



Illinois ESSA & School Counseling

School Counselors play a unique, but critical, part in Illinois schools and educating the whole child. However, it can sometimes be difficult to identify where school counselors and other specialized instructional support personnel fit into federal and state programs like the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), particularly in regard to funding. Many of the themes and goals within the Illinois ESSA are directly related to the professional practice and standards of school counselors. The Developmental Counseling Model for Illinois Schools is closely aligned with the ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs provides research- and evidence-based practices for effective school counseling programs that promote academic, career, and social/emotional development and success for students. The Illinois School Code’s Standards for the School Counselor align with the ASCA National Model. This document serves to assist Local Education Agencies (LEAs) with that identification in order to support the effective use of school counselors in promoting student success.*

Thematic Crosswalk

Theme	Illinois ESSA Plan	Developmental Counseling Model for Illinois Schools
Collaboration	“ESSA requires collaboration with stakeholders as part of creating state plans...if [ISBE will] repeatedly engage community members in the conversation about what we want Illinois students to know and be able to do, ask educators and community members what support and accountability for these outcomes should look like...this approach would lead to the development of a plan that is durable, nimble, and robust enough to radically improve educational outcomes in the state.”	“School counselors create school counseling programs, along with the help of other key school and community stakeholders, to meet the academic career, and social/emotional needs of each unique student...” “An advisory council is a representative group of stakeholders (i.e. students, parents, teachers, staff, community members, administrators, etc.) selected to review and advise the school counselor(s) on the implementation of the school counseling program...Advisory councils exist to help the school counselor(s) ensure that the school counseling program is consistent with the needs of the students...Members who are included in an Advisory Council should be a blend of school and community leaders.”
The Whole Child	“We believe caring for ‘the whole child’ is an essential part of promoting academic excellence. The notion of ‘the whole child’ in the ESSA State Plan for Illinois can be understood as a child within an ecology of multiple and interconnected parts (e.g., the child is an individual composed of interacting parts, such as cognitive, social and emotional, and physical, among others, <i>and</i> that this individual lives within overlapping environments including, but not limited to, home, school, and community).”	“Illinois school counselors are critical intermediaries for Illinois students in numerous ways as they prepare all students for academic success, college and career readiness, and healthy social/emotional development.” “The Illinois Model is a tool used to assist school counselors in building a school counseling program that is comprehensive in scope, preventive in design, developmental in nature, and focused on the three...domains: academic, career, and social/emotional.”

*You can find more information on the ASCA National Model at the American School Counselor Association’s web site at <https://www.schoolcounselor.org>. The Illinois Standards for the School Counselor can be found in the Illinois School Code Section 23.110 at <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/23ark.pdf>.

System of Support	"...IL-EMPOWER will serve as the statewide system of support for schools identified for comprehensive supports and services."	"...school counselors use a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to create team approaches to prevention and intervention in schools."
Assessment and Accountability	"Teachers, school service personnel, principals, superintendents, and school boards are directly responsible for putting Illinois on the path to 60 percent by 2025."	"Perhaps the most critical difference between the traditional 'guidance counselor' and the transformed 'school counselor' is the emphasis on accountability...Today's school counselor must be able to demonstrate <i>how students are different because of the school counseling program.</i> "
Supports for Educators and Students	"The professional capital possessed by educators is the means through which they meet the ends in support of each and every child." "Schools ought to be places in which each and every child can—through trying and sometimes failing, and trying again—develop a rich sense of self." "Children in Illinois' schools should be able to access and pursue multiple educational opportunities..."	"Ultimately it is [the school counselors] goal to support students in becoming productive classroom and school community contributors, competent and satisfied in their future careers, and socially/emotionally health individuals throughout their lifespan." "Like students, school counselors have the potential for growth." "School counselors promote social justice in their buildings by empowering students and families from historically oppressed populations, challenging bias, and advocating for an equitable educational environment that supports ALL students."

Goal Crosswalk

According to the *Developmental Counseling Model for Illinois Schools*, "school counselors utilizing a developmental school counseling program can have a significant impact on accomplishing the goals of the School Improvement Plan."

Illinois ESSA Long-term Goals	Relevant Empirical Research Studies on School Counseling*	
	Article Title	Relevant Results
90% or more of third-grade students are reading at or above grade level 90% or more of fifth-grade students meet or exceed expectations in mathematics (Goals are combined as most research on effectiveness of school counseling programs on academic achievement include both mathematics and English/Language Arts)	"Comprehensive School Counseling Programs and Student Achievement Outcomes: A Comparative Analysis of RAMP Versus Non-RAMP Schools"	Findings indicate that school-wide proficiency rates in English/Language Arts and Math are significantly higher in RAMP designated elementary schools compared to elementary controls. Four-year longitudinal results indicate a significant positive difference between RAMP-designated elementary schools and their controls in Math.
	"Student Success Skills: An Evidence-Based School Counseling Program Grounded in Humanistic Theory"	The Student Success Skills program results in substantial student gains in reading and math; school counselors can use this evidence-based program to improve students' achievement.

90% or more of ninth-grade students are on track to graduate with their cohort	“Connecticut Professional School Counselors: College and Career Counseling Services and Smaller Ratios Benefit Students”	High School students who have more access to school counselors (i.e., lower student-school counselor ratios) and related college and career counseling services are more likely to graduate and less likely to have behavioral problems.
	“Missouri Professional School Counselors: Ratios Matter, Especially in High-Poverty Schools”	Results link lower student-to-school counselor ratios to better graduation rates and lower disciplinary incidents across Missouri high schools.
90% or more of students graduate from high school read for college and career	“School Counselors As Social Capital: The Effects of High School College Counseling on College Application Rates”	College counseling, as provided by school counselors, matters: high school students who saw their school counselor for college information were more likely to apply for college.
	“Estimating Causal Impacts of School Counselors with Regression Discontinuity Designs”	Increasing the number of high school counselors in school enhances the likelihood that students go on to enroll in college.
	“Counseling and College Matriculation: Does the Availability of Counseling Affect College-Going Decisions Among Highly Qualified First-Generation College-Bound High School Graduates?”	Highly qualified first-generation students are more likely to enroll in four year colleges if they have greater access to high school counselors (i.e., lower student-school counselor ratios).
	“School Counselors Supporting African Immigrant Students’ Career Development: A Case Study”	School counselors play a critical role in preparing adolescent immigrant students to be college and career ready by attending to the complex variables that promote and inhibit career development.
	“Transitioning Hispanic Seniors from High School to College”	Intentional efforts from school counselors can increase the numbers of Hispanic students who apply for college.

*A listing of these articles and more can be found in the ASCA publication entitled [“Empirical Research Studies Supporting the Value of School Counseling”](#) on ASCA’s website.

ISBE School Counseling Contact

Illinois State Board of Education
Division of College & Career Readiness
217-524-4832