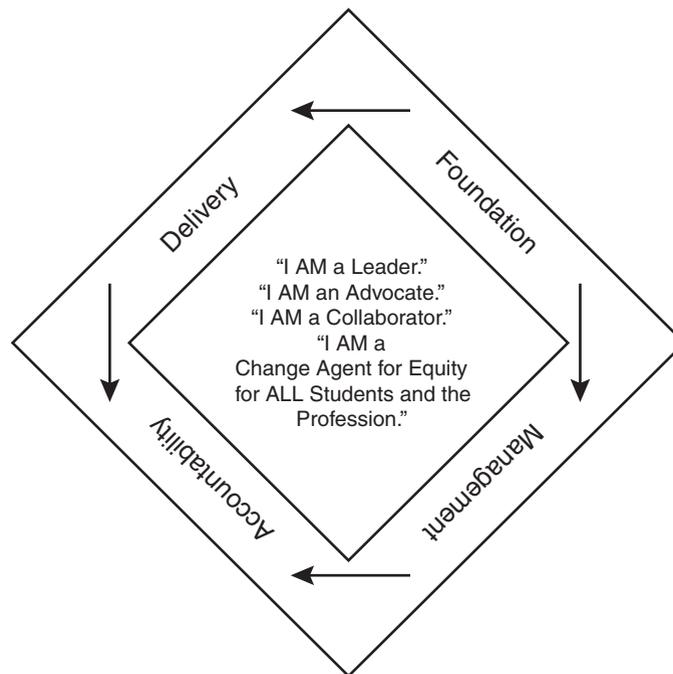# 1

Leadership Solutions

Change Agents for Equity

As a school counselor, how do you act as a leader for every student? At the heart of creating equity for every student K–12 is the capacity and potential for every school counselor to be a leader. That is why leadership as change agents for equity is the first chapter and a prevalent theme throughout the 16 chapters of *101 Solutions.*

Leadership is an ethical educational imperative for educators if the educational system is to gain traction on issues of access and equity found in the achievement and opportunity gaps that plague K–12 schools (American School Counselor Association [ASCA], 2010). School counselors and other leaders have an essential role as *change agents for equity* (Mason, Ockerman, & Chen-Hayes, 2013; Ockerman, Mason, & Chen-Hayes, 2013) in ensuring all students reach their academic, career, college, and personal/social goals (see Figure 1.1). However, solutions for making that happen have not always coincided in K–12 school pre-service training or staff development. Extensive research now tells us that fully implemented, comprehensive school counseling programs delivered by well-prepared school counselors are *essential* to student success, but there is a vast

implementation gap across programs, schools, districts, and states (Lapan, 2012). Therefore, school counselors have an ethical imperative to lead equitable change and to be leaders providing the school counseling program every student needs and to do the justice and equity work that every student deserves (ASCA, 2010; Chen-Hayes & Getch, in press; Chen-Hayes & Ockerman, in press; Holcomb-McCoy & Chen-Hayes, in press; Stone, 2005).

In many ways, entities within the school counseling profession have worked at the national level to empower school counselors to be leaders and have served as models of leadership for equity by highlighting and strengthening the positioning of school counseling within the vast field of education, including the ASCA, the National Center for Transforming School Counseling (NCTSC), the National Office for School Counselor Advocacy (NOSCA), the Center for Excellence in

Figure 1.1   Change Agent for Equity (CAFÉ) School Counselor
                Model

Delivery

Foundation

"I AM a Leader."
"I AM an Advocate."
"I AM a Collaborator."
"I AM a
Change Agent for Equity
for ALL Students and the
Profession."

Accountability

Management

The program components are on the outer level radiating from the school counselor's professional identity. The CAFÉ model purports that school counselor professional identity comes first so that school counselors can generate equity-focused school counseling programs.

School Counseling and Leadership (CESCAL), and the Center for School Counseling Outcome, Research, and Evaluation (CSCORE). Even counselor educators are challenged to be role models of leadership and change agentry for their school counseling graduate students and to promote a consistent thread of leadership throughout the profession (McMahon, Mason, & Paisley, 2009; Ockerman, Mason, & Chen-Hayes, 2013). The bottom line is everyone in the profession of school counseling, whether educators, students, supervisors, or practitioners, must develop and implement leadership practices (ASCA, 2010, 2012; Dahir & Stone, 2012; DeVoss & Andrews, 2006; Dimmit, Carey, & Hatch, 2007).

Leadership is varied and can be learned. Leadership has evolved due to influences from various fields and disciplines including business, management, sociology, and psychology (Bush, 2003). While earlier definitions of leadership suggested that it was an inborn trait and thus only held by some people, leadership has matured to being considered a style to be honed or a skill that had to be learned. Beyond that, more recent definitions of leadership suggest that it is more complex and multifaceted. While school counselors possess some leadership skills, they have not been identified as such historically when leadership models were restricted to men with titles of power. Some of the skills that school counselors possess include knowing how to read people, being empathic and encouraging, and bringing a group to consensus. In schools where student success is a collaborative, ongoing effort and challenges arise, leaders of all types are critical to student success. Skills that school counselors may lack, such as creating a vision, managing policy, and purposefully challenging the status quo (Dollarhide, 2003; McMahon, Mason, & Paisley, 2009; Mason, 2010), can be learned. Having a basic understanding of various leadership styles and models can help school counselors and other leaders deepen their understanding of leadership in their own building and contribute to flexibility with the types of leadership in which they engage (Janson, 2009). Furthermore, school counselors who identify more strongly as leaders are more likely to report a fully implemented comprehensive school counseling program in their schools (Mason, 2010). Cooperation between various leaders in a school, specifically school counselors and administrators, significantly sets the tone for the way a school operates, including equity-focused practices in closing gaps such as equity audits that assess all policies and practices in the school on a continual basis to help close achievement, opportunity, and attainment gaps (Conley, 2010; Murray, 2011).

Key Words

Action Research: Research that is specific to a local school and is aimed at generating solutions not necessarily generalizable to larger populations

Annual Agreement: The ASCA National Model tool that delineates the school counselor's time spent in various tasks and the major function of the school counseling department; the agreement is to be co-constructed and agreed upon by school counselors and administrators

Authoritarian Leadership: Leadership that comes from one person who dictates what others are to do

Data-Based Decision Making: Decision making that is accomplished by reviewing critical data elements associated with the problem at hand, such as graduation rates, test scores, grades, and disciplinary or attendance rates

Democratic Leadership: Leadership that involves seeking the perspectives and feedback of those who are led

Distributed/Shared Leadership: Leadership that is shared within a group that makes decisions together with input from stakeholders

Equity: Fairness, justice, and ensuring that all students have the social capital and academic, career and college readiness, and personal/social competencies to reach their career/college dreams, facilitated by a school counseling program; some students need greater resources than others

Equity Audit: An assessment of all of a school's policies and practices and their effect on diverse cultural groups/identities within the school; this includes the master schedule, who takes rigorous courses, who receives career and college readiness counseling and planning, who graduates on time, who is over-credited and under-credited, and how school counselors and school counseling program resources are deployed for all students

Evidence-Based Practices: Interventions or strategies that are grounded in research and have publicly available data

Laissez-Faire Leadership: A leadership style in which leaders are vague and seemingly aimless, hands-off, and/or uninvolved

Leadership: Taking initiative to create positive change

Leadership Practices: Practices, either innate or learned, that create positive change

Outcome Research: Research that demonstrates the effectiveness of an intervention or program and suggests generalizability to larger populations

Program Assessment: The process of measuring a school counseling program's effectiveness, including process, perception, and outcome results; it typically includes regular pre- and post-tests, needs assessments, surveys,

and questionnaires for various stakeholders including students, staff, families, and/or community members

School Profile: An overview of the school, including demographics, size, population, location, academic achievement strengths and gaps, and special programs

Servant Leadership: Leadership that has service as a core value and is carried out as a means to serve the greater good

Strategic Planning: Planning that is conducted in response to identified needs in a school and as a means to address those needs

Transformational Leadership: A type of leadership that empowers the leadership of others

Key Questions and Solutions

1. What does leadership in schools look like, and how can the CAFÉ School Counselor Evaluation assist?

Leadership, especially in schools, does not have to be defined by a title alone. In other words, principals and vice/assistant principals, and department chairs are not the only leaders in schools. Because of the multitude of tasks that need to be done and all of the stakeholders in schools that need to be served, it is critical that leadership is open to multiple forms and styles such as transformational leadership, servant leadership, shared leadership, distributed leadership, and so on (Northouse, 2004). Leadership can run the range from coordinating a canned food drive to chairing a committee, to initiating the implementation of a new school-wide program to close gaps, to presenting to colleagues on a relevant and timely topic.

All 50 U.S. states and countries around the world evaluating teachers and building leaders often lack appropriate evaluation tools for school counselors and school counseling programs. Few current national assessment tools for teachers mention school counselors. All too often, building leaders use teacher evaluation tools to assess school counselors but the jobs differ. It makes no more sense to evaluate school counselors with teacher evaluation tools than it does to evaluate teachers with school counselor evaluation tools. In school counseling, the current national evaluation tools are based on the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2012) and include a school counseling program assessment, the school counselor performance appraisal, and the ASCA school counselor competencies. These tools assist

administrators in understanding the types of activities school counselors should do to develop, deliver, and evaluate a comprehensive school counseling program with evidence-based outcomes. The one national evaluation tool for teachers that has a small component for assessing school counselors is *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching* (Danielson, 2007), focused on increasing effective teaching using evidence-based practices. This model includes multiple other professions beyond teachers in schools, including school counselors. But challenging times call for greater solutions for equity and the school counselor's role in change agentry. We developed the CAFÉ School Counselor Evaluation to assess the 16 equity and change-agentry skills covered in *101 Solutions* (see Figure 1.2). We incorporate the complementary elements of the ASCA National Model school counseling program evaluation tools (ASCA, 2012), the NOSCA *Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling,* and the *Framework for Teaching* rating categories (Danielson, 2007) to encourage individual school counselor assessment in additional areas.

2. What leadership models and strategies work best in K–12 schools?

There are many leadership models that have developed over time (Bennis, 1994; Bennis & Nanus, 1997; Bolman & Deal, 1991; Dollarhide, 2003; Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Northouse, 2004; Sergiovanni, 2000). The models of leadership that work best in schools are those in which leadership is shared beyond the principal; models such as distributed leadership, servant leadership, or transformational leadership (Sergiovanni, 2000). This type of leadership, which capitalizes on an individual's strengths and collaborative staff member relationship styles, has led to shared governance; shared decision-making, leadership, data, and inquiry teams; faculty councils; and student-managed peer disciplinary tribunals.

Northouse's (2004) definition identifies four interrelated ingredients prevalent across multiple theories of leadership: "(a) leadership is a process; (b) leadership involves influence; (c) leadership occurs within a group context; and (d) leadership involves goal attainment" (p. 3). Given that schools operate largely through group work (e.g., departments, academic teams, parent-teacher organizations) and that schools are highly goal-focused (e.g., attendance rates, graduation rates, academic achievement) a leadership structure that rests with a

Figure 1.2 CAFÉ (Change Agent for Equity) School Counselor Evaluation (Chen-Hayes, Ockerman, & Mason, 2013)

School Counselor Name:
Date:
Evaluator Name:
School Name:

Directions: Rate the school counselor from 1 to 4 (unsatisfactory, basic, proficient, distinguished) in each area below:

1. Leadership as Change Agents for Equity	Rating			
Indicator	1 (Unsatisfactory)	2 (Basic)	3 (Proficient)	4 (Distinguished)
a. Demonstrates leadership by serving on school leadership, inquiry, and/or data teams				
b. Maintains active involvement in professional associations				
c. Initiates new programs and interventions to close achievement, opportunity, and attainment gaps				
d. Articulates personal equity-focused leadership activities				

(Continued)

Figure 1.2 (Continued)

Indicator
e. Assists with annual equity audits to assess school programs, policies, and practices with goals, objectives, and outcomes for change linked to the school's improvement plan

2. *Educator/School Counselor Collaboration*

Indicator	Rating			
	1 (Unsatisfactory)	2 (Basic)	3 (Proficient)	4 (Distinguished)
a. Establishes or maintains a program advisory council				
b. Seeks the input and expertise of other educational professionals				
c. Co-plans or co-delivers program activities with other educational professionals				
d. Keeps current with academic instruction initiatives, and shares with staff the goals and outcomes of the school counseling program				

3. *Program Assessment/Accountability*

Indicator	Rating			
	1 (Unsatisfactory)	2 (Basic)	3 (Proficient)	4 (Distinguished)
a. Shares intervention results digitally and traditionally with all stakeholders				
b. Uses disaggregated school report card data to find gaps				
c. Uses School Improvement Plan and district goals to find gaps				
d. Aligns Interventions to school and district data				

e. Uses disaggregated data to target policies and practices for specific nondominant cultural groups including students of color: African American, Asian, Latino/a, Native American Indian/Pacific Islander, and mixed race students; low-income students (free/reduced lunch); bilingual students; students from nontraditional family types; students with nondominant immigration status; students with nondominant religion/spirituality/belief systems; LBGTIQ students; students with learning, emotional/behavioral, intellectual, physical, and/or developmental disabilities; gifted/talented students

4. Achievement Gap

Indicator	Rating			
	1 (Unsatisfactory)	2 (Basic)	3 (Proficient)	4 (Distinguished)
a. Delivers ASCA Student Standard academic competencies to all students				
b. Uses ASCA Closing the Gap Actions Plans and Results Reports				
c. Creates annual goals and objectives with measurable results of closing achievement gaps				
d. Monitors disaggregated school achievement data				

5. Opportunity/Attainment Gaps

Indicator	Rating			
	1 (Unsatisfactory)	2 (Basic)	3 (Proficient)	4 (Distinguished)
a. Delivers ASCA Student Standard career competencies to all students				

(Continued)

Figure 1.2 (Continued)

	1 (Unsatisfactory)	2 (Basic)	3 (Proficient)	4 (Distinguished)
b. Uses ASCA Closing the Gap Actions Plans and Results Reports				
c. Creates annual goals and objectives with measurable results of closing opportunity gaps				
d. Monitors disaggregated district high school graduation data to show who has attained college diplomas and what types of careers				

6. College and Career Readiness

Indicator	Rating			
	1 (Unsatisfactory)	2 (Basic)	3 (Proficient)	4 (Distinguished)
a. Demonstrates NOSCA 8 college and career readiness activities and interventions and outcomes in each area: College Aspirations, Academic Planning for College and Career Readiness, Enrichment and Extracurricular Engagement, College and Career Exploration and Selection Processes, College and Career Assessments, College Affordability Planning, College and Career Admission Processes, Transition from High School Graduation to College Enrollment				

7. Annual College/Career Readiness Planning

Indicator	Rating			
	1 (Unsatisfactory)	2 (Basic)	3 (Proficient)	4 (Distinguished)
a. Creates annual college and career plans with students				

b.	Hosts parent/guardian events on college selection, admissions, and financial aid process and postsecondary options including 2-year, 4-year, and technical/trade schools and military and peace-making programs			
c.	Creates opportunities for students to explore various postsecondary options on school grounds and at different college/career sites			

8. School-Family-Community Partnerships

	Indicator	Rating		
		1 (Unsatisfactory)	2 (Basic)	3 (Proficient)	4 (Distinguished)
a.	Develops/updates community resources guide				
b.	Communicates both traditionally and digitally with parents/caregivers				

9. Ethics

	Indicator	Rating		
		1 (Unsatisfactory)	2 (Basic)	3 (Proficient)	4 (Distinguished)
a.	Maintains student/client confidentiality and educates all stakeholders on its importance and exceptions				
b.	Uses an ethical decision-making model				
c.	Distributes copies of the ASCA, ACA, and NACAC Codes of Ethics for all stakeholders in digital and traditional formats				
d.	Consults with district attorney, other school counselors, social workers, psychologists, and Counselor Education faculty/supervisors				

(Continued)

Figure 1.2 (Continued)

10. Cultural Identity/Language	Rating			
Indicator	1 (Unsatisfactory)	2 (Basic)	3 (Proficient)	4 (Distinguished)
a. Delivers cultural competencies in annual planning with students, classroom lessons, and other activities				
b. Delivers ASCA personal/social competencies to respect self and others				
c. Empowers all students to study at least two languages in school for cognitive and cultural gains				
d. Ensures bilingual students receive appropriate resources, supports, and rigorous coursework				
e. Implements affirmative school climate interventions and shares outcomes for students from multiple nondominant cultural groups such as age, ability/disability, appearance, ethnicity/race, gender, family type, gender identity/ expression, immigration status, religion/spirituality/belief system, social class, and sexual orientation				

11. Technology	Rating			
Indicator	1 (Unsatisfactory)	2 (Basic)	3 (Proficient)	4 (Distinguished)
a. Keeps current with legal and ethical issues related to schools' use of technology				

Indicator				
b. Assists in developing or revising the school technology policies				
c. Utilizes various technology tools to engage and serve more students and families				
d. Annually updates school counseling program web page resources				

12. School-Wide/Multi-Systemic Intervention

Indicator	Rating			
	1 (Unsatisfactory)	2 (Basic)	3 (Proficient)	4 (Distinguished)
a. Takes a leadership role on school-wide committees (e.g., inquiry, data, school-based support, school counseling program advisory council)				
b. Connects school counseling program interventions and outcomes with school-wide academic, career/college readiness, and personal/social initiatives				
c. Collaborates with multiple internal school systems (master schedule, extracurriculars, access to rigorous coursework for all students) to create and sustain systemic change assisting all students				
d. Collaborates with multiple external systems (families, community organizations, businesses) to create and sustain systemic change assisting all students				

(Continued)

13

Figure 1.2 (Continued)

13. Administrative/Operational/Supervision

Indicator	Rating			
	1 (Unsatisfactory)	2 (Basic)	3 (Proficient)	4 (Distinguished)
a. Annually updates the SC/Administrator Agreement				
b. Reviews the school counselor evaluation tool regularly and with the administrator or evaluator				
c. Identifies the systemic structures in the school that may impede student success and offers potential solutions				
d. Serves as a source of school climate knowledge and expertise				
e. Provides evidence-based supervision for school counseling practicum and internship candidates				

14. Advocacy/Public Relations

Indicator	Rating			
	1 (Unsatisfactory)	2 (Basic)	3 (Proficient)	4 (Distinguished)
a. Identifies the needs of underserved populations and works to meet them				
b. Knows current legislation or policies impacting school counseling, education, and students				
c. Engages in advocacy by presenting data to stakeholders including school staff, families, school boards, district personnel, legislators				
d. Demonstrates one's own advocacy activities				

15. *Anti-Violence/Bullying/Safety*

Indicator	Rating			
	1 (Unsatisfactory)	2 (Basic)	3 (Proficient)	4 (Distinguished)
a. Delivers evidence-based anti-violence/bullying and safety programming in classroom lessons and school-wide activities to all students				
b. Educate parents/guardians, administrators, teachers, and all school staff on proactive anti-bullying strategies and the school's anti-bullying policies				
c. Advocates for students who feel unsafe				
d. Helps bullies develop healthy conflict resolution skills				
e. Delivers ASCA personal/social competencies on safety to all students				

16. *Ability, Disability, and Gifted/Talented*

Indicator	Rating			
	1 (Unsatisfactory)	2 (Basic)	3 (Proficient)	4 (Distinguished)
a. Collaborates with Special Education faculty and advocacy organizations				
b. Empowers families of students with varied abilities, disabilities, gifts/talents to advocate for their children's needs				
c. Ensures transition planning is effective and implemented annually for all students with IEPs				
d. Ensures IEPs and 504 plans are regularly updated and information on diagnosis and treatment plans is accurate and used in devising individual and group counseling services				

single person, such as the principal, is less effective. However, each school is unique and there is no leadership model that is guaranteed to work in every school; the style of the principal has great impact on the culture and operations of a school (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Marks & Printy, 2003; Reardon, 2011) and the school counseling program (ASCA, 2012).

3. How can school counselors be leaders if they don't see themselves as leaders?

Not all leaders shout from the soapbox. In fact, some of the best leaders are those who are thoughtful, observant, and listen more than they talk. Either way, leadership comes in all shapes, sizes, colors, and voices.

Consider some of the people who are considered effective leaders. What was it they said or did that is admired? Answering these questions can help highlight what is valued in a leader and perhaps what others would like to emulate. Getting comfortable as a leader can take more time for some than others but is more likely to develop when participating in leadership activities that are personally meaningful, such as starting a school counseling program advisory council (ASCA, 2012) or fighting to save school counselor jobs with evidence of school counselor success in helping close achievement and opportunity gaps (ASCA, 2010).

4. How can school counselors start being leaders?

Being a leader begins with identifying unique strengths and skills as a school counselor and educator. Leadership must come from a place of passion and drive. For school counselors, a large part of leadership comes from taking *initiative*. When school counselors take on a leadership role out of motivation, leadership will bring fulfillment, but when taking on a leadership role out of obligation or someone else's insistence, it will feel like a chore. Many school counselors and other educators are already leaders but do not realize it because they have assumed that leadership was associated with a specific title, office space, or salary.

Some ways to start or increase leadership roles in schools:

1. Be visible in and around the school whenever possible and connect professionally with school counselor, educator, staff, and administrator colleagues. A large part of leadership is the knowledge of who people are and understanding their specific roles.

2. Share expertise or knowledge that others in school would find helpful through mentoring, presentations, e-mails, or simple print materials for reference. School counselors often are the only ones in the building trained in career and college readiness counseling (see Chapters 6–7), ethics (see Chapter 9), and multicultural issues (see Chapter 10), so all three of these areas are ripe for staff development and taking on a leadership role.

3. Take on a new challenge. Leaders grow by pushing themselves outside of their comfort zones. Start by volunteering to pick up the slack for a colleague who must temporarily step aside, chair a committee, or introduce a new initiative to solve an equity-related achievement or opportunity gap in the school. For example, San Jose Superintendent Linda Murray used a collaborative leadership strategy including an equity audit to look at college preparatory course-taking patterns in her district disaggregated by race/ethnicity and gender. She found large discrepancies and created the vision and support that moved her district to making rigorous courses mandatory for every student in the district and shared the data of how gaps closed for underrepresented students once everyone was receiving rigorous courses preparing all students for career and college readiness (Murray, 2011).

Solution Success Stories

Story 1

Leadership can develop early in one's career. As a school counseling intern at a local public high school in the Midwest, Michelle became aware of the need for LBGTIQ students to feel welcome, safe, and valued in the community. Garnering support from some staff and administration approval but some resistance, she started the school's first Gay Straight Alliance (GSA). Along with a few key, passionate students, Michelle researched and invited in a local agency known for their advocacy for LBGTIQ populations, and she received training on starting the GSA and what to anticipate in the process. During the year, the GSA met regularly, marketed themselves to the school community, and sponsored several awareness-raising events. Michelle collected data on the impact of GSA involvement on students' grades and attendance and showcased this successful intervention prior to graduation with her master's degree in school counseling.

(Continued)

(Continued)

Story 2

An independent high school counselor in the Northeast, Terry, used his leadership skills to strengthen the profession and use of current terminology (ASCA, 2010, 2012). He challenged the use of the outdated term "guidance" and persuaded all on his school counseling team to use the term "school counselor." Other changes included adding "school counseling" to the name of the department, to office placards, and to the school's website so updated practices used in his school counseling program were reflected for all stakeholders with accurate terminology.

Story 3

A southwestern elementary school counselor, Felipe, designed a school counseling software program to not only track the school counselor's day-to-day responsibilities but calculate the percentage of academic, career, college readiness, and personal/social competencies being delivered daily/weekly by school counselors in an easy-to-read set of graphs and charts. He not only uses his creation but has shared it with several school counselor education programs across the country to disseminate an easy and effective way of monitoring school counselor time and outcomes in delivering academic, career, college readiness, and personal/social competencies to all students in a school counseling program.

Story 4

Several school counselor educators during a poster session at a recent Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) conference discussed the urgent need for a regular forum for monthly organizing and conversation about transforming school counseling and college readiness issues. Because of skyrocketing school counselor to student ratios, decreased public funding for school counselors, and threats to school counseling around the country, it was time to organize beyond a one-hour meeting at a biannual conference. As a result, two counselor educators, Melissa Ockerman and Stuart Chen-Hayes, were appointed co-chairs of the ACES School Counseling Interest Network and began a monthly network phone call in the fall of 2011 for all interested ACES counselor educators and supervisors. The network calls often feature a guest speaker, such as a representative of a national school counseling association, college counseling or career and college readiness advocacy groups, and other school counselor educators and school counseling site supervisors doing significant equity work in their states. Minutes from these calls are shared

(Continued)

on CESNET, the ACES Listserv for all counselor educators and supervisors. Often there are 20–30 persons on the monthly network calls, and to date, over 180 counselor educators and supervisors are part of the network. The new school counseling network was renamed the Transforming School Counseling and College Access Interest Network (TSCCAIN). They focus on the importance of counselor educators and supervisors using their leadership skills to teach and supervise with the principles of the National Center for Transforming School Counseling new vision of school counseling including closing achievement and opportunity gaps and creating college and career readiness skills in all K–12 students.

Resources

Digital

Center for Excellence in School Counseling and Leadership (CESCaL): www.cescal.org

Center for School Counseling Outcome, Research and Evaluation (CSCORE): www.umass.edu/schoolcounseling

Emergenetics: www.emergenetics.com

National Office of School Counselor Advocacy's Principal Counselor Relationship Toolkit: http://nosca.collegeboard.org/research-policies/principal-counselor-toolkit

The Leadership Challenge: www.leadershipchallenge.com/home.aspx

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