Steps and Tools for Planning and Using Your Data

Adapted from:
http://schoolcounseling.ncdpi.wikispaces.net/file/view/C.+Data+Literacy+for+School+Counselors.pdf

It is no longer enough for School Counselors to answer the question, “What do school counselors do?”
School Counselors must now respond to the question, “How are students different as a result of what we do?” -ASCA National Model

The only way to show how students are impacted by counselors and counseling programs are through data. It is therefore imperative that school counselors start changing the way they serve students. No longer can we know in our hearts that we made a difference to every child we came into contact throughout the day. We now have to demonstrate to stakeholders that students are different as a result of our contact with them. To accomplish this task, school counselors must become proficient in:

- Accessing data
- Analyzing data
- Interpreting data
- Presenting data

Professional school counselors must be able to use the data to:

- Recognize barriers to learning,
- Point out system inequities,
- Advocate for systems change,
- Show the urgency for change. Improve your comprehensive school counseling program to meet the needs of your students,
- Show student progress

The Multiple Uses of Data:

- DRIVES decisions and funding
- Ensures that you are reaching EVERY student, so EVERY student benefits from your school counseling program
- Creates an urgency for change
- Creates the energy for change
- Serves as a catalyst for focused attention
- Challenges existing policies
- Engages decision makers, district leaders, school teams in data driven decision making
- Surfaces evidence of access or equity issues
- Focuses resources where they are most needed
- Supports grant writing efforts
- Data has multiple, intentional and diagnostic uses and can be categorized differently
Multiple Types of Data for Monitoring Students’ and Program Progress:

**Student Achievement Data**
- Standardized test data
- Grade Point Averages
- SAT and ACT scores
- Changes in achievement levels (Math, reading)
- Drop-out rate
- Completion of college prep requirements

**Achievement Related Data**
- Course enrollment patterns
- Discipline referrals
- Suspension rates
- Alcohol, tobacco and other drug violations
- Attendance rates
- Parent involvement
- Extracurricular activities

**Standards and Competency Related Data**
Percentage of students who:
- Have 4-year plans
- Participate in job shadowing, workplace learning experiences, community service, etc.  
  (See *IN Graduation Pathways* for a complete list)
- Have set and achieved their goals
- Apply conflict resolution skills

**Disaggregate Data**
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Socio-economic status
- Language
- Special Education
- Grade level
- Teacher/Class/Counselor

**Comprehensive School Counseling Program Evaluation Data**
- Process data
- Perception data
- Results data

**Data Over Time** To get a true picture of the impact of the school counseling program, school counselors need to look at their process, perception and results data over time. **Data should be collected and evaluated in three time frames: Immediately, Intermediately, Long-range.**
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM EVALUATION DATA
(Inclusive of Delivery System, Management System and Accountability Tools)

PROGRAM EVALUATION DATA IS CRITICAL TO SHOWING “HOW STUDENTS ARE DIFFERENT AS A RESULT OF WHAT PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELORS DO!”

Program evaluation data shows how the school counseling program has impacted students’ academic achievement, their personal social skills, and/or their career readiness skills. Together, process data, perception data and results data (program evaluation data) tell a story and paint a picture about whether or not, as well as how the professional school counselor and their program is impacting students. When interpreting the data it is important to look at its implications.

For example:
- What pictures, pattern or gaps does the data indicate?
- What problems or needs surfaced?
- What achievement gaps exist?
- What opportunity gaps does the data suggest?
- How is the data aligned to specific grant goals, activities, baselines, outputs, and outcomes?

While professional school counselors are likely to find that their program does impact student success, they may also find that the data implicates that components of their program does not impact student success. This would indicate that the school counselor may need to re-evaluate one or more components of their program. Are all the components of your program meeting the needs of the students? If not, consider eliminating or replacing those components not working (with permission from the funder in advance). If it is a need, then consider how to improve that component so that it does benefit students. This may mean a change in curriculum, or the time spent in that component needs to be increased or decreased, the curriculum needs to be reinforced in the classroom over time, teachers/counselors need additional training or support, or other factors may need to be examined.

PROCESS DATA “What you did for whom” Where do you spend your time? How many students did you impact? Are these duties directly related to services to students? Can only a professional school counselor perform these functions? What evidence can you provide that the event occurred? How was the activity conducted? Did the program follow the prescribed practice (implemented with fidelity)?

Examples of Process Data (general and specific):
- Percentage of time spent in Responsive Services
- Percentage of time spent in Non-Counseling duties
- Number of Individual Counseling sessions per month
- Number of Group Counseling sessions per month
- Number of Health/Mental Health team consultations
- Number of counseling groups with number of students each were held in the school year
- Number of grade level students received a number of guidance lessons
• All incoming high school students were seen individually to prepare 4 year plan.

Examples of a Process Data Tools: calendars, counseling activity logs, monthly reports, portfolios

CAUTION: Process Data alone will not show how students are different as a result of what school counselors do. Process data should be used in addition to Results/Outcome Data and/or Perception data.

PERCEPTION DATA
• What do people think they know? (Knowledge gained)
• What do they believe? (Attitudes and Beliefs)
• What can they do? (Competency Achievement)

Examples of Perception Data: Measures related to competency achievement, knowledge gained or attitudes/beliefs of students and should be compared to baseline data (prior to grant or early in grant period).

Knowledge Gained
• % of students demonstrate knowledge of promotion/retention criteria
• % can identify Early Warning Signs of violence
• % of students reported acquiring knowledge from the curriculum about how to handle bullying

Attitudes or Beliefs
• % of students believe fighting is wrong
• % of students feel safe at school
• % of students know the name of their school counselor
• % of ___ grade students felt their school was safe

Competency Achievement
• Every student in grades 9-12 completed a 4 year plan
• Every 10th grade student completed an interest inventory

Examples of Perception Data Tools
• Pre-Post tests
• Surveys/Rating scales—parents, students, teachers, counselors
• Needs assessments
• Completion of an activity
• Competency achievement
• Evaluations/Program audit
• Focus groups/Interviews
• Testimonials
RESULTS/OUTCOME DATA “So WHAT” data, Hard data, Application data

“Results are not about what counselors do. Results are about what students do.”
~C.D. Johnson

What are the outcomes? How did the students change as a result of the lesson or intervention? Proof your program has (or has not) positively impacted students’ ability to utilize the knowledge, attitudes and skills to effect behavior in: Attendance, Behavior, Academic achievement

Examples of Results/Outcome Data:
- Graduation rates improved __% over three years
- Attendance improved among __ grade males by __%
- Number of students on the retention list avoided retention

Examples of Results/Outcome Data Tools
- Results Reports
- Impact over time
- Action Plans

Examples of Results/Outcome Data related to student achievement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immediate</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Long Range</th>
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</table>
| Test Scores
  - Achievement
  - State
  - National Attendance
  - Absences
  - Tardies
  - By Grade Level
| Enrollment
  - Honors/AP Classes
  - College Track
  - Special Education Discipline/Behavior
  - By Classroom
  - Types of Problems
  - Gender Special Education
  - By Gender
  - By Ethnicity
  - By SES
| Graduation Rates
  - By Gender
  - By Ethnicity
  - By SES GPA/Rank
  - By Gender
  - By Ethnicity
  - By SES
| Dropout Rate
  - By Grade Level
  - By Gender
  - By Ethnicity
  - By SES
| Suspensions
  - By Grade Level
  - By Gender
  - By Ethnicity
  - By SES
| Expulsion rates
  - By Grade Level
  - By Gender
  - By Ethnicity
  - By SES
| F & R Lunch
  - By Gender
  - By Ethnicity
  - By Grade Level
| Demographic Data
  - By Ethnicity
  - By SES
|
Results Report

*How are students different as a RESULT of what you do?*

- What does the data tell you?
- Was the program successful?
- What worked?
- What did NOT work?

Results Report: A tool that helps you:

- Ensure program was carried out with fidelity
- Provide evidence that every student was served
- Compare your data to State/National Standards
- Meet developmentally appropriate norms

**Documenting process, perception, results data; immediate, intermediate, and long range impact of program**

- Analyze effects
- Share successes/progress/challenges
- Make mid-course corrections/refinements (as needed and with permission from funder)
- Advocate for systemic change