

**EDUCATIONAL DECISION MAKERS AND ACCESS
TO COLLEGE SUPPORT PROGRAMS**

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ABSTRACT

Access to pre-college and college support programs is essential to student achievement and success. There are a myriad of opportunities and programming that will assist in college readiness for K–12 students. Exposure and awareness are key to these college readiness programs. By participating in college readiness programs, students are more apt to further their postsecondary education and graduate from an institution of higher education. Dual enrollment programs are just one avenue that students can explore to prepare for college. These programs allow students to take college level courses while being dually enrolled at both the college/university and their high school. This allows the student to earn college credit and high school credit simultaneously.

Pre-college and readiness programs are crucial for student success, especially for underrepresented populations. Access to accurate and comprehensive information about college can aid individual students' postsecondary decision-making process. However, studies show that students' access to college information and their sources for such information greatly vary depending on their demographic circumstances (Galotti & Mark, 1994).

The survey was distributed to school administrators and school counseling personnel. Thirty-seven individuals responded and completed the survey. The third and final phase was a series of one-on-one interviews conducted with ten school leaders to discuss how they widen access to dual enrollment programs.

The survey data provided the foundation, and the interview provided a deeper understanding to arrive at answers to the research questions. Of the survey respondents, it was found that school leaders take on as much responsibility as the school counseling

personnel as related to preparing students for pre-college programs. The interviews with school leaders further explained their position on how they widen access to all students, such as by establishing more high school/university partnerships.

The findings from this study provided insight into how students are assisted in the college preparation process. Additional research is needed to further examine the perspective of the school counseling personnel and the student/family perspective.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my daughters Arin and Ashlee. In every way, I strive to provide an example for you. An example not of perfection, but of love, joy, empathy, obedience to God and even perseverance. Words escape me when I think of how Godly proud I am of the both of you. You both have inspired and motivated me to be better at everything I set out to do; but to also be a better person, mother, sister, educator, and friend. Thank you for speaking life into me when I felt like I could not go on any further. Thank you for sharing your gift of wisdom, talent, and love with me. Thank you for leaving notes of encouragement throughout our house so I could see a positive message when the world tried to tell me different. Thank you for the countless hours of memories and laughter that will forever live in my heart. Every day spent with both of you is the most amazing blessing. As you embark on the next chapter in your life, please know that I will be with you always. May every dream you have come true, may every blessing you prayed for be delivered tenfold. Continue to keep God first in all things, He is your source! I love you more than you know!

To my family and village...Thank you for your outpouring of love and support with everything I do. I could not have made it without your continued support. To my mother and father who instilled in me passion, dedication, courage, commitment, and perseverance, thank you. Your sacrifices will never be forgotten or go unnoticed. I love you both.

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prayer lifted on my behalf. Thank you for believing in and encouraging me. We are family!

Lastly, I dedicate this dissertation to every black and brown girl and boy who may have doubted themselves based off what someone else may have said. Guess what? I believe in you, and you are loved! You are purposed to do great things! Never stop dreaming, never stop believing in YOU...for you are your ancestors' wildest dreams! Embrace Your Magic!

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Define the Problem

There are many students lost before they either reach college, complete college, or complete some postsecondary training that will secure their economic future in our postindustrial economy. One of the most critical gaps into which students fall is the transition from high school to college. The research being proposed here is on high school/college transition programs, specifically those pre-college programs at colleges and universities available to high school students.

These programs are designed to give high school students a glimpse of what to expect in college. These programs can range from academic courses, seminars, and preparatory courses to subject specific courses such as STEM or other exploratory majors such as the arts. Bridge programs take place over the summer to create awareness of and build skills for students. Some programs are specifically offered for underrepresented youth, students with disabilities, low-income students who are gifted, and/or first-generation students. In some cases, programs are available for students who may need remedial coursework or need assistance in passing a specific exam. In these cases, programs are developed for a successful transition to college rather than study skills or time management. (Kezar, 2000).

Relevance of Proposed Local and National Education Goals

Projections of the U. S. economy in 2020 suggest 65% of all jobs will require at least some level of postsecondary education. At the current pace, however, the U.S. will

fall short of that requirement by five million workers, largely because our educational system is pockmarked with gaps—places where students leave school before they have the skills and competencies required to minimally equip them for life in contemporary society (Carnevale et al., 2013). Currently, 30% of students leave high school without a diploma, and those who enter postsecondary training have less than a 49% chance of graduating with a credential in 6 years. The dropout problem is at its worst in urban centers. Many large cities routinely lose close to half of their high school students prior to graduation (Balfanz, et al., 2014). They are left without the skills required to compete in the current economy, much less the economy of the future.

There is a growing recognition that more needs to be done to retain students through to high school graduation and re-engage those who have dropped out (Bridgeland et al., 2006). Even when students from economically and socially challenged backgrounds do complete high school, regardless of the pathway, their transition to postsecondary education is an especially vulnerable point that claims many young people. These efforts take many forms throughout the country. Programs designed to help students make the transition from high school to college—also known as bridge programs—such as TRIO, GEAR-UP, and dual enrollment are some examples.

Many factors contribute to the low graduation rates at colleges (Barnett et al., 2013). Students often enter with poor prior academic skills. In addition, students are often confronted with greater expectations in their college course work—both in amount and quality—that greatly exceeds what they experienced in their previous schooling. Studies show a positive relation between pre-college academic preparation, college enrollment, and degree attainment (Adelman, 2006; Gamoran & Mare, 1989).

Even if student mastery has not occurred with material learned from the course, other important skills are learned. For instance, individuals who take advanced courses tend to have higher expectations of academic success and tend to think more critically than students who took a general curriculum course (Berends, 1995). Despite their importance for college success, many students still enter college underprepared. Fewer than half of high school graduates are highly qualified for admission at a 4-year institution (Berkner & Chavez, 1997).

Transition to College and Postsecondary Success in College

The transition to college is difficult (Parker et al., 2004; Tinto, 1993). Ample research (see Tinto [2006] for a review) over the last 40 years has explored the challenges inherent in this transition as students navigate new environments, negotiate new identities, and forge new connections. In efforts to ease the transition and help students succeed, recent scholarship in this field has highlighted the critical nexus of individual difference, institutional context, and engagement. That scholarship increasingly acknowledges that transitions are not “one size fits all”: contexts and students vary. As scholars have unraveled this riddle of retention and transition, it has become clear that the transition to college can be especially challenging due to a lack of alignment between high school and college curricula and expectations and high rates of remedial education required for many college students (Barnett et al., 2013). Much of the research focuses on predicting college student success and improving student transition has focused on prior academic ability. This scholarship has documented the vast gap in preparation between the most and least advantaged students and the impact it has on learning while in college (Arum & Roksa, 2011). Yet, as powerful as prior academic experience is in shaping

postsecondary experiences, it does not account for all the observed variance in academic success or retention (Parker et al., 2004). As a result, researchers have begun to explore the role of other variables, such as employment status and full- or part-time enrollment, to explain this variation.

Despite an apparent national focus on increasing the rigor of high school, many students entering college appear to be unprepared for college level work. Nearly half of all postsecondary students need at least one remedial course upon entering college (NCES, 2001). Remediation extends the time it takes for students to earn their degrees, costing students and states money, both in terms of additional tuition and education-related expenses and in terms of lost wages and revenue. Students required to take many remedial courses are also more likely to drop out of college before receiving a degree than their counterparts in need of less remedial assistance (Deil-Amen & Rosenbaum, 2002).

Other attempts to help students enter and succeed in college are based on a body of research demonstrating that postsecondary success is predicated on both rigorous academic preparation and a clear understanding of the expectations in college (cf. Venezia et al., 2003). This approach suggests that high schools and colleges should work together, and that blurring the distinction between the two education sectors may help students to be more successful. As such, policymakers should seek to promote programs and policies that help link secondary and postsecondary education (Karp et al., 2004).

In addition, the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (Kazis et al., 2004) proposed five steps that states can take to improve education outcomes,

especially for students who have been traditionally underserved by higher education. Included in the five steps is a call for providing more options for students to have college-level learning opportunities while still in high school. There are a variety of ways to address challenges related to outcomes. States may raise the academic requirements for high school students or link these requirements with college placement exams. Students may also benefit from intense academic and extracurricular college preparation experiences, such as those provided by the federally funded GEAR UP and TRIO programs. College-based orientation programs that provide entering students with emotional support may help them with their social and psychological adjustment. However, it should be noted that scientifically based research has not shown any of these interventions to be effective (Karp et al., 2004).

There are several college preparatory programs that assist students transitioning from high school to college. Three of these programs, GEAR UP, TRIO and Upward Bound have been running in Pennsylvania schools for years. These programs are positioned in urban schools and are designed to aid with college preparation and early awareness about college and postsecondary life to underrepresented youth.

GEAR UP

GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) is a federally funded program that provides early exposure and access to programming for underrepresented youth. The program is based on a cohort model. It is supposed to support students with an eye toward increasing the number of low-income students who enter and succeed in college. Schools with large numbers of at-risk students are targeted to receive six- or seven-year grants. In school programming will then start in

the seventh grade and continue on to graduation in the 12th-grade year. Scholarships are also awarded to GEAR UP students using funding from the program. (*GEAR UP Grant*, 2019). Within the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, GEAR UP programs have run in Allentown, Harrisburg, Lancaster, Philadelphia, and Norristown school districts. In 2014, the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education was awarded its third grant. The 14 state universities have partnered with middle and high schools to provide experiential learning, host college visits and workshops. (*GEAR UP Grant*, 2019).

GEAR UP services must begin no later than the seventh grade. Services may include tutoring, mentoring, college field trips, career awareness, colleges-readiness counseling, classes, meetings, parent education about access to higher education, curriculum reform, and teacher training (Standing et al., 2008).

TRIO

TRIO programs focus on services for disadvantaged youth. There are eight programs within TRIO that target and assist low-income students, first-generation college students, and individuals with disabilities to progress through the academic pipeline from middle school and post baccalaureate programs. Each of the subprograms within TRIO develops, plans, and implements programming to service said populations. A student must be eligible to receive services and live in the area of the funded school or institution. (Office of Postsecondary Education, 2019)

Among the eight programs that TRIO has to offer, the Upward Bound and Upward Bound Math and Science programs are prevalent. These programs specifically focus on raising college enrollment and graduation rates among underrepresented youth. Upward Bound Math and Science is specifically designed to promote awareness and

expose students to STEM careers. There are currently six Upward Bound Math and Science programs and eighteen Upward Bound programs across the state of Pennsylvania. Most of these programs are held at higher education institutions and a few are through community agencies.

TRIO Programs remain one proven pathway for ensuring college preparedness and access for all students. According to Cowan Pitre and Pitre (2009), “TRIO educational opportunity programs have been successful in increasing both the higher education attendance rates and educational attainment of students from low-income, first-generation college, and underrepresented ethnic minority backgrounds” (Office of Postsecondary Education, 2019).

Dual Enrollment

One of the academic opportunities to help students make the transition from high school to college and to help defray associated costs is dual enrollment. Dual enrollment involves programs in which students are enrolled in their high school and a university/college at the same time. Unlike Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate programs, dual enrollment courses are actual college courses—rather than college-like or college-level—and usually result in students’ progress being recorded on a college transcript from the sponsoring postsecondary institution. Dual enrollment students are typically admitted as nondegree students to the institution offering the dual enrollment course, sometimes even receiving college identification cards and access to college facilities and events. As such, dual enrollment programs require high schools and

colleges to collaborate and share institutional knowledge and responsibility (Karp et al., 2004).

In general, growth in dual enrollment has been disproportionate, with White and Asian students participating at higher rates. At one time, programs were widely recognized as helping high-achieving, affluent White students thwart “senioritis,” a term coined for students who lose motivation during the senior year of high school, but research has shown that dual enrollment can have an even greater impact on low-and middle-achieving Black and Latinx students (An, 2012). Programs have been developed that appear inclusive on the outside, but internal eligibility requirements, financial commitments, and recruiting methods often exclude underrepresented populations (Hooper & Harrington, 2022).

Typically, students who take advantage of this opportunity are at junior and senior level status within their high school and have met the necessary criteria to participate. In most cases, students are able to earn dual credit—credit from the institution and credit towards graduation from their high school. Dual enrollment thus requires the engagement of college faculty with high school personnel and their students. Some dual enrollment programs are more structured in that certain courses are scheduled or set aside specifically for high school students, so that they are not combined with regularly matriculated college students. In these cases, a college faculty member is recruited to teach a class made up only of high school students (Hughes, 2010).

Costs for dual enrollment programs vary from state to state. Students may have to pay all program costs, including the standard college tuition, fees, and books, or the school, district, college, and state may cover all or some of these costs. To participate,

students typically must meet certain eligibility requirements, which also vary by state policy and local agreements. These requirements can include an age or grade-level threshold; minimum grade-point average; qualifying scores on a college placement test, PSAT, SAT, ACT, or state assessment; and written approval from a teacher, counselor, principal, or parent (Mehl et al., 2020). Within this study, I will examine the process by which students are selected and/or recommended to participate in dual enrollment programs.

In the early 2000s, researchers and policymakers identified dual enrollment as a potential policy solution for helping underprivileged students access higher education (Bragg et al., 2005). In subsequent years, state and federal educational policy has largely focused on the economic potential of schooling as reflected in discourse and policy aimed at enhancing students' college and career readiness (CCR; Conley, 2012). CCR has various definitions and manifestations across states and localities, but the major thrust of CCR is for students to graduate from high school prepared to successfully either enter the workforce with an industry credential or an institution of higher education. The CCR initiative aims have been tied to federal money, for instance, the 2015 *Every Student Succeeds Act*, which sought to promote an increase in college access and completion (*Every Student Succeeds Act*, 2019; Malin et al., 2017; Office of Elementary & Secondary Education, n.d.).

What is the Issue?

Establishing programs such as those above is just the first step as students need to know about them and know how to avail themselves of them. School personnel, especially school counselors, play a key role here. The role of school counselors is not

new (Cicourel & Kitsuse, 1963). Building on this foundational research, Rehberg and Hotchkiss (1972) raised the issue of whether a counselor's personal biases unknowingly affected the advice they gave to students. The result would then be a static social status system. Now is the time to reprise this research with a specific focus not on high school track placement, but on how students are selected for postsecondary educational opportunities.

By continuing to examine school counselor training and consequent job competency standards, it may be possible to determine gaps in training and how counselors compensate for their lack of knowledge in serving their students. Career counseling theory and application play a role in how school counselors work with students in postsecondary planning, and where a lack of knowledge exists, a lack of services exists as well (Perrone et al., 2000). The rising costs of higher education, paired with students' lack of concise college and career planning, make the school counselor's role more important than in past decades.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

As indicated in the previous chapter, bridge programs were designed to facilitate the transition from high school to college with an eye toward improving the college going rate of all students, especially those who are at-risk, economically disadvantaged students, many of whom are of color. Various factors contribute to the educational outcomes of these students, including unequal access to preschool and early childhood programs, quality teachers, access to high-quality curricula, and other support systems (Amatea & West-Olatunji, 2007). Despite facing many obstacles, some at-risk students do achieve high levels (Wyner et al., 2007). Many African American and Latino youth demonstrate resilience in the face of negative schooling experiences (Wyner et al., 2007).

Another issue to consider is that educators need to be aware of how students perceive their educational experiences in order to address their concerns. Educators can play a significant role in transforming potentially negative situations into positive school experiences for these student bridge programs.

Dual Enrollment is a Promising Strategy

Dual enrollment courses include those aligned to degrees and credentials in both liberal arts and workforce fields. Eighty-six percent of dual enrollment students take classes at a high school, taught by a college instructor or a high school instructor credentialed to teach college classes. Some educators say that when dual enrollment is in high school, teachers and counselors can better monitor students' behavior and progress

and provide support when needed. It is, they say, a good intermediate step on the road to greater independence (Mehl et al., 2020).

Dual enrollment programs have become increasingly popular in the United States over the last two decades (An & Taylor, 2019; Pompelia, 2020). In 2019 alone, 108 bills to expand dual enrollment programs were introduced in 37 state legislatures (Pompelia, 2020). All states now offer dual enrollment in some form (Shivji & Wilson, 2019). Data show that dual enrollment participation is linked to increased higher education access, persistence in college courses, graduation, and even improved high school performance and graduation rates (Cowan & Goldhaber, 2015; Haskell, 2016; Ison, 2022; Lee et al., 2022).

Dual enrollment programs change comprehensive high school structure by offering students curricular choices that differ from traditional high school courses. About 80% of the students who take dual enrollment courses do so at their home high school, making local high school leaders, like school principals, important actors in dual enrollment educational policy (Hornbeck et al., 2023; Shivji & Wilson, 2019). In most cases, high schools and the partnering college share governance of the program (Hornbeck & Malin, 2019; Pompelia, 2020). Some states require school districts to form tuition agreements with the participating college.

According to the Education Commission of the States' Center for Community College Policy (2001), advocates found that dual enrollment programs provided a rigorous curricular opportunity for high school students, saved students time and money toward a college degree, encouraged competition for students by postsecondary programs, provided space in high school courses that promote better curricular matches

to students, enhanced middle and low income students aspirations, and built a stronger relationship between postsecondary programs and the communities they serve. Also, researchers found that participation in dual enrollment programs helped students prepare for college coursework and degree attainment (Allen, 2010; Hoffman et al., 2008). Further, studies have shown that dual enrollees are more likely to graduate from high school and earn higher grades in college than non-dual enrollees, even after controlling for preexisting student characteristics (Allen & Dadgar, 2012; Karp et al., 2007; Spurling & Gabriner, 2002).

College students who had participated in dual enrollment as high schoolers had higher persistence and retention, grade point average (GPA), and credit accumulation than students who did not participate (Karp et al., 2007). Dual enrollment students earned 15.1 more college credits than non-dual enrolled students three years after high school graduation (Karp et al., 2007). It has been argued that by being enrolled in a dual enrollment program, students learn critical skills such as independence and self-advocacy (Karp et al., 2007).

Barriers to Dual Enrollment

As was discussed above, while there are research findings on access to college programs, more needs to be done given the continuing differential access to one specific program, dual enrollment. That is the focus of this research.

In a study of school counselors in urban schools, McDonough and Calderone (2006) found that many African American and Latino students were not interested in applying to colleges because of financial reasons. In 2019, states looked for ways to

eliminate or reduce the cost burden for students and families so that students from low- and moderate-income households were not prevented from participating. Cost reduction strategies include fully funding the state dual enrollment program so that it is free for all students, creating scholarship or grant programs to support students from low-income households, limiting what colleges may charge for dual enrollment courses, and covering the tuition and fees for a limited number of courses (Pompelia, 2020).

Some states' legislation requires the state or local school district to pay students' tuition at the college at which they are enrolled, while others expect students to pay their own tuition and fees, and still others allow funding decisions to be made at the local level (Boswell, 2001).

According to Pretlow and Wathington (2014), expanding access to dual enrollment courses requires an increase in the number of teachers who meet state qualifications to teach the courses. Though students may take dual enrollment courses on college campuses with postsecondary instructors, most students take dual enrollment courses at their own high schools—creating a need for teachers at the high school level who are qualified to teach dual enrollment courses. States also want to ensure that students who are taught by high school teachers receive the same quality of instruction as those who are taught by postsecondary faculty (Pompelia, 2020).

Differential Access to Dual Enrollment Programs

Some scholars, policymakers, and dual enrollment advocates support dual enrollment as a tool for equity and access that helps underrepresented student populations find success in higher education. Bragg et al. (2005), for example, identified dual enrollment as a potential mechanism for equity in an early study examining ways that

states used policy to serve underprivileged students. Subsequently, studies have examined how dual enrollment policies affect underrepresented student groups. Allen et al. (2019) found that Latinx students who engage in engineering courses through dual enrollment used the experience as capital and followed a STEM pathway more frequently upon graduation. Ganzert (2012) studied dual enrollment students' grade point averages (GPAs) by race and gender. They found significantly better GPAs among female dual enrollment students and also found that students of color benefited from dual enrollment programming. Haskell (2016) studied a statewide dual enrollment program in Utah and found that dual enrollment programs help underrepresented students prepare for jobs and work skills. Hughes et al. (2012) tracked the progress of underserved students who took dual enrollment courses, focusing on graduation rates, college enrollment, and completion, and found that those who take dual enrollment courses do better in all aforementioned categories. Minaya (2021) compared students in Florida who took a dual enrollment algebra course with those who did not and found that Black and Hispanic students who took dual enrollment algebra persisted more significantly in a college STEM program upon graduation.

There is differential access to educational opportunities, especially dual enrollment programs. The significant gap between African American, Latino, and White students has been well documented in public education. Students of color have fallen behind their White counterparts in areas such as standardized testing, high school completion rates, academic achievement, and college attendance and completion (Gándara & Contreras, 2009; O'Connor et al., 2006; Thomas et al., 2009; Valencia, 2000; Vega et al., 2012)

Given the benefits of taking college level courses—such as advanced placement and dual enrollment—in high school on college success for economically disadvantaged students, racial gaps in participation rates serve as important indicators of educational inequality. Disparities are also observed in dual-credit participation by race. Using the High School Longitudinal Study of 2009, National Center for Education Statistics (Planty et al., 2009) reported lower participation rates among African American students in dual enrollment.

Student Perspective of Dual Enrollment

Kanny (2015), using a qualitative, grounded theory approach, explored how dually enrolled high school students within an urban setting conceptualized the benefits and drawbacks of dual enrollment participation. Using this student-centered approach, implications for policy and practice were drawn in order to maximize the potential benefits of dual enrollment across an increasingly diverse student population.

Three themes captured students' perceived benefits of their dual enrollment experiences: exposure to the college environment, the hidden curriculum, and independence and freedom. First, a key theme that resonated among all participants focused on the benefits of being exposed to the college academic environment, an environment that was different from their high school environments. Second, as a result of this exposure, students had the chance to learn what is often referred to as “the hidden curriculum,” the norms that underly official social expectations and regulations. The opportunity to take college courses resulted in the participants becoming aware of the more implicit skills and practices that are not only expected of college students, but also

lead to enhanced academic success in college. For example, participants noted learning about the importance of interacting with faculty on a regular basis.

The third theme related to students' perceived benefits of dual enrollment course-taking entailed learning to be more independent within the context of academics. Each participant specifically noted the words "independence" and "freedom" during the interviews

There were drawbacks resulting from their dual enrollment experiences, namely issues with credits and grades, negative interactions with others, and limited support systems. The most prevalent negative consequences of dual enrollment were issues in credits earned as well as negative impacts on high school transcripts due to poor grades in dual enrollment courses.

Students also reported negative impacts from their dual enrollment experiences due to negative interactions with the regularly enrolled students. A majority of the participants mentioned feeling uncomfortable due to their nontraditional enrollment status. Specifically, they referenced feelings of being judged by students and faculty at college.

School Counselors

Young people exploring career decisions are often left to their own devices to find direction in this complex process. Ninety-five percent of high school seniors expect to attain some form of college education, yet more and more are delaying entry after high school, frequently changing colleges or majors when they do enter or taking time off throughout their programs (Altbach et al., 2011). According to The College Board National Office for School Counselor Advocacy, professional school counselors need to

better support students during the decision-making process to streamline their progress toward postsecondary education and career readiness (Bridgeland & Bruce, 2014). School counselors need to balance this task with accountability in other areas, such as academic achievement, social and emotional development, and related administrative duties. According to The College Board (Bridgeland & Bruce, 2014), reform is necessary to highlight the lack of support students receive in their pursuit of higher educational goal attainment.

In order to take advantage of dual enrollment programs, high school students need to know about them, need to know the requirements and application process, and often need to be nominated by a high school official who most often is a counselor. This is where the key role of school professionals comes into play. The role of the high school counselor is an ever changing one that began as job selection and placement, progressed to college selection, and now has had grief counseling added in light of episodes of horrific school violence. Additionally, as Merlin-Knoblich and Chen (2018) indicated in their empirical study, multicultural issues have been added to this role's responsibilities.

Approaches to dual enrollment advising vary. Typically, high school counselors are the first line of support. Sometimes they advise students throughout their dual enrollment program, but ideally a college advisor steps in, either at the college or the high school. Some programs assign each student multiple advisors, from both the college and high school. The best dual enrollment systems systematically offer excellent advising, going above and beyond to nurture students (Mehl et al., 2020).

According to Chandler et al. (2018), originally a school counselor's main focus was on vocational and job training information. As college-going populations increased, the role was broadened to providing information about colleges, applications, and financial aid sources. Of late, psychological supports have broadened the role further. However, few high school graduates report that they had a high school guidance counselor; others report that they never met with one to discuss their postsecondary plans.

It appears that there are different approaches to guidance in high school counseling. Gandara and Bial (1999) argue that counselors offer directional, generic, and procedural guidance to students. Directional guidance involves working with students individually; these students often have the highest chance of graduating, receiving pertinent information and achieving academic success. Generic guidance counselors do their due diligence by delivering general information to students and families. Extra assistance is given to families about academic opportunities, but only upon the family's request. Procedural counseling focuses solely on delivering basic information with little to no detail. According to Sattin-Bajaj et al. (2017) this counseling approach leaves more room for more parental involvement and gives no recommendations or further information.

Studies have shown that guidance counselors are inundated with outside tasks and do not necessarily spend most of their time advising students (McDonough, 2004; U.S. Department of Education, 2004). Much of their day is devoted to administrative tasks, discipline issues, and untangling scheduling issues, according to experts on the profession. Researchers have found that many counselors are involved in overseeing testing programs, along with lunch duty, attendance monitoring, and substitute teaching.

Under the current system, public schools often seem to assume that counselors can juggle a whole roster of duties and still effectively assist hundreds of students in planning their futures. Research clearly shows that counselors, when consistently and frequently available and allowed to provide direct services to students and parents, can be a highly effective group of professionals who positively impact students' aspirations, achievements, and financial aid knowledge (Adelman, 1999; McDonough, 1997, 2004; Orfield & Paul, 1993; Plank & Jordan, 2001).

To improve counselor effectiveness would be to relieve guidance counselors of some of the other nonessential duties they now assume. Another option would be to improve the preparation and training of counselors. Research has shown that counseling education programs do not include instruction or coursework on how to help parents and students navigate the financial aid system or on advising students about college selection, apprenticeships, or other postsecondary options (McDonough, 2004). School counselor education programs that have limited education and awareness about college readiness constrains advice that is available to students. School counselors need to be equipped with the education, support and/or professional development to best service their students. Some graduate programs for school counselors do not yet offer a college admissions course for school counselors, let alone programs that focus on equity (The College Board, 2010).

School Professionals' Interactions with Students

Access to accurate and comprehensive information about college can assist with an individual student's postsecondary decision-making process. However, studies show that students' access to college information and their sources for such information greatly

vary depending on their demographic circumstances (Galotti & Mark, 1994). Given that nearly six in ten public school students are first-generation collegegoers (Herrold & O'Donnell, 2008), the need to understand when, where, and what information students gather about college becomes pronounced. Yet, it appears that the college information gathering strategies among many students, especially those who are low-income and first-generation, remains limited.

There is hesitancy, possible fear, and lack of trust among students of color when it comes to seeking assistance from a school counselor. Gandara and Bial (1999), found that counselors place these students in non-college-recommending classes (Atkinson et al., 1990), and historically have frustrated students' and their parents' educational aspirations (Lareau & Horvat, 1999).

Awareness of College Readiness Programs

School counselors have historically lacked a clear identity in role and function (Bridgeland & Bruce, 2014; Johnson & Rochkind, 2010), and in response, many states have adopted the use of some form of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Model as a guide for practicing school counselors (Martin & Carey, 2012; Martin et al., 2009). Not all states provide such guidance for their school counselors and, as a result, some school counselors are left with little agreement a bit adrift. Some counselor educators have called for more support and supervision for school counselors (Brott, 2006; DeVoss & Andrews, 2006; Somody et al., 2008); however, a gap between education and professional responsibility, and consequently liability, has remained (Foster et al., 2005; Pérusse & Goodnough, 2005). It is important to note that the aforementioned reform is linked directly to the roles and functions of school counselors

(Pérusse & Goodnough, 2005). According to Bridgeland & Bruce (2014), 71% of school counselors surveyed stated that they believed academic planning related to college and career readiness was important, but only 31% believed their school was successful in fulfilling students' needs in that area. The gap between what is believed to be important and how information and assistance is delivered to the students is critical.

To bridge the gap and provide students with a consistent avenue for college and career readiness successfully, more attention must be directed toward a) educating school counselors and b) clearly defining the roles and functions of school counselors to other school professionals (Dodson, 2009; Mason & McMahon, 2009; McMahon et al., 2009; Reiner et al., 2009). Further research is needed to determine the possible impact of revised training and practice on the profession as well as on school counselors' relationships with students, parents, and the school community stakeholders. Counselor educators are not solely responsible for the role development of the school counselors they train; however, they have an increased personal responsibility as well (Pérusse & Goodnough, 2005). Consistent dialogue between counselor educators and school counselors-in-training regarding role competence in career development may provide an avenue to overall effectiveness. Currently, professional school counselors are expected to offer comprehensive, well-balanced, developmental, evidence-based school counseling programs that target social and emotional supportive services, educational and academic planning, and vocational education for all students (ASCA, 2003; Campbell & Dahir, 1997; Dugger & Boshoven, 2010; Foster et al., 2005; Martin & Carey, 2012; Martin et al., 2009; Pérusse & Goodnough, 2005). However, high school counselors continue to be scrutinized in light of the poor marks they receive from high school students and

graduates regarding the counselors' involvement in their respective postsecondary planning processes (Johnson & Rochkind, 2010).

School counselors are expected to demonstrate competency in the areas of academic achievement, social and emotional development, and career counseling. However, career counseling competency is often minimized in relation to other areas because the accountability measures are not fully developed. Also, the results cannot be determined until years after students leave high school (McDonough, 2005), and due to so many commitments falling upon school counselors, their time to provide specific career interventions can be limited (Bryan et al., 2011; Deil-Amen & Tevis, 2010).

The leaders of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA; 2021) have encouraged secondary school counselors to spend at least 40% of their day conducting career assessment and engaging in development and planning postsecondary activities with students (e.g., individual student responsive services, group guidance activities, college and career indirect services); yet, according to Clinedinst et al. (2011), high school counselors devote only 23% of their time to this cause. School counselor education programs minimally address this disparity (Foster et al., 2005). Most programs offer one course in general career development theory, assessment, and counseling, which would translate to roughly 6% of students' training within a 48-credit hour program, and only 5% for programs requiring 60 credit hours of graduate work. Although the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP; 2009) has called for counselor educators to infuse career development throughout the program curricula, school counselors have reported they did not feel competent in the delivery of career programs (Bridgeland & Bruce, 2014).

Counselor and Counseling Education

School counselors must have an appropriate level of career counseling techniques in order to be effective leaders, not just possess a basic understanding of career development theories (Zunker, 2012). Osborn and Baggerly (2004) suggested that high school is a crucial time for students to make career and/or postsecondary training decisions and that if there were any group of school counselors who needed to have a large proportion of their time devoted to career counseling, it would be high school counselors. Bridgeland and Bruce (2014) stated in the NOSCA report that “counselors are also largely enthusiastic about supporting college and career readiness initiatives, but here again, do not think they have the support and resources to successfully promote their students’ postsecondary achievement” (p. 12). Hines and Lemons (2011) proposed refocusing university training programs for school counselors to emphasize educational access, opportunity and equity in college, and career readiness, with an increased focus on interns using college and career readiness curricula with students in their schools. They also recommended the revision of school counselor job descriptions to focus on postsecondary planning, the use of performance evaluations connected to student academic outcomes and college and career readiness standards, and the need for continuing professional development in order to cultivate effective college and career readiness counseling programs.

School counselor preparation programs have a variety of course offerings, credit, field placement requirements, and faculty experiences (Pérusse & Goodnough, 2001). Some graduate programs for school counselors do not yet offer a college admissions course for school counselors, let alone programs that focus on equity (The College Board,

2010). This leaves school counseling professionals with limited education and awareness about college readiness programs and processes, which can create a barrier for students.

The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) standards for counselor training serve as a guide for counselor education programs to include when determining elements and experiences essential for training competent school counselors. However, the standards were not established to provide any support or structure for the postgraduate professional working in the schools (Campbell & Dahir, 1997; Pérusse et al., 2001). ASCA provides professional school counselors with support through the national model to administer appropriate programming to students at the secondary level, including career planning. The question remains whether counselors-in-training receive access to the appropriate coursework and relevant experiences to adequately prepare them to fulfill their role in the schools, as suggested by historical perspectives (e.g., the vocational needs of students) and the current national standards for the profession.

The area of career development and postsecondary planning is one in which counselors-in-training may not receive adequate instruction or supervision (Barker & Satcher, 2000; Foster et al., 2005). With the acceptance of the 2016 CACREP standards revisions, counselor education programs would be required to demonstrate how they assess students' competencies using data "gathered at multiple points and using multiple measures" (CACREP, 2014, p. 6). Counselor educators must determine how to measure competency in career development throughout their programs. Some programs offer one course in career counseling, development, or assessment, while other programs may choose to meet the standards in other ways. While students may gain training experience

in career counseling through internship hours at the master's level, career development is not a required part of the internship experience. Using standardized tests that measure students' knowledge of career counseling theory (e.g., Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination, National Counselor Examination), counselor education programs would be partially meeting the requirements for CACREP accreditation under the new standards. Testing graduate students on their knowledge of career counseling theory, however, does not provide an indicator of the students' ability to provide comprehensive career counseling programs upon graduation. Using multiple measures of competency throughout the program may be a more effective way to accurately measure professional skill and readiness to provide career services to students. A recent review of the counseling and education literature identified several articles confirming the deficiencies in school counselor training and the increased need for additional competence among school counselors to provide college and career readiness programming to students, including information on financial literacy and the cost of higher education (Bridgeland & Bruce, 2014;). Some educators may argue that these issues have been infused throughout the school counselor training program curriculum, yet there does not appear to be a consensus as to a consistent standard of practice. As a result, the question remains: Can counselor educators provide the necessary curriculum and expect that counselors-in-training will retain and apply enough information to be able to provide services competently to students?

Educational Leaders' Perception of Expanding Dual Enrollment Programs Participation

Considering the broad expansion of dual enrollment programs nationwide, it is important to understand the perspective of local principals who administer many aspects of these programs in their respective school settings. While the literature has framed dual enrollment as a potential way to bring about increased access and equity in higher education as well as economic benefits, more should be known on the local level (Hornbeck et al., 2023).

While students are the center of concurrent enrollment programs, other constituents are actively involved in shaping the success of programs. High school principals are responsible for decisions about school involvement with a concurrent enrollment program. Although teachers, counselors, and principals are vital to the success of a concurrent enrollment program, more needs to be known about how these three groups perceive such a program (Hanson et al., 2015).

Compared to other areas in the dual enrollment literature, staff perceptions have been given scarce attention. Some of the studies that have looked at the staff perspective have found that dual enrollment would benefit from improved communication between stakeholders (Hornbeck et al., 2023). In one qualitative study, Charlier and Duggan (2009) studied perceptions of faculty and dual enrollment support staff participating in one program and found that the high school teachers largely appreciated the opportunity to work with and learn from college professors to ensure they were teaching at the appropriate level. Duncheon and Relles (2020), in the border region of Texas, found that the high school teachers were unsure of their role as both high school teacher and college

instructor, finding it difficult to navigate both worlds without specific direction. Gomez (2020) studied communication between high school teachers and community college faculty in El Paso, Texas, and found that teachers viewed communication as essential to student success. Hooker (2018) studied community college and high school dual enrollment partnerships in Central Ohio and found that adding more interaction and regular meetings between high school dual enrollment faculty and community college faculty was perceived to be helpful.

Studies of dual enrollment faculty and administrators have also shown that staff believe some students lack the maturity needed to take dual enrollment courses and that these courses are less rigorous than traditional college courses (Hornbeck & Malin, 2019; Garcia et al., 2020; Howley et al., 2013; Duncheon & Relles, 2020). Garcia et al. (2020) surveyed high school administrators and staff about dual enrollment and found that they felt the dual enrollment curriculum had to be diluted because of the lack of maturity of high school students.

Hornbeck and Malin (2019) surveyed school district superintendents in Ohio and found that maturity was one cause for concern of superintendents. Some superintendents also questioned the rigor of dual enrollment courses, with several superintendents sharing that they thought some traditional high school courses were more rigorous. Howley et al. (2013), likewise, interviewed students and staff in rural Ohio and found that they too thought the dual enrollment classes to be less rigorous than traditional college courses.

Other studies of high school staff perceptions revealed financial concerns related to dual enrollment. Hornbeck and Malin (2019) found that school district superintendents in Ohio were concerned that dual enrollment would require them to cut traditional high

school courses and staff due to the reallocation of funding to dual enrollment tuition and textbook costs. Witkowsky et al. (2020) examined the perspectives of high school counselors and found that counselors believed students could benefit from additional advising. Hooker (2018) studied a dual enrollment partnership in central Ohio and also found that more robust advising and direct degree pathways in dual enrollment would benefit students.

Principals thought that economic motivations were driving both students' choices to enroll in dual enrollment, and the college's commitments to offering coursework. According to Hornbeck et al. (2023), a majority of responding principals—86% of Ohio principals and 91% of Texas principals—agreed or strongly agreed that dual enrollment was a popular option for many students. Most felt that the primary reason students took dual enrollment courses was to save money. When ranking the reasons why students at their school took dual enrollment courses, the principals' the reasons were: (1) the opportunity to earn college credit at low or no cost, (2) the opportunity to earn college credit while in high school, (3) the ability to leave the high school campus, (4) the opportunity to take more challenging coursework, and (5) the opportunity to pursue courses that students found interesting.

Secondary school teachers and college professors go through different preparation programs, with secondary teachers required to be certified by their state, take exams about content and pedagogy beyond college, and engage in internships/student teaching (Goldhaber, 2019). Conversely, in most cases, professors who teach dual enrollment courses are required to have at least a master's degree in their content area and be approved by the institution in which they are employed (Pompelia, 2020).

Research Questions

Thus while there is much that is known about the effects of college forward programs, more is needed. Having good programs in place is a necessary condition, but more needs to be done. More needs to be known about school leaders' interactions with students and their families as they relate to increasing college access. Further, school leaders need to support the counselors. To begin this conversation, the following research questions guided this study:

1. How do school personnel/administrators' demographic characteristics affect the selection and support of students' postsecondary decision especially as they apply for dual enrollment opportunities?
2. How does the education/experience of school personnel affect the advice given to students with respect to college related programs?
3. How do educational leaders perceive their role in widening students' access to college forward programs such as dual enrollment opportunities?

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to gain a perspective on how school counselors and administrators recommend high school students for dual enrollment. The intent is to gain a full understanding of exactly how and why said students are recommended.

Methods

A mixed methods approach was used to conduct this research. A survey was sent out with the invitation to be interviewed included at the end. The survey was disseminated to school counselors and administrators in schools in two central PA school districts in the spring of 2022. These districts had diverse student bodies. While two reminders were sent out, limited participation remained an issue. The survey was expanded by the snowball sampling technique to other school districts to increase the respondent sample. See Table 3.1 for the relationship between the method and data analysis plan. The survey and interview protocols are included in the appendix.

Recruitment

Emails, collected from the schools' website, were sent to school leaders who were then asked to distribute to their school counselors. Following the university's IRB specified protocol, the emails contained an attached link to the survey. The survey also asked if the respondent would be willing to be interviewed. Those who agreed to participate in a face-to-face interview received a consent form that included a request for a signature.

Table 3.1*Research Questions, Data Sources, and Analyses*

Research Question	Data Source	Type of Data	Proposed Data Analyses*
1 How do school personnel/administrators' demographic characteristics affect the selection and support of students' postsecondary decision especially as they apply for dual enrollment opportunities?	Survey	Quantitative	Univariate statistics (Means, Standard deviations, proportions) of the whole survey response to set the context Bivariate statistics (Crosstabs, correlation, and ANOVA) to compare those who did or did not agree to be interviewed
	Interview	Qualitative	Selected interview to focus on in-depth material
2. How does the education/experience of school personnel affect the advice given to students with respect to college related programs?	Survey	Quantitative	Univariate statistics (Means, Standard deviations, proportions) of the whole survey response to set the context Bivariate statistics (Crosstabs, correlation, and ANOVA) to compare those who did or did not agree to be interviewed
	Interview	Qualitative	Selected interview to focus on in-depth material.
3 How do educational leaders perceive their role in widening students' access to college forward programs such as dual enrollment opportunities?	Survey	Quantitative	Univariate statistics (Means, Standard deviations, proportions) of the whole survey response to set the context Bivariate statistics (Crosstabs, correlation, and ANOVA) to compare those who did or did not agree to be interviewed
	Interview	Qualitative	Selected interviews to focus on in-depth material

The response rate for the study was very low ($n = 37$), possibly for various reasons. First, the pandemic could have played a role in the low response rate. In all, the

survey was sent to more than 200 individuals and fewer than 40 responded. With more people becoming inwardly focused and experiencing burnout, it was easy to put off and or ignore an online survey. Second, the time of year in which the surveys and interviews were conducted could have played a part in the low response as well. Because of IRB delays, the surveys and interviews were given towards the end of the school year and lasted throughout the summer. Delaying the data collection well after the start of the following school year did not seem reasonable. Many participants had scheduling conflicts, school events, and needed to proctor and administer standardized testing for their schools. Due to many challenges and covid restrictions, interviews were conducted via zoom. While this initially might seem an asset, it could be argued that Zoom fatigue had set in.

School counselor/administrator emails were collected in two ways: One way was through the use of school district public websites, and the second way was through participant referrals which was part of the snowball sampling technique. Participants were emailed the survey information directly and reminder emails were sent out after two weeks to increase study participation. The researcher also verbally recruited participants via phone and physical conversation. A list of school counselors and administrators who stated they would not mind being interviewed was generated. Once the full list was compiled, the researcher reached out to school personnel to schedule an interview over zoom. Interviews took place later in the year, between October and November of 2022, with the ten administrators who volunteered. These interviewees represented various schools and districts in and out of Pennsylvania. These administrators were high school principals and superintendents. The goal of these interviews was not to establish a

different data source, but rather to enhance the survey results. Everyone who agreed was interviewed.

Data Collection

Two data collection techniques were used. First, data were collected via survey. The survey was distributed to the school counselors and administrators/principals. The survey was designed to capture the respondents' demographics, educational background, and knowledge of dual enrollment programs. This survey established the broad context needed to support generalizations. Qualtrics, the online survey software, was used to administer the surveys. Responses were read directly into a database thereby reducing any data entry errors that might occur otherwise.

Survey

The survey was based on three sources, specifically the U.S. Department of Education's National Teacher and Principal Survey and the Merlin-Knoblich and Chen (2018) School Counselor Survey. This was done to minimize validity (are the questions measuring what they are supposed to measure) and reliability (can the study be replicated) concerns.

Data Analysis

Data were accumulated from 37 administrators and advising staff members. They were analyzed using SPSS. Univariate, bivariate, and multivariate analyses were planned, but the small sample made multivariate analyses not possible. To contextualize the findings of the study, percentage analyses and chi-squared tests were conducted.

A research log was kept for all of the interviews detailing all activities related to the study such as correspondence, interactions, meetings, and interviews. The interviews

were transcribed and saved. This was a cycle of reviewing the data and focusing on key material on the issues which informed or shaped the study. The secondary data review was when open coding was used to identify categories to organize the highlighted clusters of data which was then used to identify themes. Finally, the interview data was infused in the survey results to get a fuller “picture” of the issue being researched.

Characteristics of Survey Respondents

In all, survey respondents came from 30 different schools spread across eight states of which Pennsylvania was the most highly represented ($n = 21$). One respondent was from a community college and three other respondents were from private schools. While one school had four respondents and another three respondents, there were no occasions where both an administrator and a counselor responded from the same school. Perhaps because of the snowball sampling technique, African Americans were overrepresented, thus limiting generalizability of results. The probability of selection cannot be calculated because of the snowball technique, making any statistical generalizations difficult.

To determine any internal biases, basic demographic analyses were conducted to be able to consider potential biases. For the 37 survey respondents, gender was not related to race/ethnicity ($\chi^2 = 1.809$, p not significant). By percentage of respondents, the largest group of participants were African American females. See Table 3.2 for further details.

Table 3.2*Distribution of Survey Respondents' Gender by Race/Ethnicity*

Gender	African American or Black	Asian	Latinx	White	Total
Male	5 (50%)	0(0%)	0(0.0%)	5 (50%)	10
Female	17 (63%)	1 (4%)	1 (4%)	8 (30%)	27
Total	22 (59.5%)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	13 (35%)	37

$\chi^2 = 1.809$, p not significant

Although it might seem like a stretch to expect elementary school professionals to give advice relating to college, it is part of the Pennsylvania Department of Education Career Education and Work Academic Standards. (*PA Career Standards*, n.d.) As early as third grade, students are expected to know the importance of lifelong learning. In fifth grade, students are expected to know and be able to describe ranges of career training programs within their community including but not limited to: two-and four-year colleges, career, and technical education programs available at centers and high schools. This sets a firm foundation that promotes and creates awareness of postsecondary education and options. Recognizing that waiting until high school to prompt students to think about college is too late to increase the number of students seeking postsecondary opportunities, middle and high elementary (K–8) administrators were included. As indicated earlier, Xu et al. (2021) found that pre-high school differences explained the fact that African American and Hispanic students participated in dual enrollment programs at a significantly lower rate than white and Asian students. If a student does not take the appropriate courses from the start (9th grade), it will limit college enrollment. By percentage, most respondents worked in elementary schools rather than middle or high

schools. On a percentage basis, elementary school respondents were more likely to identify as Black or African American (n = 11, 350%) than those of other racial categories. See Table 3.3 for further details.

Table 3.3

Crosstabulation of Race/Ethnicity and School Personnel Role

Race	Elementary	Middle School	High School	Total
African American or Black	11(50.0%)	3(13.6%)	8(36.4%)	22
Asian	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(100.0%)	1
Latinx	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(100.0%)	1
White	7(53.8%)	3(23.1%)	3(23.1%)	13
Total	18(48.6%)	6(16.2%)	13(35.1%)	37

$\chi^2 = 2.113$, *p* not significant

On a percentage basis, male respondents were more apt to be in an elementary or high school than were female respondents. No male respondents were in a middle school. Please see Table 3.4 for further details.

Table 3.4

Crosstabulation of Gender and School Personnel by School

Gender	Elementary	Middle School	High School	Total
Male	6(60.0%)	0(0.0%)	4(40.0%)	10
Female	12(44.4%)	6(22.2%)	9(33.3%)	27
Total	18(48.6%)	6(16.2%)	13(35.1%)	37

$\chi^2 = 2.677$, *p* not significant

On a percentage basis, male respondents were more apt to be administrators while female respondents were more apt to be teachers or counselors. See Table 3.5 for further details.

A higher percentage of administrative respondents identified as African American, or Black compared to their white counterparts ($n = 5$; 35.5%). See table 3.6 for details.

Table 3.5

Crosstabulation of Gender and School Personnel by Role

Gender	Administrator	Teacher	Counselor	Total
Male	8(80.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(20.0%)	10
Female	11(40.7%)	4(14.8%)	12(44.4%)	27
Total	19(51.4%)	4(10.8%)	14(37.8%)	37

$\chi^2 = 4.824$, p not significant

On a percentage basis, African American respondents were more apt to be administrators than respondents in the other racial/ethnic groups. African American and White respondents were equally likely to be counselors. See Table 3.6 for further details.

Characteristics of Interviewees

Given Temple University IRB requirements, it was not possible to link any survey responses with any interviewee’s responses. This was to protect the complete anonymity of the research respondents.

Most of the leaders in service are school principals. See Table 3.7 for details.

Table 3.6*Crosstabulation of Race/Ethnicity and School Personnel Role*

Race/Ethnicity	Administration	Teacher	Counselor	Total
African American or Black	12(54.5%)	1(4.5%)	9(40.9%)	22
Asian	1(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1
Latinx	1(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1
White	5(38.5%)	3(23.1%)	5(38.5%)	13
Total	19(51.4%)	4(10.8%)	14(37.8%)	37

 $\chi^2 = 5.023, p$ not significant

In the sample, males were more likely to have roles as principals. It is also important to note that there were no males that served in the role as superintendent. See table 3.8 for details.

As shown in Table 3.9, there is a greater representation of those who identify as African American or Black in the Principal and Superintendent role. This is a needed perspective given the number of studies where respondents are mostly White.

Conclusion

The survey respondents and interviewees are somewhat diverse and represent different perspectives. Their attitudes towards dual enrollment issues will be discussed in subsequent sections.

Table 3.7*Characteristics of School Leaders*

Interviewees	Gender	Race/Ethnicity	Position
Person A	Female	African American	Superintendent
Person B	Female	African American	Superintendent
Person C	Male	African American	Principal
Person D	Female	African American	Chief Academic Officer
Person E	Female	African American	Principal
Person F	Male	African American	Principal
Person G	Male	African American	Principal
Person H	Male	African American	Principal
Person I	Male	White	Principal
Person J	Male	White	Assistant to the Superintendent

Table 3.8*Crosstabulation of Gender and School Administrative Role*

Gender	Principal/Asst Principal	Superintendent	Other Administrative Role	Total
Female	1 (25.7%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)	4 (100%)
Male	5 (83.3%)	0 (0%)	1 (16.7%)	6 (100%)
Total	6 (60%)	2 (20%)	2 (20%)	10 (100%)

Table 3.9*Crosstabulation of Race/Ethnicity and School Administrative Role*

Race	Principal/Asst		Other	Total
	Principal	Superintendent	Administrative	
			Role	
African American or Black	5	2	1	8
Asian	0	0	0	0
Latinx	0	0	0	0
White	1	0	1	2
Total	6	2	2	10

CHAPTER 4
DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Introduction

School personnel on all levels should support students with academic achievement, character development, emotional management, and postsecondary options. Those postsecondary options include workforce, military and/or higher education. Starting as early as elementary school, students are to be exposed to college and career issues.

Research Question #1: How do School Personnel/Administrators’ Characteristics Support Students’ Development?

How school leaders allocated their time varied. Considering gender, on a percentage basis, the leader’s gender had little effect on how much time was spent with students selecting and scheduling courses. A possible explanation is that this is not a time-consuming task. See Table 4.1 for further details.

Table 4.1

Crosstabulation of Gender by Time Spent Per Week Meeting with Students Selecting and Scheduling Courses

Gender	None	1-4 hours	5- 10 hours	11 and more hours	DNA	Total
Male	3(30.0%)	3(30.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(20.0%)	2(20.0%)	10 (100%)
Female	8(29.6%)	10(37.0%)	3(11.1%)	4(14.8%)	2(7.4%)	27 (100%)
Total	11(29.7%)	13(35.1%)	3(8.1%)	6(16.2%)	4(10.8%)	37 (100%)

$\chi^2 = 2.406, p$ not significant

Table 4.2 shows us that on a percentage basis, most of the respondents spend 4 hours or less meeting with students to discuss the students' academic development (24, 64.9%). By percentage, females spend more time on this than males. See Table 4.2 for further details.

Table 4.2

Crosstabulation of Gender by Time Spent Per Week Meeting Students to Discuss Academic Development

Gender	None	1-4 hours	5- 10 hours	11 and more hours	DNA	Total
Male	1(10.0%)	5(50.0%)	1(10.0%)	1(10.0%)	2(20.0%)	10 (100%)
Female	2(7.4%)	16(59.3%)	3(11.1%)	5(18.5%)	1(3.7%)	27 (100%)
Total	3(8.1%)	21(56.8%)	4(10.8%)	6(16.2%)	3(8.1%)	37 (100%)

$\chi^2 = 2.896, p$ not significant

As can be seen in Table 4.3, on a percentage basis, female school personnel spend less time discussing job and employability skill development with students than do males. See Table 4.3 for further details.

Table 4.3

Crosstabulation of Gender by Time Spent Per Week Meeting with Students to Discuss Job Employability Skill Development

Gender	None	1-4 hours	5-10 hours	11 and more hours	DNA	Total
Male	2(20.0%)	3(30.0%)	1(10.0%)	2(20.0%)	2(20.0%)	10 (100%)
Female	3(11.1%)	15(55.6%)	5(18.5%)	2(7.4%)	2(7.4%)	27 (100%)
Total	5(13.5%)	18(48.6%)	6(16.2%)	4(10.8%)	4(10.8%)	37 (100%)

$\chi^2 = 3.874, p$ not significant

As shown in Table 4.4, female counselors spend a smaller percentage of time discussing job choice and career planning than do male colleagues. Indeed, 55.6% of the females report spending no time.

Table 4.4

Crosstabulation of Gender by Time Spent Per Week Meeting with Students to Discuss Job Choice and Career Planning

Gender	None	1-4 hours	5- 10 hours	11 and more hours	DNA	Total
Male	3(30.0%)	2(20.0%)	2(20.0%)	1(10.0%)	2(20.0%)	10 (100%)
Female	15(55.6%)	7(25.9%)	2(7.4%)	1(3.7%)	2(7.4%)	27 (100%)
Total	18(48.6%)	9(24.3%)	4(10.8%)	2(5.4%)	4(10.8%)	37 (100%)

$\chi^2 = 3.761$, p not significant

In sum, by percentage, men spend more time talking with students on career and work-related issues than do women, whereas women spend more time on social and academic issues. Whether this is due to unconscious gender biases or is by design certainly needs further research.

Next, consider how school professionals spend their time with students. Not unexpectedly, teachers, on a percentage basis, are less likely to meet with students to discuss career plans than counselors. On the other hand, administrators devote more time to this important task than do counselors. See Table 4.5 for details.

Social development is an essential part of growth for students. While school professionals across the board reported spending time on this activity, there were differences. By percentage, teachers spend more time than their colleagues. Counselors spend the least. However, social development is not as important as other education themes. See Table 4.5 for further details.

Table 4.5

Crosstabulation of School Role by Time Spent Per Week Meeting with Students to Discuss their Social Development

Role	None	1-4 hours	5-10 hours	11 and more hours	DNA	Total
Administrator	3(15.8%)	6(31.6%)	4(21.1%)	4(21.1%)	2(10.5%)	19 (100%)
Teacher	0(0%)	2(50.0%)	1(25.0%)	1(25.0%)	0(0%)	4 (100%)
Counselor	2(14.3%)	10(71.4%)	0(0%)	1(7.1%)	1(7.1%)	14 (100%)
Total	5(13.5%)	18(48.6%)	5(13.5%)	6(16.2%)	3(8.1%)	37 (100%)

$\chi^2 = 2.013, p$ not significant

Again, school professionals appear to focus more on direct education activities over a more foundational activity as “academic development.” On a percentage basis, efforts are concentrated in the second lowest category, 1–4 hours. In Table 4.6, 78.6% of school counseling professionals spend 1–4 hours a week meeting with students to discuss their academic development. The next highest percentage, 42.1%, falls to administrative professionals followed by teachers (26.3%). See Table 4.6 for further details.

In Table 4.7, we again see that while all school professionals spend 1-4 hours per week meeting with students discussing career plans, many do not devote more time. Traditionally this has been part of a school counselor’s portfolio. Could this be due to a refocusing that has been occurring in school counseling? More research is needed.. See Table 4.7 for further details.

Table 4.6

Crosstabulation of School Role by Time Spent Per Week Meeting with Students to Discuss their Academic Development

Role	None	1-4 hours	5- 10 hours	11 and more hours	DNA	Total
Administrator	2(10.5%)	8(42.1%)	2(10.5%)	5(26.3%)	2(10.5%)	19 (100%)
Teacher	1(25.0%)	2(50.0%)	1(25.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	4 (100%)
Counselor	0(0.0%)	11(78.6%)	1(7.1%)	1(7.1%)	1(7.1%)	14 (100%)
Total	3(8.1%)	21(56.8%)	4(10.8%)	6(16.2%)	3(8.1%)	37 (100%)

$\chi^2 = 8.557$, p not significant

Table 4.7

Crosstabulation of School Role by Time Spent Per Week Meeting with Students to Discuss their Career Plans

Role	None	1-4 hours	5-10 hours	11 and more hours	DNA	Total
Administrator	4(21.1%)	10(52.6%)	1(5.3%)	2(10.5%)	2(10.5%)	19 (100%)
Teacher	0(0.0%)	2(50.0%)	2(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	4 (100%)
Counselor	1(7.1%)	6(42.9%)	3(21.4%)	2(14.3%)	2(14.3%)	14 (100%)
Total	5(13.5%)	18(48.6%)	6(16.2%)	4(10.8%)	4(10.8%)	37 (100%)

$\chi^2 = 7.556$, p not significant

Perhaps the most interesting point shown in Table 4.8 is that most of the school professionals, on a percentage basis, spend 1–4 hours a week discussing job and employability skill development with students. Could this be due to the push for all students to go to college? Given the probability of a student’s changing majors in college,

any specific job skills become less relevant or important. The recent declines in college going, especially among males, is thought provoking. See Table 4.8 for further details.

Table 4.8

Crosstabulation of School Role by Time Spent Per Week Meeting with Students to Discuss Job and Employability Skill Development

Role	None	1-4 hours	5-10 hours	11 and more hours	DNA	Total
Administrator	8(42.1%)	7(36.8%)	1(5.3%)	1(5.3%)	2(10.5%)	19 (100%)
Teacher	3(75.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(25.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	4 (100%)
Counselor	7(50.0%)	2(14.3%)	2(14.3%)	1(7.1%)	2(14.3%)	14 (100%)
Total	18(48.6%)	9(24.3%)	4(10.8%)	2(5.4%)	4(10.8%)	37 (100%)

$\chi^2 = 5.848$, p not significant

Overall, in Table 4.9, school professionals spend many hours discussing non-academic but school related issues such as attendance, discipline, and other personal problems with students regularly. See Table 4.9 for further details.

Table 4.9

Crosstabulation of School Role by Time Spent Per Week Meeting with Students to Discuss Attendance, Discipline, and Other Personal Problems

Role	None	1-4 hours	5-10 hours	11 and more hours	DNA	Total
Administrator	0(0%)	7(36.8%)	4(21.1%)	6(31.6%)	2(10.5%)	19 (100%)
Teacher	1(25.0%)	0(0%)	2(50.0%)	1(25.0%)	0(0%)	4 (100%)
Counselor	0(0%)	4(28.6%)	6(42.9%)	2(14.3%)	2(14.3%)	14 (100%)
Total	1(2.7%)	11(29.7%)	12(32.4%)	9(24.3%)	4(10.8%)	37 (100%)

$\chi^2 = 12.058$, p not significant

In sum, as captured in the survey, by percentage, teachers, followed by counselors, spend little time with students discussing job and related issues. Further, counselors devote less time to discipline issues than do teachers or administrators. Lastly, it appears that school professionals continue to focus on the traditional vocational issues and career planning student development issues, but less time on academic or discipline issues. as can be seen in Figure 1.

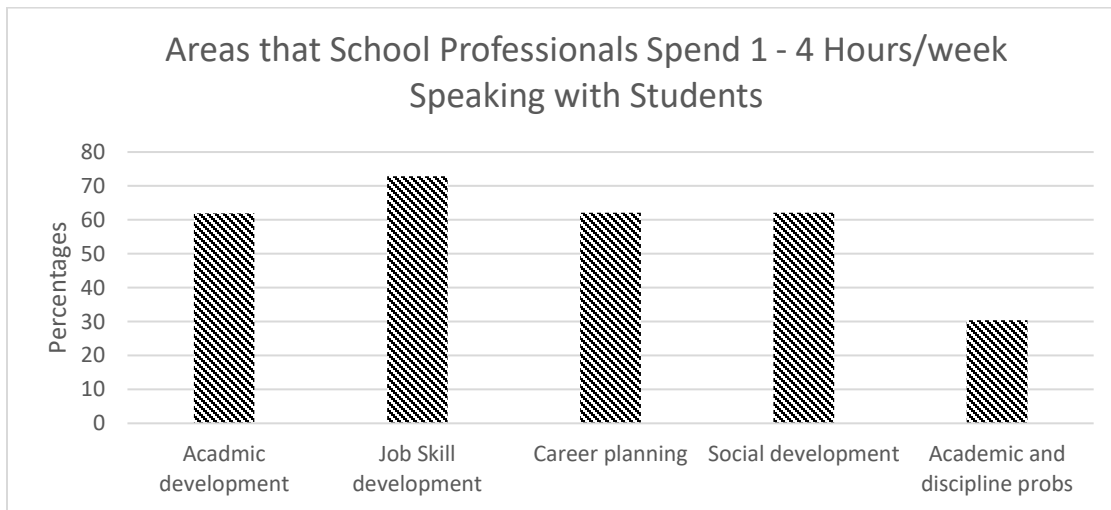


Figure 1. Areas that School Professionals Spend No More Than 4 Hours/Week Speaking with Students.

In sum, in allocating time to discuss school relevant issues with students, respondents generally met what was expected of their roles. There were some thought-provoking results. For example, by percentage, administrators reported spending more time on academic issues and the teachers the least. Administrators spent more time on academic and discipline issues followed closely by teachers, with counselors spending the least time. This may reflect the general push for everyone to go to college, as all spent time on career development but not on job and work skills.

Research Question #2: How Does the Education/Experience of School Professionals Relate to the Advice Given to Students with Respect to College Related Programs?

Introduction

School counselor preparation programs have a variety of course offerings, credit, field placement requirements and faculty experiences (Pérusse & Goodnough, 2001). Some graduate programs for school counselors do not yet offer a college admissions course for school counselors, let alone programs that focus on equity (The College Board, 2010). This might leave school personnel with limited education and awareness about college readiness programs and processes, which can create a barrier for students.

Table 4.10 shows a diverse group of school counselors in terms of service. Out of the 11 counselors interviewed, only two had coursework in their counselor preparation program that was related to college readiness. Four of the school counselors serve in an urban school setting, while four serve in suburban and two serve in another setting.

Effective college readiness counseling requires a strong foundation in counseling, developed through course work and field-based training. This includes a general, if not specific, knowledge of postsecondary education history, college choice theories and policies, aspiration formation, and barriers to postsecondary enrollment and persistence. However, programs in counselor education rarely include course work in college readiness counseling, favoring instead clinical training and content areas such as vocational development and psychological testing (McDonough, 2005; National Association for College Admission Counseling [NACAC], 2004).

Table 4.10*Characteristics of School Counselors*

Counselor	Years Of Service	College Readiness Course work (Y or N)	Urban, Suburban or Other School Setting
Counselor A	8	N	Urban
Counselor B	35	N	Other
Counselor C	23	N	Suburban
Counselor D	22	Y	Suburban
Counselor E	28	N	Suburban
Counselor F	4	N	Urban
Counselor G	20	N	Urban
Counselor H	23	N	Other
Counselor I	10	N	Suburban
Counselor J	12	N	Urban
Counselor K	5	Y	Urban

According to NACAC (2004), fewer than 30 counselor education programs offer a course in college readiness counseling that offers school counseling credit, a small number compared with the 466 programs listed by the American School Counselor Association. This may be partially explained by the fact that there are no states that require course work or competencies in college readiness counseling for secondary school counselor licensure. The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) includes career development as one of eight common

core curricular areas and requires CACREP-accredited programs to include opportunities for students to learn “how to design, implement, manage, and evaluate transition programs, including school-to-work, postsecondary planning, and college admissions counseling” (CACREP, 2009, p. 41). However, this does not impose specific curricular requirements in college readiness counseling.

This is critical in the way we prepare our young people for the world of work and postsecondary life. Only one out of ten school counselors who were interviewed had coursework pertaining to college readiness in their counselor preparation program. When asked about this, Counselor F, a newer counselor, responded,

I didn't have any courses related to college and career readiness. It was something that I had to learn on my own after I got my job. It was something that caused a great deal of stress during my first two years as a school counselor. I feel like I did my students a real disservice those first two years because I was figuring everything out as I was going. I was honest with my students and their families about needing to educate myself on the topic, so I referred them to other professionals in the field. We learned together in that way. It made me feel incompetent, though. It's year 4 for me as a counselor and I have a pretty good handle on it now, but what a journey!

Counselor H, a seasoned counselor with 23 years in the field, agreed:

My counseling program concentrated more on actual counseling. I had two special education courses; a life span psychology course and the rest were counseling and methods courses. Counseling programs were leaving it up to the schools to teach us how the school operates because all schools run things differently. I remember meeting with an outside district at a community meeting and they were impressed with how much we did with college and career in our district. They wanted us to help put together a college and career program for them.

Another seasoned respondent, Counselor D offered another opinion:

Yes, I had course work on college and career readiness. The coursework served as a foundation for understanding best practices on advising. I would have to say that I felt all that knowledge come into practice through

my internships and being able to perform the day-to-day job function. It's one thing to study theory, but the implementation of a holistic counseling program was more impactful in my professional career.

With only 5 years of experience, Counselor K offered a more direct point of view:

I took a career counseling class while in my program. I learned about a lot of resources that were beneficial to students. Things such as interest surveys, careers aptitude and personality tests. All these things I used heavily when working as a school counselor. It even helped to open conversation about trade schools and entering the workforce after high school. This was all great to know, because not every student is going to go to college and that is okay. I am just glad that I knew what to do and had the resources to assist them.

School counselors working in settings with high proportions of first-generation, low-income, and underrepresented minority students have the potential to act as a key source of social capital to promote participation in postsecondary education, reinforcing the need for highly qualified and trained counselors (Farmer-Hinton, 2008).

Other school counselors found that their preparation was deficient. According to Counselor A,

While in my counseling program, we only scratched the surface of college and career planning. It was expressed to us (counselors) that it would be a requirement within the position to assist students with higher education, not so much with career planning because college was and is the expected goal for students. During my tenure with my current school, it has been a struggle in terms of advice given to my students. The struggle comes from the consistent changes in graduation requirements as well as of the other demands put on school counselors...I did not have programming that dealt with college and career readiness while in my counseling program. At the time I did my practicum and supervision, college and career readiness was just beginning in its beginning stages. This was about 22 years ago. I really didn't see a whole lot going on in any of the schools I was working with at that time. Once I began working in my current district, and being involved in programming, it exposed me to different career pathways, and I could give better guidance on schools and colleges that students could attend.

Critics of poor college readiness counseling in low-income schools typically label school counselors as central to the problem, citing high student–counselor ratios, few college planning resources, and an overemphasis on administrative duties (Corwin et al., 2004; Johnson & Rochkind, 2010). At the same time, other studies indicate that students of color, first-generation college-bound students, and low-income students rely heavily on their school counselors for providing high postsecondary expectations and college planning support (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2000; Choy, 2001; Noeth & Wimberly, 2002; Terenzini et al., 2001). The takeaway here is that all too many students encounter challenges that need to be addressed in a coherent fashion.

One interesting finding is that while not statistically significant, it does appear, by percentage point differences, that high school professionals (50%) are slightly less likely to gender-based advice than those in elementary/middle grade schools (57.6%). Perhaps gender role socialization is more solidified among high school students and thus reinforcement is not needed. See Table 4.11 for further details.

Table 4.11

Crosstabulation of School Type by Whether Advice is Gender-Based

Type of School	Yes	No	Total
Elementary/ Middle grades	11 (57.6%)	8 (42.4%)	19 (100%)
High school grades	6 (50.0%)	6 (50.0%)	12 (100%)
Total	17 (54.8%)	14 (45.2%)	31 (100%)

$\chi^2 = 1.062, p$ not significant

Summary

Overall, the respondents felt that their education did not fully prepare them, but that their on the job experiences filled in what was needed. There was some variation in responses related to experience and school level. Advice given differs by school with those in high school being more apt to be gender free.

Research Question #3: How do Educational Leaders Perceive Their Role in Widening Access to Dual Enrollment Programs?

School leadership roles are critical to student success and academic achievement. While school leaders are inundated with a myriad of assignments and must be multi-taskers most times; the single task that outweighs everything is academic achievement. However, academic achievement and accessibility go hand in hand. Students are unable to achieve academically if there is a lack of funding or access to the resources needed. In this case, specifically, we are viewing addressing access and opportunity in dual enrollment programs through the lens of the school leader. The importance of dual enrollment opportunities cannot be overstated. One administrator gave a complex response that included related issues:

My role as a school administrator is critical for widening student access to dual enrollment. First, dual enrollment gives high school students the opportunity to transition from high school by engaging them in college level coursework and rigor. This will aid students in facing this challenge with one or two classes while they still have high school and family support systems in place.

Second, with teachers in short supply, particularly for many specialties curricular areas, it allows schools to tap into programs that would be too difficult to offer within the context of the high school.

Third, as a growing district, it provides additional flexibility on-campus for underclassmen. Our district is keen to get as many upperclassmen as

possible, particularly seniors, off-campus for alternate experiences. This allows us to ensure that more entry-level courses in different programs remain free for younger students.

Alignment and Articulation

When making decisions for students about dual enrollment, school leaders need to ensure that all things align on the district side. This may include but is not limited to reviewing memorandums of understanding from university partners, seeking approval from the district school board, and adhering to district outcomes. Respondent H views his role in this way:

I think an admin's role is critical in:

1. Determining dual enrollment alignment with target strategic district outcomes.
2. Ensure transferability of dual enrollment coursework.
3. Facilitate logistical execution and work to find solutions to eliminate barriers that may impede access. (Scheduling. Transportation if needed, clearances, access to instructional spaces)
4. Structure feedback/student tracking/supports for students to see they are meeting course requirements successfully.

Another administrator, Counselor I, said,

The only way to reap these benefits is to establish partnerships with regional colleges and universities. School administrators serve as the negotiators in this context to seek, pilot, and approve of these kinds of options to make available to students.

Articulation agreements and maximum transferability are critical in discussions surrounding dual enrollment. Administrators, families, and students want to be sure that the credits taken will have transferability if the student does not choose to stay with the college where they are enrolled (Kilgore & Wagner, 2017).

Dual enrollment as a strategy to encourage college-going through less time to degree completion and less expense only works if the credits students earn are transferable to the colleges they attend after high school. Articulation agreements govern the equivalency and transferability of courses and credits. These agreements may include a common core list of courses, a common course numbering system, and rules on how credits are given and the transferability of college credits between institutions (Cassidy et al., n.d.).

While articulation agreements are a good starting point, the dual enrollment courses need to have the rigor of the regular courses for them to be accepted for credit. Who teaches the course is an important consideration. Respondent F, a relatively new school professional working in an urban school, commented,

Personally, my role is to provide opportunities for my scholars to have access to as many educational opportunities before they leave my building. That is providing exposure, walking them through the process, every part, if needed. Also, helping my teachers identify students and teaching college level courses is needed. Sometimes it is easier to have my staff qualified to teach college level courses, rather than students leaving our building. This way, we are eliminating the barrier of transportation, but still providing an option. In that case, we are here on this side to provide support that the students are a little more familiar with.

However, care must be taken in the selection of students to participate in a dual enrollment program. Not all students are suitable. This perspective was supported by another interviewee thusly by Respondent J, a school professional working in an urban school:

We have students who are well equipped academically to participate in dual enrollment, but some are not quite ready for full independence and being on a college campus. In this case, we still want to be able to provide the opportunity to run classes here at our school, taught by our teachers.

This gives students a known, comfortable environment and we can ween them into independence.

Long-Term Plans

Along with aligning college courses with graduation requirements and district outcomes, dual enrollment courses need to align with the students' desired major and/or desired program of study if benefits are to be truly attained. As noted in Chapter 2, some colleges and schools simply encourage dual enrollment students to take general education courses without prompting them to consider where they will lead. This can mislead students and families and create frustration when students' credits do not transfer to a four-year university or apply to program and major requirements (Mehl et al., 2020).

Dual enrollment partners must find the best ways to enable students to get credit toward associate and bachelor's degrees for coursework in career and technical education. High school students may enroll in career and technical education dual enrollment classes because they are especially engaging, teach skills required in the workforce, and prepare explicitly for careers. Yet often the career and technical education credits do not apply to degree programs at colleges (Mehl et al., 2020). This can be both frustrating and expensive for students and families. Academic advisors shared that students who pursued dual enrollment coursework often assumed all earned credits would directly advance their postsecondary education trajectory. This is not necessarily the case. Advisors recounted instances in which they met with students who took dual enrollment classes that did not apply to the student's college degree attainment because the student was undecided at the time of dual enrollment (Witkowsky et al., 2020). One school

leader, Respondent C, elaborated on the difficulty in trying to meet all of the students' needs by describing what his institution offer:

It is essential that we have many offerings for our students here at our school. We offer AP classes, dual enrollment courses through the local community college; but we also expose our students to some career pathways. We encourage our students to explore various postsecondary opportunities. These explorations help students select college/career pathways. We must be prepared to offer our students different things, some students want to go straight to college, others into the world of work.

Dissemination of Information

An important consideration is that the lack of information can effectively eliminate a year of the dual enrollment experience. Some state laws now stipulate that schools distribute written notification about dual enrollment, although the responsibility for adequate, timely dissemination resides within individual districts. Families do need information about their state's laws existence, prerequisites required to qualify, appropriate college courses, potential consequences of participation, and timelines that coordinate differences in high school and college calendars (McCarthy, 1999).

It is essential that communication happens between students, families, and school professionals. Oftentimes, information about college/university programs about dual enrollment opportunities fail to reach the hands of families. Even the instances when the information does reach the student's household, the responsibility still remains with the school leadership to ensure that the information is understood. As Respondent D, a long-time school administrator said,

One key component is ensuring parents/families understand opportunities as well. If scholars are not provided access including exposure to educational opportunities, how can they take advantage of them? Families must know what to advocate for. We must ensure families know how to fight from the other end. Imagine the opportunities afforded to scholars

when there are combined efforts to expose them to opportunities, they did not even know they wanted.... I'm just saying.... We must educate the families on what these opportunities are and why they are even important.

Unfortunately, parents who have not had opportunities to attend college themselves have neither experienced the process of college preparation and college going nor sufficient access to needed access. (Ceja, 2006). One interviewee agreed and spoke of breaking down barriers, as this is equally important:

My role is critical to communicating to students and their families their opportunities to access higher education. In addition to partnering with foundations who can fund dual enrollment opportunities and colleges who are open to ensuring that the students' needs are also being met.

Advocacy

Advocacy is a large part of what school leaders do. For school leaders serving underrepresented students, advocacy work is critical to academic success and survival. Creating policies and practices that address to be more readily available to all students requires a deep understanding of why equity gaps exist in dual enrollment for underrepresented Black and Latinx students (Hooper & Harrington, 2022). Laws, as well as schools, sometimes improve with parent involvement. While dual enrollment motivated legislators may have simply been focused on cost-saving, parents found the positive effect on their children's interest and enthusiasm. (McCarthy, 1999). This was articulated thusly by one administrator, "I see myself as the chief advocate and architect in terms of access. I am responsible for putting systems, policies, and procedures in place to remove barriers and expand access."

Minority Issues

Research on African American and Latino parental involvement in college preparation and planning has shown that despite high expectations for educational attainment, few parents know how to access to meaningful information to help them understand the college application process (Torrez, 2004). The school leaders all reported experiencing low parental involvement in their child’s educational planning, especially of parents of at-risk children.

It is important for leaders to understand where they might advocate for policies that could advance equity in a lasting way and how policies that expand dual enrollment without race-conscious efforts to equalize access may only widen equity gaps (Hicks & Jones, 2020). Schools need to consider whether students are not tracked into acceleration options by race or income as was shown in the seminal work *The Educational Decision-Makers* by Cicourel and Kitsuse (1963), but rather that they are encouraged to pursue the program that will help them achieve their greatest aspirations. If developed through an equity-minded lens, dual enrollment programs could serve as a catalyst for inspiring students to look beyond high school and set postsecondary education and career goals (Taylor, 2015). One school leader, Respondent G, explicated how important it is to understand what is needed and what a leader needs to be doing:

That is a great question. Many districts, including my current one struggle with “opening it up” to all willing participants. Some want to narrow it to only those who qualify. But if you aren’t “on track” with having the prerequisites as a middle schooler and underclassmen, how can you ever qualify? My personal goal in my current role has been to increase the amount of minority students who have A’s and B’s at all levels and connecting them with other minorities who are struggling. I call it my “mentorship pipeline.

One veteran school professional, Respondent E, with 28 years of experience agreed,

I love this question; I will do anything necessary for my students to have the opportunity to take advantage of dual enrollment. We are a small school with 95% of students qualifying for free and reduced lunch. Almost if not all the students in my building are minorities and/or of low socio-economic status. In many cases, my students cannot afford the price tag that comes with a dual enrollment opportunity. We just do not have the resources that our more affluent counterparts do.

Ongoing Support

Interviewees generally felt that their prior educational experiences provided a good foundation for discussing and supporting dual enrollment programming. Further, as indicated above, interviewees were in accord that it was extremely helpful to the K–12 schools to have academic advisors work with higher education institutions to assist the students with the dual enrollment process. The advisors can speak with students and help answer questions about the college process that K–12 professionals are not equipped to respond to.

While dual-enrolled students may be capable of comprehending college curricula, they likely lack experience with the organizational tools and time management required of college students. The clues held within a syllabus that help to organize time, the unknown maze of a college campus, the expected judgment in making decisions—these are likely all new experiences. Indeed, advice on deciding which course to take and how to read a college schedule of classes would help orient most new students (McCarthy, 1999).

Leaving the high school environment is not always easy, either. Students can easily be disenfranchised from their school if they are not full-time participants. They

may miss daily announcements of important activities, become an outsider as the school “nerd,” or feel guilty for taking the school’s money. These students can feel that they fit in with either school. Being able to take on advanced coursework should not require that they must figure everything else out on their own (McCarthy, 1999). According to one very experienced administrator, Interviewee C,

We are grateful to have a great relationship with the institutions that we partner with in offering dual enrollment. Although many things have been a challenge through the pandemic, our dual enrollment program and partnership has been the one thing that has stood firm. We have a system that works like a well-oiled machine. While we (the school and the school counselor) serve as the first point of contact, there are advisors at our higher education institutions that work directly with our students and families. It takes us out of the equation when there are details involved. The advisors at the colleges are dedicated to the dual enrollment students. They are there to answer questions and point them in the right direction, such as with academic support services. The students can also reach back to us for help as well.

Other Issues

Although not directly related to the topic at hand, interviewees brought up another theme that has indirect applicability related to student mental health. With all the interviewees, the subject of mental health came up as a topic of discussion. Each leader agreed that they have seen a multitude of mental health issues present themselves during the last two years with the pandemic present. The leaders also agreed that the pandemic put a strain on all things, mainly their staff and students. The pandemic created a domino effect in their schools. Almost all the leaders experienced great loss ranging from covid related deaths of staff members to a mental health crisis within the student body. Many of the school leaders spoke of seeing an uptick in mental health referrals for students. The

leading causes of the mental health issues ranged from anxiety, stress, depression and unfortunately, suicidal thoughts.

Being able to adjust to change is considered resiliency. However, the leaders agreed that being able to adapt to sudden change with multiple things happening at once was most definitely a challenge. These challenges were magnified with the pandemic.

Among the challenges are:

- Computers not being accessible in some student homes, therefore school districts having to give students school-issued laptops.
- Instruction time being cut short, but assignments seemed to grow in number.
- Some leaders saw student engagement drop during this time.
- A revolving door and teachers citing burnout and leaving the field which led to a tremendous teacher shortage in some school districts.

The American Psychological Association (APA, 2020) reported that nearly 81% of Gen Z teens (ages 13–17) experienced more intense stress associated with schooling due to COVID-19. However, APA's report does not delve into the specific details of the stressors arising from the pandemic-related changes in schooling. According to one administrator, interviewee G,

Not only do we have students who are underrepresented that fight through barriers to have access and opportunity daily, we were just hit with an unprecedented pandemic. We have never seen anything like this in our time. We have had several cases in school with there are issues with students and mental health is cited as the cause. The pandemic affected everyone, no matter what you looked like. It took a toll on my staff and especially my students. So, while we want to make sure we are providing the best opportunities for our students; we want to be sure that we have systems in place to support systems. We also want to be secure in knowing that these systems are in place for our dual enrollment students who may be on college campuses or taking classes virtually.

Another administrator, interviewee E, raised this issue,

We take mental health here in school, very seriously. We have counseling and mental health staff here routinely. For us, the challenge was that we did not return to school at the same time the other schools in our area did. Our students were home for an additional 9-10 months after the fact. We had many challenges. We were dealing with issues many don't even know about on top of the pandemic. We have students who lost parents and/or loved ones to Covid, students with incarcerated parents who are being raised by their grandparents or another member of the family. The odds are stacked against our students in so many ways, so it is our duty to provide all the assistance that we can to help them through. My students are some of the most resilient people I know.

Conclusion

While school counseling professionals may be the main point of contact regarding dual enrollment through their advising responsibilities, school administrators are the glue that holds everything together. Principals and superintendents are the chief decision makers and advocates for the students and families. While school administrators have a wealth of responsibilities, the pandemic just added more as they were thrown into the challenging positions of learning how to adjust and deal with online teaching and learning. It was evident throughout the findings that school leaders have been willing to do what was necessary to expose their students to great opportunities and provide necessary awareness. It should also be noted that school leaders recognized the need for and importance of providing their underrepresented populations with the same access and opportunities as their counterparts.

Access and opportunities do not come without sacrifice. School leaders needed to defend decisions that were made for their schools even when others did not see it as the best interest. Educational leadership goes beyond being multi-taskers and a disciplinarian,

it involves improving the school culture, climate, and processes to achieve academic success.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Study Limitations and Implications for Educational Leaders

School Counselors

Schools seem to have put a basic system in place to offer advice and guidance to young people leaving high school. However, very few high school graduates reported that they never met a guidance counselor. Studies have shown that guidance counselors are inundated with outside tasks and do not necessarily spend most of their time advising students (McDonough, 2004; U.S. Department of Education, 2004). Much of their day is devoted to administrative tasks, discipline issues, and untangling scheduling issues, according to experts on the profession. It appears that the role of the guidance counselor has changed with more student-centered individual issues being more prominent at the expense of academic issues. Let us reprise the discussion and findings.

School Professionals and School Leadership

School based and school district leadership are pivotal to the success of the students. While school principals are the “glue” that binds relationships together, everyone is needed to ensure student success. It is the collaborative relationship of the principal, guidance counselor, and teacher that is needed. In the percentage analyses, it was readily apparent that individuals in these roles each had slightly different perspectives, but all had the same focus, and that was student success. Educational leadership is a collaborative effort and process that requires the time, talent, and resources of all named above to ensure educational quality. School leaders quickly

become advocates for their students ensuring that access, equity and opportunity are provided for all.

The Research Questions

This study set out to answer three questions that related to addressing college access and academic opportunity for students. The first question centered on how school professionals, i.e., teachers, counselors, and administrators' demographics are related to their interactions with students, specifically what is discussed and how often relative to the selection and support of students' postsecondary decisions. It was found that overall, on a percentage basis, female school counselors spent more hours a week meeting with students to discuss more general student development issues while males were more focused on job and career issues.

The second question focused on the experience and education of school professionals and how these affected their interaction with students about college-related programs. While the literature showed that school counseling education programs have few if any courses dedicated to college preparation and awareness, there are tools and resources available for school professionals to use. Overall, the interviewees did not find that they were at a loss here as their field experience compensated for this deficit.

The third question focused on how educational leaders perceived their roles in widening student access to college-forward programs such as dual enrollment. School leaders are responsible for a very diverse set of tasks, academic achievement and access to precollege programs, and opportunities for postsecondary education are important. Educational leaders stated that they wanted to provide support in the following ways:

- Eliminate barriers to pre-college programs/dual enrollment opportunities.
- Strengthen communication between families and school leadership.
- Widen access for dual enrollment across the student body.
- Advocate for underrepresented youth/minority populations.
- Establishing more partnerships with higher education institutions.

Summary of the Results

In sum, by percentage, men spend more time talking with students on career and work-related issues than do women. Again, by percentage, women spend more time on social and academic issues. In allocating time to discuss school relevant issues with students, respondents generally met what was expected of their roles. There were some problematic results. For example, by percentage, administrators reported spending more time on academic issues and the teachers the least. Administrators spent more time on academic and discipline issues followed closely by teachers and counselors the least. Perhaps reflecting the general push for everyone to go to college, all spent time on career development but not on job and work skills.

It is essential that one walks away with having learned valuable lessons from had experiences. Initially, the goal of the study was to research the perceptions of school professionals relating to college forward advising. What was revealed was that there was an effort for all students to have access to dual enrollments programs, but systemic issues stood in the way and presented challenges to these efforts. Many school counseling preparation programs have not yet been adequately modified to offer courses on college preparation for K–12 students.

Limitations of Study

As is the case for an empirical study, it is important to be mindful of limitations. The overarching issue is the low number of responses. Certainly, the pandemic could have been the explanatory factor as people became more inwardly focused and interacted very infrequently with others, it became easier to ignore online surveys. Related to this is self-selection bias, where the distribution of respondents was biased in terms of who did or did not choose to respond. In general individuals with more extreme views, i.e., at either end of the continuum, are more apt to respond than those in the middle of the distribution. As a result, more moderate views are not captured. With higher responses rate, this issue can become less important. Another factor affecting the response rate was the fact that the survey and interviews were conducted at the end of the school year and through the summer. This occurred because of IRB delays.

Several issues compromised data collection. Collecting survey and interviews data at the end of the school year through the summertime was a challenge. This was not the original plan, but IRB delays intruded. The tough decision to send the surveys out when we did was made to meet IRB deadlines rather than suffer a six-month delay. Another issue relates to the Covid-19 pandemic which certainly affected the study as well. Some interviewees had a challenging time participating due to scheduling conflicts and school events, issues and events affected by the press to “go online.” When meeting fact to face presented a challenge due to Covid restrictions, interviews were conducted via Zoom. Lastly, originally the study was to be focused on two local school districts, one urban and one suburban to facilitate data collection. Again, because of the pandemic

effects, the survey was opened to other school professionals in various school districts. Interestingly, this last issue resulted in a more geographically diverse group.

Taken together, these issues limit the generalizability of the findings, making them suggestive rather than definitive. In their highly cited article, Tversky and Kahneman (1971) wrote, “The belief that results from small samples are representative of the overall population is a cognitive bias (p. 109). As a result, care must be taken to position any results.

Recommendations for Future Research and Practice

The findings of this study identified several areas in the education system that could use more attention if the goal is to reduce barriers and broaden college access and opportunities for all students, especially those who are economically disadvantaged. To direct the discussion, two domains have been identified, the educational level and responsibility area. To effect real change both need to be studied further, both within a domain as well as in between domains. See Table 5.1.

Table 5.1

Responsibilities by Educational Level

Educational Level	Responsibility	
	Institution	Student
High School	How to improve academic supports	How to take advantage of academic supports
	How to improve college going knowledge and supports	How to take advantage of college going knowledge and supports
College	How to improve academic supports	How to take advantage of academic supports

While interviewees discussed how they had experienced good working relationships with individuals at higher education institutions, it appeared that the “hand-off” from high school to higher education institutions could be improved to establish means of working more closely together. This could be done in several ways. For example, school districts and colleges and universities could appoint liaisons to work collaboratively between the two entities. Colleges and universities could meet with school leadership about what is needed and potentially design a program around said need. As an example, one university in the mid-Atlantic region established a collaborative effort between the university and the local school district. The two institutions have banded together to create and promote access and opportunity for high school students who desire to become educators.

While this opportunity is available to all, it specifically targets students of color and other underrepresented youth. This collaboration does many things for the urban area. One, it provides access and opportunity to inner city youth to experience the challenge and academic rigor of college courses. It creates a bond/partnership between school leaders and university leadership, creating a transitional bridge for students to cross over with less barriers. In the grand scheme of things, this program has the ability to produce more teachers of color who return back to their home school areas to become teachers, hence helping to address the teacher shortage. The key to any successful program is clear, consistent communication and to make sure all key stakeholders are at the table. These collaborative partners have done just that.

Another example, mentioned by an interviewee, comes from a small city/semi-rural community college partnering with the surrounding school districts and

homeschooling associations to provide dual enrollment courses to high school students. Qualified juniors and seniors are able to take courses on any of the community college's three physical campuses, virtually or even within their school building. Participating in the partnership's dual enrollment program allows students to take college general education courses while still enrolled in a high school.

In the K–12 realm, greater emphasis could be put on college access and preparation within school counseling programs. Additionally, school counseling professionals could have more resources and education made available to them to update their knowledge and skills. However, while school counselors are uniquely positioned to guide all students toward college readiness, the survey and interviews captured the collaboration among all of the school professionals that occurs and needs to continue. Each interacts with teachers, administrators, students, and their families each day, marshaling forces from across the school, district and community. All can profoundly influence students' academic achievement, aspirations, decisions, and future plans. The counselors are the school-based professionals who connect students to resources and information about preparing for and applying to college. It appears that school counseling preparation program should consider including more college admission materials so that high school counselors could better prepare students for college selection and application submissions.

Advocacy and Policy

Perhaps the time has come for all of those in the educational process to advocate for expanding college access, ensuring fair funding for K–12 school systems, diversifying the educator pipeline, and supporting safe schools among other issues. It would appear

that this is a good time to reach out to interact with community-based organizations to advocate for equity in education. Better working relationships among school leaders, students, and families focused on working with policy makers and elected officials to broaden college access would be beneficial. According to the Education Trust (2020), policymakers can improve the lives of African American and Latinx students by making meaningful policy changes. These impactful policy changes could assist with closing the educational achievement gap. However, students need to accept the school-based support to enroll and excel in challenging courses and programs.

One example of how this is being done is that of dual enrollment programming. There are many states that have turned dual enrollment access and opportunity into law while others collaborate with higher education institutions voluntarily. Currently, in the state of Pennsylvania, the Department of Education has announced a request for application for funding to support dual credit experiences for high school students. This is an amazing opportunity for school districts to eliminate cost related barriers. It was announced that \$6.5 million is available in competitive grants with eligible grantees receiving up to a total award of \$75,000 to cover allowable expenses between August 1, 2022, until June 30, 2024. Effective the 2022–23 academic school year, Pennsylvania law requires school entities to enter into agreements with institutions of higher education to allow students to earn college-level credit prior to graduating high school (Pennsylvania Pressroom, 2023).

Another example is in Florida, where dual enrollment courses are governed by law and more than 40,000 students participate each year. Tuition and fees are waived for students and textbooks are provided at no cost to students from public high schools.

(Dual Enrollment at Florida's Colleges and Universities, n.d.). In the state of Michigan, students can take advantage of dual enrollment programs as early as ninth grade, continuing through their senior year at no cost. Michigan law requires school boards or public-school academies to ensure that every student in eighth grade and above receives information on dual enrollment opportunities *(Dual Enrollment, n.d.)*.

The Reach Higher Initiative *(The First Lady's Reach Higher Initiative, 2015)*, spearheaded by former First Lady Michelle Obama, was designed to inspire high school students to pursue postsecondary education. This initiative was an equity-based college and career readiness program designed for all students. The initiative will help make sure all students understand what is needed to complete their education through the following: exposing students to college and career opportunities, understanding financial aid eligibility makes college an affordable reality, encouraging academic planning and summer learning opportunities, and supporting high school counselors who can help more kids get into college.

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APPENDIX A

SURVEYS AND SURVEY ITEMS

The National Teacher and Principal Survey (NTPS) is a system of related questionnaires that provide descriptive data on the context of public and private elementary and secondary education in addition to giving local, state, and national policymakers a variety of statistics on the condition of education in the United States. As a nationwide sample survey collecting information directly from teachers and principals, the NTPS provides an opportunity for the characteristics and experiences of school staff to inform analyses about the education sector. Redesigned from the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) with a focus on flexibility, timeliness, and integration with other ED data, the NTPS system allows for principal, teacher, and student characteristics to be analyzed in detail and supports the analysis of a variety of subgroups (e.g., female principals, Black or African-American teachers, rural schools)

1. Including yourself, how many full-time and part-time counselors work with high school students at (insert school name)?
2. On average, what is the caseload for a counselor in your school?
3. Which of the following describe how counselors are assigned to students at your school?
 - a. To all students?
 - b. To a specific grade level such as an 11th grade school counselor?
 - c. To an incoming class of 9th graders and remain with them throughout their high school career?
 - d. To a group of students whose last names fall within a slice of the alphabet such as all students with last names from “A to D”?
 - e. To small learning communities such as schools-within-a school, pods, and houses?
4. Last school year (2019-2020), what percentage of work hours did your school’s counseling staff spend delivering the following services to high school students?
 - a. Choice and scheduling of high school courses
 - b. Assisting students with college readiness, selection and applications
 - c. Personal development
 - d. Social development
 - e. Academic development
 - f. Occupational choice and career planning
 - g. Job placement and employability skill development
 - h. Student attendance, discipline, and other school and personal problems

- i. Academic Testing
 - j. Non-counseling activities such as hall or lunch duty, substitute teaching, or bus duty
 - 1=5% or less
 - 2=6%-10%
 - 3=11%-20%
 - 4=21%-50%
 - 5=More than 50%
5. Does your school have one or more counselors whose primary responsibility is assisting students with...
- a. Selecting courses and programs?
 - b. College selection?
 - c. College applications?
 - d. Preparation for the workforce?
 - e. Placement into the workforce?

Part II: Programs and Support

Now we have some questions about programs and support offered by your school during the last school year

- 6. Are students in your high school required to have a high school graduation, career or education plan?
- 7. What does this plan include?
 - a. A graduation plan
 - b. A career plan
 - c. An education plan
- 8. Which of the following best describes the graduation, career, or education plans of students in your school?
 - a. Students create personalized plans
 - b. Students choose one of several plans offered by the school
 - c. Students are assigned one of the several plans offered by the school
 - d. Students are all assigned to a single plan offered by the school
- 9. Are students' plans shared with their parents or guardians?
- 10. On average, how often do students meet with an adult in your high school to review or revise these written plans?
 - a. More than once each school year?
 - b. Once each school year?

- c. Less than once each school year?
 - d. Never
11. Does your school offer a dual or concurrent enrollment program? A dual or concurrent enrollment program is an organized system with special guidelines that allows high school students to take college level courses, which may be taught on the campus of a postsecondary institution, through distance education, or on your high school campus. Please do not include Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs.
12. What type of dual or concurrent enrollment program does your school offer?
- a. Students can earn college credits
 - b. Students can complete the requirements for a certificate program such as a nursing assistant or computer network administrator
 - c. Students can complete the requirements for an Associate's degree
 - d. Students are automatically accepted into a partner college upon high school graduation.
13. During the 2019-2020 school year, what was the total number of high school students enrolled in courses for dual or concurrent credit? An individual high school student may be counted more than once, and should be counted for each course in which he/she was enrolled for dual credit?
- a. Academic course focus:
 - b. Career/Technical/Vocational focus:
14. Does your school have a formal program on-site that prepares students for the General Education Development test (GED)?
15. In which of the following ways does (school name) assist students with college entrance exams such as the SAT and ACT?
- a. Providing access to information about when and where exams are offered such as websites, flyers or pamphlets
 - b. Providing assistance with exam registration such as providing copies of registration forms or assistance completing the exam registration forms
 - c. Providing assistance with exam registration fees such as providing information about fee waivers or paying exam registration fees
 - d. Providing assistance with exam preparation such as offering test-preparation classes or providing study materials
16. In which of the following ways does (school name) assist students with identifying and applying to colleges, universities, or schools that provide occupational training?
- a. Holding or participating in college fairs
 - b. Holding information sessions for students and parents
 - c. Assisting students with completing college or university applications

- d. Providing access to information about colleges and universities
 - e. Helping students identify criteria for selecting colleges to apply to (such as majors offered, cost and entry requirements)
17. During the 2011-2012 school year, approximately what percentage of students in grades 11 and 12 take advantage of each of these college identification and application services offered by (school name)?
- a. Holding or participating in college fairs
 - b. Holding information sessions for students and parents
 - c. Assisting students with completing college or university applications
 - d. Providing access to information about colleges or universities
 - e. Helping students identify criteria for selecting colleges to apply to (such as majors offered, cost, entry requirements)
 - i. 1=5% or less
 - ii. 2=6-10%
 - iii. 3=11-24%
 - iv. 4=25-49%
 - v. 5=50-74%
 - vi. 6=75-100%
18. In which of the following ways does your school assist with college financial aid preparation?
- a. Offering informational meetings about the FAFSA (Free Application for Financial Student Aid) process
 - b. Assisting students and families with completing the FAFSA Providing computer access for completing the FAFSA
 - c. Sending out reminders of FAFSA deadlines
 - d. Assisting with completing financial aid applications other than the FAFSA such as scholarships, loans, or grants
 - e. Offering informational meetings on sources of financial aid such as scholarships, loans, or grants
 - f. Offering individual counseling sessions to help students identify possible sources of financial aid
 - g. Making information about financial aid available for students to explore on their own, such as flyers and pamphlets
19. During the 2011-2012 school year, approximately what percentage of students in grades 11 and 12 take advantage of each of these financial aid preparation services offered by your school?
- a. Offering informational meetings about the FAFSA (Free Application for Financial Student Aid) process
 - b. Assisting students and families with completing the FAFSA

- c. Providing computer access for completing the FAFSA
 - d. Sending out reminders of FAFSA deadlines
 - e. Assisting with completing financial aid applications other than the FAFSA such as scholarships, loans, or grants
 - f. Offering informational meetings on sources of financial aid such as scholarships, loans, or grants
 - g. Offering individual counseling sessions to help students identify possible sources of financial aid Making information about financial aid available for students to explore on their own, such as flyers and pamphlets
 - i. 1=5% or less
 - ii. 2=6-10%
 - iii. 3=11-24%
 - iv. 4=25-49%
 - v. 5=50-74%
 - vi. 6=75-100%
20. What percentage of students who enroll in college after graduation from (school name) persist past their first year in college?
- a. 1=5% or less
 - b. 2=6-10%
 - c. 3=11-24%
 - d. 4=25-49%
 - e. 5=50-74%
 - f. 6=75-100%
 - g. 7=Your school does not collect this information
21. During the 2019-2020 school year, how many different AP courses are offered at your school across all subjects? (Count multiple sections of the same course as one course.)
22. What percentage of 12th-graders in [school name] have taken or are currently enrolled in at least one Advanced Placement (AP) course?
23. How many AP exams were taken during the 2010-2011 school year by students in grades 9-12 in (school name)?
24. Of the AP exams taken during the 2010-2011 school year by the students in grades 9-12 in (school name), how many exams received a score of 3 or higher?
25. How many seniors graduated from your school in May or June of 2021? Do not count certificates of completion.
26. What were the overall mean SAT scores for your school's class of 2021?
27. (This information can be found in the College Board College-Bound Seniors report sent to your school. The SAT Program uses the 200 to 800 point scale. If

none of the students in this class took the SAT exam, please state that. Please round to the nearest whole number.)

- a. Critical reading
- b. Mathematics
- c. Writing
- d. None of the students in this class took the SAT exam.

28. What was the average ACT score for your school’s class of 2021? (This information can be found on the ACT College Readiness Letter sent to your school. Scores range from 1 to 36. If none of the students in this class took the ACT exam, please state that. Please round to the nearest whole number.)

- a. English
- b. Mathematics
- c. Reading
- d. Science
- e. Composite score
- f. None of the students in this class took the ACT exam.

From Merlin-Knoblich, C., & Chen, J. 2018. A survey of school counselor multicultural education behaviors and the obstacles that impede them. *Journal of School Counseling*, 6 (22), 1.

Table A.1

Primary Data Collection Factors and Corresponding Loadings

Factor	Items	Factor Loadings	Percent Variance
Classroom Guidance with Multicultural Education Emphases	Have you led a classroom guidance lesson intended to reduce stereotyping among students?	.706	36.3%
	Have you led a classroom guidance lesson that addressed student <u>bullying</u> due to <u>gender</u> ?	.904	
	Have you led classroom guidance lessons about <u>diversity and equity</u> ?	.750	
	Have you led a classroom guidance lesson that addressed student bullying due to having a <u>disability</u> ?	.856	

Table A.1*(continued)*

Factor	Items	Factor Loadings	Percent Variance
	Have you led a classroom guidance lesson that addressed student <u>bullying</u> due to <u>race/ethnicity</u> ?	.814	
	Have you implemented a classroom guidance lesson with students about valuing others who are different from them?	.674	
Professional Development with Multicultural Education Emphases	Have you given a presentation to teachers or staff about how to best meet the needs of specific groups of students? For example, presenting information about how to best help English Language Learners, individuals in poverty, immigrant students, or students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ).	.848	14.3%
	Have you conducted professional development with faculty or staff about appropriately addressing student diversity? Examples of such topics include discussing harmful stereotypes, promoting the belief that all students can learn, or teaching how to help specific groups of historically marginalized students.	.860	
	Have you organized a professional development event for teachers/staff about understanding cultural differences?	.803	

Table A.1*(continued)*

Factor	Items	Factor Loadings	Percent Variance
Knowledge Construction	Have you presented a classroom guidance lesson to students about where the content they learn in school comes from? For example, have you discussed with students who wrote their textbooks or academic standards?	.748	8.6%
	During a classroom guidance lesson with students (about any topic), have you discussed where the content they are learning originates? For example, have you discussed who wrote the content of the lesson you are teaching?	.893	
	During group counseling, have you initiated a conversation with students about the origins of the content they learn in school? For example, have you discussed with students in group counseling who wrote their textbooks or academic standards?	.850	
Human Relations	Have you implemented an intervention intended to create positive interactions among students? This intervention may take the form of a small counseling group, school-wide project, or other initiative.	.828	6.6%
	Have you implemented an initiative focused on improving or maintaining unity and harmony among students? This intervention may take the form of a small counseling group, schoolwide project, or other initiative.	.905	
Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different	When working with diverse students in individual counseling, has your main goal been to help assimilate them into the majority culture?	.990	6.3%

Table A.1

(continued)

Factor	Items	Factor Loadings	Percent Variance
Cumulative Variance Accounted for			72.1%

APPENDIX B

INTRODUCTORY EMAIL

Dear Counselor (Insert Name)

My name is Danielle Martin, and I am a current doctoral student at Temple University in the college of Education and Human Development. Equalizing college access is a passion of mine and I am very interested in the role of the school counselor when recommending students for dual enrollment.

I am surveying school counselors to collect information about the dual enrollment process for my dissertation. The survey should take no more than 15-20 minutes to complete. Within the survey, there is opportunity for school counselors to participate in a follow up interview. The follow up interview will take approximately 30-45 minutes. In order to ensure everyone's safety, in person interviews will be conducted via zoom or Microsoft Teams. I recognize and respect how busy your schedule is as a school counselor, so we can schedule a day and time that is most convenient for you.

As a part of my research study, I am attaching a consent form. On the form, please take note to the following:

- This is an optional study.
- At any time, you are free to stop the study/interview.
- Confidentiality will be protected at all times.
- I would like to record our conversation to assist with my analysis and data collection only.

Thank you for your time, participation, and support with this study. Please feel free to let me know if you are interested in participating in the survey and follow up interview.

Respectfully,
Danielle Martin

APPENDIX C

SCHOOL COUNSELOR INTERVIEW

(Insert name),

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this interview. I greatly appreciate your time. I am a doctoral student at Temple University in the College of Education and Human Development. As a former K–12 educator and now higher education professional, equalizing college access is a passion of mine and I am very interested in the role of the school counselor when recommending students for dual enrollment. At the conclusion of this interview, I will better understand school/school district policies for student selection/recommendation for dual enrollment programs.

- This interview will last approximately 30-45 minutes and help me understand the process of which students are recommended for or selected for dual enrollment programs.
- If at any reason, you decide that you would not like to participate, please feel free to let me know and we will stop the interview process.
- This interview will be recorded as it will assist me with my data collection and analysis. All information will be kept private and confidential. The only time this information may be shared or made available is if a member or members of my dissertation committee should ask for it.
- Currently, do you have any questions?

APPENDIX D

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL/ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEW

(Insert name),

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this interview. I greatly appreciate your time. I am a doctoral student at Temple University in the College of Education and Human Development. As a former K–12 educator and now higher education professional, equalizing college access is a passion of mine and I am very interested in the role of the school counselor when recommending students for dual enrollment. At the conclusion of this interview, I will better understand school/school district policies for student selection/recommendation for dual enrollment programs.

- This interview will last approximately 30-45 minutes and help me understand the process of which students are recommended for or selected for dual enrollment programs.
- If at any reason, you decide that you would not like to participate, please feel free to let me know and we will stop the interview process.
- This interview will be recorded as it will assist me with my data collection and analysis. All information will be kept private and confidential. The only time this information may be shared or made available is if a member or members of my dissertation committee should ask for it.
- Currently, do you have any questions

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

Research title: Educational Decision Makers and Access to College Support Programs

Investigator: Danielle Martin, Temple University, College of Education and Human Development

Why am I being asked to participate in this research?

You have been invited to take part in this research study because you are a school counselor or school administrator in an urban or suburban school district located in Central Pennsylvania. Your expertise will provide the researcher with a better understanding of the process in which your high school students are selected and/or recommended for dual enrollment. It will also allow the researcher to better understand how information is disseminated to your student body about higher education opportunities.

What should I be aware of regarding this research?

- You can choose to participate in the research.
- If you begin to participate, and then change your mind, your decision will not be held against you.
- If you choose not to participate in this research, your decision will not be held against you.
- Please feel free to ask questions at any time.

Why is this research/study being done?

Equalizing college access for the entire student body is essential to student success. Dual enrollment provides an opportunity for all students, especially special populations (such as minority, first generation students to save time and money

How long will I participate in this study?

The initial survey will take between 15- 20 minutes to complete. A follow up interview will be requested and will take approximately 30-45 minutes.

If I agree to participate in this, what will happen?

Once your participation is agreed upon, you are agreeing to a 45-minute interview. Due to the unpredictable nature of COVID-19, all interviews will be conducted via zoom.

This will be done to ensure the safety of all participants. During the interview, the researcher will ask questions about the participants' role and responsibility as a school counselor; and questions will be asked about the process in which students are selected for participation in dual enrollment programs. During the interview, the researcher will take notes as well as record the conversation to capture and summarize similarities between participant responses. Following the interview, a written report will be shared with my dissertation chair and committee members.

What will my responsibilities be if I participate in this study?

Your responsibilities are as follows

- Review and complete the consent form
- Participate in the interview for approximately 45 minutes
- Ask questions if you need clarification

How can my participation in this study benefit me?

While this study will not produce anything tangible for you, being able to reflect on your leadership experiences/practices within your role is always beneficial. Also, you will be able to review my literature and final report.

If I have questions about this study/research, who am I able to contact?

This research is being overseen by the Institutional Review Board ("IRB"). The IRB is a group who performs an independent review of research studies. If you have concerns, questions and/or comments or feel like this research has hurt you in any way, please contact IRB by emailing them at irb@temple.edu or calling them at (215) 707-3390 if the following occurs:

- You have questions about your rights while participating in research.
- You cannot reach the researcher/research team.
- You are not receiving responses from the research team.
- You would like to speak with someone else about the research.

Signature Block for Adult Subject Capable of Consent

Your signature documents your permission to take part in this research. All recordings, transcripts, and notes will be destroyed upon my graduation from this doctoral program.

Signature of subject

Date

Printed name of subject

Signature of person obtaining consent

Date

Printed name of person obtaining consent

APPENDIX F

REMINDER EMAIL TO SCHOOL COUNSELORS REQUESTING PARTICIPATION IN SURVEY

Dear Counselor (Insert Name)

My name is Danielle Martin, and I am a current doctoral student at Temple University in the college of Education and Human Development. Equalizing college access is a passion of mine and I am very interested in the role of the school counselor when recommending students for dual enrollment.

I am surveying school counselors to collect information about the dual enrollment process for my dissertation. The survey should take no more than 15-20 minutes to complete. Thank you so much to those of you who have already shared my email and survey link with your staff. If you have not, it is not too late, and I would greatly appreciate your support! Within the survey, there is opportunity for school counselors to participate in a follow up interview. The follow up interview will take approximately 30-45 minutes. In order to ensure everyone's safety, in person interviews will be conducted via zoom or Microsoft Teams. I recognize and respect how busy your schedule is as a school counselor, so we can schedule a day and time that is most convenient for you.

As a part of my research study, I am attaching a consent form. On the form, please take note to the following:

- This is an optional study.
- At any time, you are free to stop the study/interview.
- Confidentiality will be protected at all times.
- I would like to record our conversation to assist with my analysis and data collection only.

Thank you for your time, participation, and support with this study. Please feel free to let me know if you are interested in participating in the survey and follow up interview. If you would like more information about my research, please feel free to reach out to me. Your assistance and support is greatly appreciated!

Respectfully,
Danielle Martin

APPENDIX G

REMINDER EMAIL TO SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS REQUESTING PARTICIPATION IN SURVEY

Dear Administrator (Insert Name)

My name is Danielle Martin, and I am a current doctoral student at Temple University in the college of Education and Human Development. Equalizing college access is a passion of mine and I am very interested in the role of the school counselor when recommending students for dual enrollment.

I am surveying school personnel to collect information about the dual enrollment process for my dissertation. The survey should take no more than 15-20 minutes to complete. Thank you so much to those of you who have already shared my email and survey link with your staff. If you have not, it is not too late, and I would greatly appreciate your support! Within the survey, there is opportunity for school personnel to participate in a follow up interview. The follow up interview will take approximately 30-45 minutes. In order to ensure everyone's safety, in person interviews will be conducted via zoom or Microsoft Teams. I recognize and respect how busy your schedule is as a school counselor, so we can schedule a day and time that is most convenient for you.

As a part of my research study, I am attaching a consent form. On the form, please take note to the following:

- This is an optional study.
- At any time, you are free to stop the study/interview.
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- I would like to record our conversation to assist with my analysis and data collection only.

Thank you for your time, participation, and support with this study. Please feel free to let me know if you are interested in participating in the survey and follow up interview. If you would like more information about my research, please feel free to reach out to me. Your assistance and support are greatly appreciated!

Respectfully,
Danielle Martin