 - Somewhat disagree (14)
 - Strongly disagree (15)
-

Q56 I feel working in a virtual setting allows me to get to know my students

- Strongly agree (11)
 - Somewhat agree (12)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (13)
 - Somewhat disagree (14)
 - Strongly disagree (15)
-

Q57 I feel I am just as effective in the virtual setting as I am in the brick and mortar setting as a counselor

- Strongly agree (11)
- Somewhat agree (12)
- Neither agree nor disagree (13)
- Somewhat disagree (14)
- Strongly disagree (15)

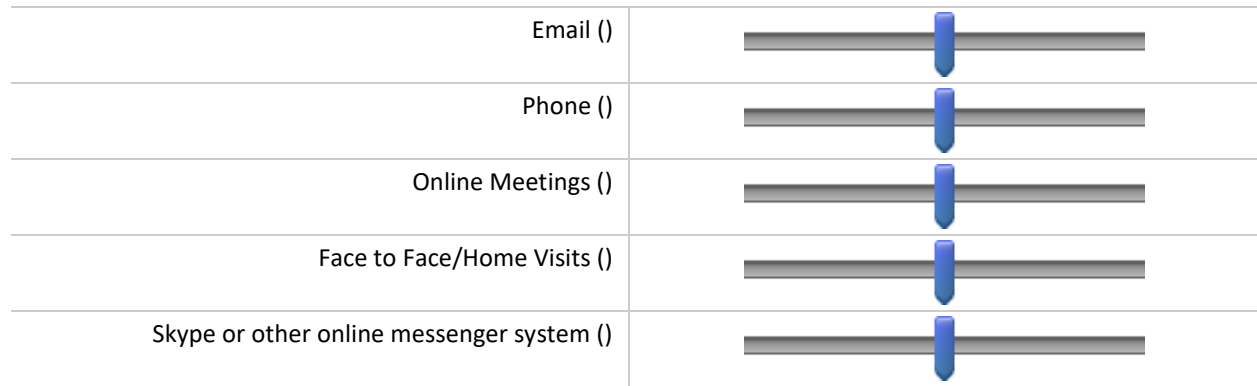
End of Block: Connectedness

Start of Block: Technology

Q32 What platform does your school use (IE Blackboard collaborate, Moodle, etc.)

Q58 How do you contact/connect with students? Use slider to mark the percentage you use each modality. Use percentage used on a weekly basis. Total percentage should equal 100% between all modalities.

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100



End of Block: Technology

Start of Block: Feeling after COVID-19

Q49 If you were working as a virtual school counselor prior to COVID-19, do you feel your role has changed due to COVID-19?

End of Block: Feeling after COVID-19
