

2020

How Teachers and Counselors Collaborate Formally and Informally to Improve the Precollege Curriculum

Amanda Williams
Walden University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations>



Part of the [Counseling Psychology Commons](#), [Curriculum and Instruction Commons](#), and the [Teacher Education and Professional Development Commons](#)

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies Collection at ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu.

Walden University

College of Education

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Amanda Vonetta Williams

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee

Dr. Ellen Scales, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty
Dr. Sunddip Aguilar, Committee Member, Education Faculty
Dr. Karen Hunt, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University
2020

Abstract

How Teachers and Counselors Collaborate Formally and Informally to Improve the
Precollege Curriculum

by

Amanda Vonetta Williams

MA, Converse College, 2006

BS, University of South Carolina-Aiken, 1997

Final Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

July 2020

Abstract

Teachers and counselors in a large suburban district in the Southeastern United States strive to collaborate to equip students with key skills needed to succeed in their first year of college. The problem is that little was known about the collaborative challenges teachers and counselors faced as they implemented the precollege curriculum in secondary schools. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine how teachers and counselors collaborate formally and informally to improve the precollege curriculum as recommended by the guidelines of the American School Counselor Association and adopted by the local district. Knowles's theory of andragogy provided a framework for exploring the routine work of 4 teachers and 4 counselors as they implemented curriculum and instruction. Participants were selected based on seniority, 3 or more years of collaborative experience, and certified employment with the district. Participants completed a questionnaire pertaining to Knowles's adult learning and collaboration theory. Participant interviews were conducted using questions informed by Knowles's theory of andragogy and collaborative relationships. Interview transcripts were reviewed through inductive analysis and line-by-line axial relationships were determined using a general coding system to look for teacher-counselor collaborative themes. Reported findings indicated that developing a common language and a mutual understanding of roles and responsibilities may affect positive social change for teachers and counselors and may eventually allow graduates to achieve success in college. It is recommended that professional developments be offered in multiple formats to provide greater collaborative flexibility for teachers and counselors in secondary schools.

How Teachers and Counselors Collaborate Formally and Informally to Improve the
Precollege Curriculum

by

Amanda Vonetta Williams

MA, Converse College, 2006

BS, University of South Carolina-Aiken, 1997

Final Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

July 2020

Dedication

I dedicate this study to My Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and to my amazing and supportive husband, Emery Williams, Jr. Their love, strength, belief, and support in me have made this dream of mine possible! I also dedicate this study to my deceased father, Ernest Glover, who once aspired and attempted to become a doctor and left an indelible impression on me to do the same. I honor my mother also, Leoma Talbert Glover, who always taught me to have faith in God and to believe in myself and all that God created me to be. Last, but not least, I dedicate this study to my children, Zehari, Judah, Daniel, and Samuel, who were with me all the way in this most memorable journey, as well as my cousin Brenda, and I would not have had it any other way.

Acknowledgments

Throughout this amazing journey, I would like to acknowledge those who have supported my dream. I would like to thank Dr. Ellen Scales, the best doctoral committee chair member any doctoral student could have been assigned. Under the auspices of Dr. Scales, I have not only grown as a practitioner, but I have grown as a person who values lifelong learning and invariably sees the good in mankind. Her tireless positivity, toughness, and support have catapulted me to horizons beyond what I could have dreamed.

Above all, I would like to thank My Lord and My Savior Jesus Christ. He placed the desire within my heart to pursue this dream. He also supplied me with the resources and support I needed through His matchless grace. I am forever grateful for His unconditional love, wisdom, and ability to realize His dreams for me. Thank You, Lord Jesus, for everything! All Glory be to Him forever.

Table of Contents

List of Tables	vi
Section 1: The Problem.....	1
Introduction.....	1
The Problem.....	6
Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level.....	6
Evidence of the Problem from the Professional Literature.....	8
Rationale	10
Definition of Terms.....	12
Significance of the Study	14
Guiding Research Questions.....	15
Review of the Literature	15
Conceptual Framework.....	15
Key Elements of Andragogy.....	22
Andragogy’s Application to Qualitative Research	23
Review of the Broader Problem.....	24
Common Core State Standards	28
How Collaboration Improves Outcomes	31
Self-Directed Inquiry in Collaborative Teams.....	32
Instructional Design Paradigm: Transition from Pedagogical to Andragogical.....	33
Professional Learning Communities in the 21st Century	34
Implications.....	36

Summary	37
Section 2: The Methodology.....	39
Qualitative Approach and Design.....	40
Description of Qualitative Research Design.....	40
Justification for the Qualitative Case Study Design	41
Participants.....	43
Criteria for Selecting Participants.....	43
Justification for Number of Participants.....	44
Researcher-Participant Relationship.....	45
Ethical Treatment of Participants.....	45
Data Collection	46
Justification for Data Collection Methods	47
Data Collection Procedures.....	48
Systems for Keeping Track of Data.....	49
Procedures to Gaining Access to Participants	50
Role of the Researcher	51
Data Analysis	52
Procedures.....	52
Qualitative Credibility and Trustworthiness.....	53
Conclusion	55
Findings.....	56
Findings for Research Question 1	59
Findings for Research Question 2.....	65

Discussion	71
Discrepant Cases	72
Evidence of Quality	73
Summary	74
Section 3: The Project	76
Introduction	76
Description and Goals	76
Rationale	78
Review of the Literature	80
A New Approach to Curriculum	81
Implementing American School Counselor Association National Model	
Framework in the Secondary Setting	82
Agents of Social Justice	82
Leveraging Learning through Purposeful Professional Development for	
Counselors	84
Systemic Change	84
Leveraging Learning through Purposeful Professional Development for	
Teachers	86
Effective Professional Development	89
Collaborative Competency for Teachers	91
Evolving Professional Development	93
Summary	96
Project Implementation	97

Resources and Existing Supports.....	97
Potential Barriers	97
Implementation and Timetable	98
Roles and Responsibilities	99
Project Evaluation.....	100
Implementation Including Social Change.....	101
Local Community	101
Far-Reaching.....	101
Conclusion	102
Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions.....	104
Introduction.....	104
Project Strengths	104
Recommendations for Remediation of Limitations	105
Scholarship.....	106
Project Development and Evaluation.....	107
Leadership and Change.....	108
Analysis of Self as Scholar	109
Analysis of Self as Practitioner.....	110
Analysis of Self as Project Developers.....	110
The Project’s Impact for Social Change	111
Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research	112
Conclusion	113
References.....	114

Appendix: The Project143

List of Tables

Table 1. Themes for Research Questions 1 and 2.....58

Section 1: The Problem

Introduction

High school teachers and counselors confront demands of 21st century college readiness for precollege students (Jones, van Belle, Johnson, & Simmons, 2014; Stephens, Hamedani, & Destin, 2014; Stone-Johnson, 2015; Thibodeaux, Deutsch, Kisantas, & Winsler, 2017; Tompkins, Campbell, Green, & Smith, 2014). Teachers and counselors must learn to improve collaboration to assure that the curriculum prepares students to meet the academic demands of college (Hanson, Prusha, & Iverson, 2015), while meeting the challenge of instilling social and academic behaviors and personal characteristics recognized as integral for the successful transition to college and career (Camara, O'Connor, Mattern, & Hanson, 2015; Wibrowski, Matthews, & Kisantas, 2016). The teacher-counselor collaboration may be crucial to advancing pedagogy that improves student outcomes (Calvery & Hyun, 2013; Van Velsor, 2009). The collaborative relationship between teachers and counselors consists of adult learners who work together to address precollege curricula needs through andragogical practices (Calvery & Hyun, 2013; Carpenter-Aeby & Aeby, 2013; Hotchkiss, Steinmetz, & Streib, 2016). Collaboration, however, has not been a traditional role or responsibility for teachers and counselors (Jones et al., 2014).

The traditional work of counselors involved providing services for some students who needed additional support outside the classroom, with few opportunities to collaborate with teachers for student success in college (Gysbers & Henderson, 2014). As Shamsuddin (2016) found in researching the role of counselors, the traditional work

focused on forms and facts, with little emphasis on the student transitions to higher education. The traditional work of teachers was limited to work inside the classroom, with few opportunities to lead collaboration with counselors (Gonzales & Lambert, 2014).

A shift in the 21st century paradigm, as reported by Camara et al. (2015), urged collaboration between counselors and teachers to build higher academic knowledge and effective problem-solving skills in students who aspire to transition from high school to college (Atik & Atik, 2017). This transition demands that students possess a learning style that promotes a range of cross-disciplinary competencies, including a command of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking skills, in addition to healthy mental habits, trustworthy character, and time management required to make a viable contribution to the workforce (Thibodeaux et al., 2017; Tompkins et al., 2014). Merriam, Caffarella, and Baumgartner (2012) defined the transitional process as one that equips individuals to take the initiative and the responsibility for the learning process and extended the definition to include characteristics of adult learning, such as planning, implementing, and evaluating one's own learning experience. Learners who participate in the transitional learning process can build confidence and improve skillsets (McGrath & Powell, 2016).

The teacher-counselor collaboration can nurture a self-directed, student-centered environment that allows students to take on intellectual risks and to develop a growth mindset through challenging opportunities designed to develop 21st century skillsets and competencies (Zundans-Fraser & Bain, 2016). Researchers contend that a student-

nurtured environment is made possible only when teachers and counselors abandon traditional pedagogy in exchange for collaborative instruction (Calvery & Hyun, 2013; Tompkins et al., 2014). In fact, DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, and Many (2016) stated that in order to become more effective in preparing students to learn, “the adults in the organization must also be continually learning” (p. 3). Understanding how this collaboration advances as teachers and counselors adopt new roles is critical for building effective collaborative models and for forging precollege curriculum and counseling programs (Calvery & Hyun, 2013; Merchant, Goetz, Cifuentes, Kenney-Kennicutt & Davis, 2014). Teachers and counselors are beginning to acknowledge their own self-directed learning style as part of Knowles’s (1970) theory of andragogy and collaborative relationships (Goodyear, 2014; Louws, Meirink, van Veen, & van Driel, 2017).

Driving the initiative for collaboration are the data showing that a significant number of college students find themselves disadvantaged in their academic preparation (Camara et al., 2015; DeAngelo & Franke, 2016). Students are underprepared if they perform below standards in reading, math, and writing skills (Camara et al., 2015; Melzer & Grant, 2016). Staff in the North Valley School District (NVSD, pseudonym) indicated that their students are entering college without adequate preparation for the academic rigors and lack the social demand traits essential for postsecondary success (Counselor B, personal communication, December, 2016). The NVSD staff share a belief that college students must be independent learners (Bryant, 2015; Lynch, 2014; National Assessment of Educational Progress [NAEP], 2013; Petrilli & Finn, 2015; Shapiro et al., 2015; Sriram, 2014; Venezia & Jaegar, 2013). Colleges report that teachers and counselors need

to change their work to assure student success in their first year of college and beyond (DuFour et al., 2016; Rothman, 2012a; Shapiro et al., 2015; Venezia & Jaegar, 2013). Teachers and counselors who address the various challenges of a precollege curriculum through collaboration become adult learners who implement Knowles's (1970) andragogy.

In response to the lack of college readiness for students across the United States, NVSD followed the lead of districts that have implemented the American School Counselor Association National Model Framework (ASCANMF) designed to allow counselors to lead collaborations with administrators and teachers in an effort to build the competence and confidence in students for postsecondary success (American School Counselor Association [ASCA], 2012). The ASCANMF features a planning programming tool, the *ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success*, designed to assist counselors with implementing a school curriculum that builds competence and confidence through four domains: mindsets, behavioral learning strategies, behavioral self-management skills, and behavioral social skills (ASCA, 2012). The 2010 Common Core State Standards (CCSS) used by teachers to apply rigor to the curriculum provide counselors with benchmarks to understand colleges' expectations of preparedness (National Governors Association [NGA], 2010). The NVSD also operationalized the CCSS to support college and career readiness for each student in the district. Currently, both the ASCA model and the CCSS drive curriculum at the study site, informing the changes.

College and career readiness is a documented concern on both a local and a national level (Turner & Albro, 2017). As a result of the NGA's initiative in 2010, states encouraged teachers to become more accountable for increasing rigor at the local district level through the implementation of the CCSS. The ASCA has both acknowledged and integrated the CCSS into guidelines to instill academic proficiency, self-directed learning, metacognitive knowledge, and problem-solving capability in the high school curriculum. Though seemingly unrelated on the surface, the CCSS and the ASCA's (2014) *Model Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success* are essential guidelines used by counselors to assist a student's preparation for and successful transition to college. The ASCA *Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success* is an effort to identify cognitive skillsets and behaviors expected of college-ready students. Teachers and counselors in the secondary school setting collaborate as adult learners to equip students with the essential skillsets needed to succeed in college and career, and their collaboration utilizes assumptions of Knowles (1980, 1984), which entail (a) adult learners are self-directed, (b) adult learners bring life experience and knowledge, (c) adult learners are goal oriented and ready to learn, (d) adult learners are relevancy oriented, and (e) adult learners are internally motivated.

At NVSD, teachers and counselors are challenged to provide instruction and curricula enhancements to address the cognitive and behavioral skills of the whole student through the CCSS and the ASCA model. As adult learners, teachers and counselors fulfill Knowles's (1980, 1984) assumptions as they plan and implement precollege curricula changes and establish their own collaborative relationships to

transition students from the secondary to the postsecondary setting. Of Knowles's five assumptions, my research will focus on how teachers and counselors, as self-directed adult learners, bring life experience and knowledge to collaborate formally and informally to improve precollege curriculum.

The Problem

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level

Teachers and counselors strive to collaborate formally and informally to improve precollege curriculum to promote independent learning and 21st century skills for students in secondary schools (Dweck, 2015; Knowles, 1970). The problem began during the 2012-2014 academic school years, when the NVSD realized that improvements needed to be made in the K-12 school counseling model, including collaboration with teachers for improved precollege instruction. The problem became evident to the district when the ASCA model was initiated at some middle and high schools but not at others in the district, and the district decided to set a goal to have each middle and high school implement the ASCA counseling model as a means of collaboration led by counselors in the middle and high schools to improve precollege instruction (Counselor C, personal communication, March, 2015; District Counseling Supervisor, personal communication, March, 2015). Strengthening this collaboration remains the goal for the district administrators, who seek to “encourage counselors to consult and collaborate with other educators, parents, and community on behalf of all students [to implement] a curriculum addressing the needs of all students in the domains of academic, personal/social, and career development” (NVSD Mission Statement, 2017, internal document). Nationally,

these changes are common to school district leaders across the country, who have realized that a traditional academic curriculum alone does not assure students' first-year college success (Jones et al., 2014; Stephens et al., 2014; Stone-Johnson, 2015; Thibodeaux et al., 2017; Tompkins et al., 2014; Turner & Albro, 2017).

Two English teachers voiced concerns over what colleges expect and how to best prepare their students to succeed in the college setting (Grade 10 and Grade 12 teacher, personal communication, May, 2017). Two counselors expressed the need to have more collaborative experiences with teachers to build student competence (Counselor A and Counselor B, personal communications, January, 2016). A third high school teacher stated the need for more participation in the teacher-counselor collaborative process in order to make a meaningful difference in the student's academic performance (Grade 10 teacher, personal communications, January, 2018). At NVSD, teachers and counselors in the secondary schools are addressing the problem of preparation for college and career readiness through collaborations designed to enhance academic rigor through the CCSS and the ASCANMF to cultivate self-directed learning behaviors of studying, promptness, persistence, and resilience, which are characteristic of students who succeed in their first year of college (Professional learning presenter and secondary school counselor, personal communications, May, 2017). Two of NVSD's broad goals are to vary the learning experiences to increase success in college and career pathways and to develop stakeholder involvement to promote student success. This study may add to the body of knowledge for postsecondary preparation by examining the curriculum and counseling alignment with colleges' expectations and demands.

Teachers and counselors strive to learn effective ways to collaborate for student success in postsecondary enrollment while maintaining successful graduation rates. The problem at NVSD is that previously, teachers and counselors collaborated to prepare students for college entry but not for long-term college success. With an enrollment of over 111,000 students and a 2015 graduation rate of 81.4%, NVSD maintains an interest in finding ways to ensure that Grade 12 students graduate on time and are prepared to succeed in college through an investigation of the curriculum and the work of teachers and counselors. The NVSD superintendent stated on the district's website, "Of the many indicators that measure how well we are doing as a school district, graduation rate is one of the most important." However, while the superintendent applauded the increase in district American College Testing (ACT, 2011) college-readiness scores, he indicated the data would need to be reviewed by individual schools to determine where improvements were needed. The focus of this study was achieving a greater understanding of how teachers and counselors work together to build self-directed skillsets and competencies demanded of the 21st century student who plans to transition from high school to college.

Evidence of the Problem from the Professional Literature

Radford (2011) reported that one out of three students entering college must take remedial courses to acquire skillsets needed to remain in college. Even more disturbing, a *What Works Clearinghouse* intervention report revealed that providing developmental (i.e., remedial) courses for postsecondary students had little to no effect on their academic achievement, which may mean that waiting to provide support to first-year college students is too late (National Center for Educational Evaluation and Regional Assistance,

2016). According to a 2012 benchmark report published by the Institute for Policy Research at Northwestern University, *Improving College Access and Success*, the United States must establish policies for college entrance and retention rates in order to achieve its goal to have the highest college completion rates in the world by 2020 (as cited in Rothman, 2012b). Rothman (2012b) found that the report substantiated national, state, and district policy makers' "recognition that a high-school diploma is no longer enough in a complex, global economy. . . . Yet the U.S. college-attendance rate has stalled, while other countries have increasingly sent more and more young people on to higher education" (p. 2). Petrilli and Finn (2015) found that fewer than half of all high school seniors have the skills and knowledge preparation to succeed in college-level work. As such, the national foci have shifted from increasing the high school graduation rate to examining college readiness in postsecondary institutions through an exploration of college preparatory curricula through teaching and counseling.

Teachers and counselors have implemented Knowles's (1970) theory of learning that delineates the developmental stage of the adolescent transition from teacher-directed skills learning to self-directed motivation to learn (Yeager, Walton, & Cohen, 2013). Knowles's theory of adult learning informs the sea change in this approach (Carpenter-Aeby & Aeby, 2013; Knowles, 1970). Knowles (1970), an educator who studied adult learning, reasoned that motivation is critical for improved learning and improved academic achievement.

Due to substantial differences in how secondary schools prepare students for college entry and college expectations, high schools have begun to align the secondary

curriculum to colleges' entry demands through the CCSS and a collaborative approach among teachers and counselors for college readiness (Peterson, Barrows, & Gift, 2016). According to Stone-Johnson (2015) and Stanton-Salazar (2016), teacher-counselor collaboration in college readiness is essential, but the question of how to delineate those roles remains the issue. Stone-Johnson confirmed that while implementing a schoolwide college and career readiness curriculum is mandatory, teachers and counselors must address the challenge of creating a systematic way to collaborate. When considering how to help students gain the skills and behaviors needed to succeed in college, an examination of how to implement relevant, cultural, active learning strategies that promote independence and the development of 21st century self-directed skills into the school curricula becomes the goal. The purpose of my qualitative study was to investigate how teachers and counselors collaborate formally and informally as they engage in work to improve the precollege curriculum with the goal of improved curriculum and pedagogy for academic success beyond high school graduation.

Rationale

Preparing students to succeed once they get to college remains a top priority for in the United States (Every Student Succeeds Act [ESSA], 2015), as well as for the superintendent and local NSVD community. In recent studies, researchers have substantiated the need to provide students with additional supports outside the classroom to promote academic rigor within the classroom (Johnson, Rochkind, Ott, & Dupont, 2010; Masters 2013; Stone-Johnson, 2015). The teacher-counselor collaboration has been

shown to be more successful in addressing the academic prowess and behaviors students need to succeed once in college (Calvery & Hyun, 2013).

An award-winning counselor in secondary education from the NSVD school district verified the need to examine how teachers and counselors collaborate, “I believe it is crucial that counselors be involved in the academic progress of students.” She suggested that counselors’ work goes beyond the academics, “Many a time, the issues that play out [i.e., the curriculum] in an academic setting have nothing to do with the student’s ability to understand the content. It most often stems from issues on the home front.” She emphasized the importance of collaboration. “Counselors are in a unique position to help unearth the barriers to student success, regardless of where they come from, and it is for this reason that counselors should partner with teachers to support students’ academic and social/emotional success” (Counselor A, personal communication, December, 2016). Counselor A went on to say that counselors depend on teachers to allow access into the classroom to provide the academic support to meet students’ needs. Unlike elementary and middle schools, high schools face more challenging, faster-paced schedules and activities that prevent counselors from entering the classroom to provide support. Counselor B asserted,

When our student[s] are in the elementary and middle school levels, [our] counselors are in the classroom more to conduct classroom curriculum. In the high school level, there are issues with getting into the classroom, enrollments, and more that can hinder this opportunity for us to deliver such skills. (Counselor B, personal communication, March, 2017)

Establishing and sustaining a culture of strong teacher-counselor collaboration can provide universal access to resources that can benefit the student. Teachers and counselors can collaborate to build the confidence and competence demanded of the 21st century student who plans to transition from high school to college. Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative study was to examine how teachers and counselors collaborate as they engage in work to improve the precollege curriculum.

Definition of Terms

Academic self-advocacy: An individual's confidence to follow a course of action to problem solve or to achieve a goal (Wang & Neihart, 2015; Wigfield et al., 2015).

Collaboration: An instructional strategy that encourages individuals to work together to attain a common goal (Brusic & Shearer, 2014; DuFour et al., 2016; Garmston & Wellman, 2016; Owen, 2014; Tompkins et al., 2014).

College readiness: List of skills, knowledge, and attributes a student should possess to be ready to succeed in entry-level college courses (Bryan, Young, Griffin & Henry, 2015; Conley, 2011; Kivunja, 2014; Levin, 2015; Welton & Williams, 2015).

Common core standards: K-12 literacy and mathematical standards designed to assist educators to prepare students to succeed in college and career in the United States (Alexander & Miller, 2017; CCSS Initiative, 2017; Graham & Harris, 2013; Jo & Milson, 2013; Wallender, 2014).

Comprehensive school counseling program: A standards-based program that focuses on addressing the academic and behavioral development of all students and relies on data-driven decisions through a collaborative effort led by the school counselor who

works with parents and other educators to create an environment that promotes student achievement (ACSA, 2012; Bryan et al., 2015; Gonzalez, Borders, Hines, Villalba, & Henderson, 2013; Gysbers & Henderson 2014; Hatch, Poynton, & Perusse, 2015).

Developmental courses: Refresher courses designed to improve a student's skillset before entering a college-level course. Colleges offer these courses to newly enrolled students who need remediation in a content area. Such courses do not count toward a student's degree requirement (Acevedo-Gil, Santos, Alonso, & Solorzano, 2015; Bailey, Jaggars, & Scott-Clayton, 2013; Crisp & Delgado, 2014).

Every Student Succeeds Act: Education law signed by President Obama that reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to commit to equal opportunity for all students (Darrow, 2016; ESSA, 2015; McGuinn, 2016).

Fixed mindset: A fundamental belief that intelligence is innate and therefore unchangeable (Dweck, 2015; Hochanadel & Finamore, 2015; Yeager et al., 2016).

Growth mindset: A fundamental belief that intelligence is changeable and can be increased through effort (Dweck, 2015; Hochanadel & Finamore, 2015; Yeager et al., 2016).

Professional learning community: A community consisting of collaborative teams who work interdependently to meet a common goal (Adams & Vescio, 2015; DuFour et al., 2016; Durksen, Klassen, Daniels, 2017; Owen, 2014; Tam, 2015).

Self-directed learning: A process in which individuals take the initiative and the responsibility for the learning process (Goodyear, 2014; Knowles, 1975; Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 2014; Slavit & McDuffie, 2013; Sogunro, 2014).

Twenty-first century literacy skills: A multiple, dynamic, and adaptable set of cultural and communicative competencies needed to meet technological and societal demands of the 21st century (National Council of Teachers of English [NCTE], 2013; Tompkins et al., 2014; Wallender, 2014).

Significance of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine how teachers and counselors collaborate as they engage in work to improve the precollege curriculum. This study is important because it addresses the challenges high school teachers and counselors face as they strive to improve students' chances to succeed once in college. Researchers have identified that 33% of students who enroll in college on the national level and 44% of students who enroll in college from the local setting do not continue to graduation (Downey, 2016; NAEP, 2015; Venezia & Yeager, 2013). Through their strategic plan, NVSD encourages/mandates teachers and counselors to work together to address this problem (Counselor A, personal communication, 2015). There is no information regarding how teachers and counselors perceive opportunities to collaborate to improve college success for student. This study provided insight into the understanding of how teachers and counselors perceive the problem and the challenges of collaborative relationships, which will be useful in the local setting because of the district's initiative to explore creative ways to vary learning experiences to increase student success in college and career paths, as well as to develop stakeholder involvement to promote student success.

In response to the *Race to the Top* initiative, the NVSD's superintendent acknowledged in a local publication that amid the rising graduation rates, "Ensuring that students graduate on time and are prepared for success is our ultimate goal." In an effort to explore how to better prepare students to succeed beyond graduation, this study highlighted the collaboration that is now practiced by educators who share college-readiness goals. The documentation of the collaboration may encourage curricular change, influencing both teaching and learning.

Guiding Research Questions

Gaining a greater understanding about how teachers and counselors collaborate in the NVSD school environment to prepare students to succeed in college and career could both benefit the district and inform practitioners nationwide about how to effectively address the academic and behavioral needs in the college classroom. Because teachers and counselors work closely with the cognitive, social, and emotional needs of students, the following questions guided this project study.

RQ1: How are teachers collaborating formally and informally with counselors to improve precollege curriculum, as seen through Knowles's theory of andragogy?

RQ2: How are counselors collaborating formally and informally with teachers to improve precollege curriculum, as seen through Knowles's theory of andragogy?

Review of the Literature

Conceptual Framework

Andragogy, a term Knowles (1980) introduced to the modern educational lexicon, refers to autonomous adult learning. Knowles asserted that andragogy was based on the

observation that due to the rapid changes of knowledge and technological inventions and mobility, adults of the 20th century must be prepared to face a variety of experiences throughout their lifespan, and the then-current pedagogical methods alone were insufficient and lacked fulfillment for adults. Prior to the emergence of andragogy, the precollege curriculum was built on the concept of pedagogy (Knowles, 1970; Knowles et al., 2014; Merriam, 2015; Ozuah, 2016).

Pedagogy subsumes a number of assumptions. The first assumption asserts that the learner is a dependent personality who lacks knowledge. This dependency and lack of knowledge leads to the second assumption that the curriculum should be subject-centered. The third assumption is that the learner needs to be motivated by extrinsic factors, such as rewards and punishments. The fourth assumption is that any prior knowledge or experience of the dependent learner is not relevant to the learning process (Knowles, 1970; Knowles et al., 2014; Merriam, 2015; Ozuah, 2016).

These assumptions, Knowles (1980) asserted, did not prepare the learner to transition from dependent learning to independent learning. Knowles, working in the 1970s on theories of adult learning, argued that knowledge alone was not enough, but a more meaningful process was necessary for the adult student. Knowles (1970, 1975) reasoned that it was no longer practical to define education as a means of passing on what is familiar; it must now be defined as an enduring, persistent way of examination and discovery. The most important learning of all—for both children and adults—is discovering how to acquire knowledge, the skills of self-directed inquiry (Knowles, 1970).

Though Knowles (1970) in his original work limited the concept to helping adults learn, Knowles (1980) later acknowledged that andragogy is situation-specific and could be applied to adult or child alongside pedagogy, if needed. He referred to these various kinds of experiences as a way of learning how to learn (Knowles, 1980). Unlike pedagogy that features the teacher as the one who leads children in dependent learning, andragogy features the teacher as a facilitator of self-directed learning of mature, more independent minds (Knowles, 1975). Knowles introduced andragogy to accommodate the natural process of human transition from childhood to adulthood. In the secondary setting, in professional learning communities in schools, teachers, administrators, and counselors become adult learners as they tackle the issues related to preparing all students to transition from a secondary to a postsecondary setting (Calvery & Hyun, 2013; Stone-Johnson, 2015). Given the challenges of meeting the social and academic demands of preparing students to transition from high school to college, teachers and counselors assume the role of the self-directed adult learner as they collaborate to create more learning opportunities in the precollege curriculum for students.

Description of andragogy. Andragogy, unlike pedagogy, is predicated on solving problems in the adult's immediate world (Knowles, 1980; Lindeman, 1926; Ozuah, 2016, Reddy, Searle, Shawa, & Teferra, 2016). To solve these immediate problems, Knowles and his predecessors observed the natural process of adult learning (Houle, 1961; Knowles, 1980; Lindeman, 1926; Ozuah, 2016; Taylor & Laros, 2014; Tough, 1971). Knowles (1980) used the work of Lindeman (1926), Houle (1961), and Tough (1971) to establish his own assumptions about adult learning. Knowles (1980) asserted that

andragogy is established on five assumptions, which include (a) adult learners are self-directed, (b) adult learners bring life experience and knowledge, (c) adult learners possess a readiness to learn, (d) adult learners value relevancy, and (e) adult learners are motivated internally.

Adult learning is self-directed. Knowles (1980) posited that although adult learners experience moments of dependency in any given situation, they have a psychological need to see themselves as independent or self-directing. Whereas, children enter the world dependent on adults to learn; the natural maturation from childhood into adulthood experienced by child learners should begin to cause them to see themselves increasingly as self-directing. Adult learning, or self-directed learning, allows the learners to take on the responsibility for managing their educational needs. Adult learners are full-time learners but are also doers and producers. When adult learners employ pedagogical models to solve problems, they are unknowingly seeking to become dependent again (Knowles, 1980; Park, Robinson, & Bates, 2016). Instead of employing pedagogical methods with adult learners, Knowles suggested designing into their curriculum experiences that allow learners to acquire new skills in self-direction.

To build these experiences into the curriculum, Knowles (1980) suggested promoting adult learners' self-directive skillsets through adjustments in the learning climate, instances provided for self-diagnosis, and participation in the planning process for learning, conducting learning experiences, and evaluating the learning process. The learning climate can accommodate the physiological and psychological adult learning preferences. In addition to informal arrangement of furniture, the psychological climate

can encourage mutual respect and informality among the participants. In addition to the learning climate, adult learners can engage in self-diagnosis through the presentation of what Knowles referred to as models that amalgamate the desired goals of facilitator and learner alike, preceded by a diagnostic experience that allows adults to assess their inadequacies when compared to the model. Knowles asserted that this comparison would produce a self-induced dissatisfaction that would allow the learner to determine where the gaps in learning exist and to select the desired path to growth. In considering the desired pathway to growth, Knowles suggested that both the adult learner and the teacher engage in a mutual planning process that creates buy-in for the adult learner. This mutuality of the learning process continues as learning experiences are conducted through meetings of small groups that take on variety of forms, such as planning committees, learning-teaching teams, and project task forces. At the conclusion of a learning experience is the self-evaluation. Knowles argued that instead of assigning a grade to the adult learner, the primary goal is to assist the learners in gathering evidence for themselves to determine the progress toward a desired goal (Knowles, 1980).

Adult learners bring life experience and knowledge. Knowles (1980) posited that unlike child learners, whose self-identity depends on external sources, the adult learners' self-identity depends on their experiences. Knowles observed that adult learners tend to describe themselves in terms of what they have done, what they accomplished. This means that adult learners value their experiences and use their experiences in a variety of ways throughout the learning process. Adult learners can draw from their own experiences to help others, they can access their prior experiences to help them relate to

new learning experiences, and they can sometimes appear to be less open-minded to new learning experiences because of their prior experiences (Reddy et al., 2016). Knowles explained that to either reject or minimize the adult learner's experience could lead to the adult learner feeling rejected. To maximize the adult learning experience, Knowles suggested three practices: emphasis on experiential techniques, emphasis on practical application, and learning to learn from experience.

Knowles (1980) emphasized cultivating learning techniques that would enable adult learners to use and to build on their experiences. Learning techniques, such as simulations, role-playing, skills-practice exercises, demonstrations, seminars, and work conferences, could be used to tap into the experiences of the adult learner. In addition to these techniques, Knowles emphasized that, whenever applicable, teachers should access the adult learner's prior knowledge and plan to include the use of prior knowledge into the learning technique. Furthermore, to address the natural close-mindedness that tends to come from experience, instructors provide an experience early in the learning phase for adult learners to unfreeze their minds and to learn to see themselves through objective lenses.

Adult learners possess a readiness to learn. Knowles (1980) asserted that adulthood is divided into three stages: early adulthood, middle adulthood, and late adulthood. He explained that as adult learners progress throughout each stage, their varying social roles, along with the required developmental tasks needed to fulfill those social roles, create an ever-changing readiness to learn within the adult. Therefore, each adult, depending on the stage and developmental task, requires two practical implications

designed to assist a readiness to learn: the timing of learning and the grouping of the learners.

The curriculum must be sequenced, if possible, to address the developmental needs of the adult learner. Any learning task, curriculum, or program should begin with a way to address the real-life situation or readiness of the adult learner. Depending on the desired outcome of the learning situation, grouping learners according to their readiness to learn is a strategy Knowles (1980) recommends. For example, if hosting a seminar for young parents, homogeneous grouping could prove effective and would greatly differ from hosting a seminar for parents with adolescents; otherwise, if the goal was to prepare the adult learner to deal with a variety of people, heterogeneous grouping would best serve adult interests.

Adult learners value relevancy. Unlike children who view their learning as beneficial in the future, adult learners view their learning as beneficial in the immediate application to a problem (Knowles, 1980). Because adult learning is problem-centered, adult learners view their learning as a means to help them cope with or overcome the issues they face in their daily lives. Adult learners are doers, and they tend to value a performance-framed, problem-centered curriculum. Practical implications to address the adult learner's need for relevancy would involve the orientation of adult educators, the organization of the curriculum, and the design of learning experiences.

Teachers of adult learners must be able to identify the needs of each individual adult learner and differentiate the learning experiences to address those needs. Likewise, Knowles (1980) reiterated the need to organize the curriculum not around pedagogical

methods, which are subject-centered, but rather around andragogical methods, which are centered on adult concerns and problems. In addition, Knowles reiterated the need for teachers to design the learning experiences to meet the problem-centered mindset of adults who enter the learning experience. Knowles emphasized that learning experiences may not necessarily end with the problem but should certainly begin with the problem.

Adult learners are motivated internally. Knowles (1980) described the learning process as one that engages the intellectual, emotional, and physiological functions of the human being. Given these conditions, learning can meet the needs of learners and encourage a goal-oriented mindset. Knowles explained that the motivation to learn evolves out of the extent to which an individual feels a need and a goal to achieve. These needs will drive the time learners invest in accessing resources to the extent that they find these resources relevant to help achieve their cause. The learner's experience, as defined by Knowles, involves the interactions between an individual and his/her environment. For the adult learner, the learning experience that leads the adult learner to engage in a deep level of self-directed inquiry will yield the greatest learning for the adult. Knowles advocated the use of andragogy as a technology to engage the adult learner in deep self-diagnosis and to share the responsibility of planning, designing, and implementing the learning experience, as well as the self-evaluation of progress toward a goal.

Key Elements of Andragogy

Knowles's (1980) five assumptions of andragogy establish the foundation for modern adult education (Merriam, 2015; Reddy et al., 2016). The 21st century national and local school settings feature professional learning communities that foster

collaborative relationships that allow educators to assume the role of adult learners in an effort to address the curricular needs to prepare students for college and career readiness (DuFour et al., 2016; Ozuah, 2016). Of the five assumptions, I will focus on the first two assumptions because they pertain to the self-directed learning needed by the adult learners, as well as teachers and counselors who bring their life experiences to the learning experience through the practice of collaboration (DuFour et al., 2016; Ozuah, 2016). The National Governor's Initiative (NGA, 2010) holds educators accountable for the preparation of students; consequently, teachers and counselors who implement this initiative use self-directed inquiry and self-diagnoses through the cultivation of learning techniques, especially collaboration (Honingh & Hooge, 2014; Lai, 2015). Collaboration, as an andragogical experiential technique, allows the teacher-counselor collaboration to explore ways to change the precollege curriculum to be more effective and beneficial for student learners (Calvery & Hyun; 2013; DuFour et al., 2016; Jo & Milson, 2013; Ozuah, 2016; Steiner-Adair, 2013).

Andragogy's Application to Qualitative Research

Andragogy establishes the foundation of the needs of the adult learner (Knowles, 1970; Knowles et al., 2014; Merriam, 2015; Ozuah, 2016). Through the lens of Knowles's (1970) theory of andragogy, investigating how teachers and counselors function as adult learners who collaborate to improve precollege curriculum means exploring how this phenomenon of the formal and informal teacher-counselor collaboration can promote an improved curriculum for students transitioning to college. The qualitative approach allows the researcher to explore the teacher-counselor

phenomenon in a natural setting to discover how counselors and teachers use self-directed inquiry and bring their life experiences to improve precollege curriculum through collaboration (Creswell, 2014). Knowles's theory of adult learning will serve as the lens to learning how teachers and counselors work together to provide instruction that builds skillsets and mindsets of students transitioning from high school to college education. Specifically, Knowles's self-directed learning and life experiences concept will undergird the questionnaire addressed to both counselors and teachers, as well as to the data analysis, where appropriate, to answer the questions of how teachers are collaborating formally and informally with counselors to improve precollege curriculum, how counselors are collaborating formally and informally with teachers to improve precollege curriculum, and how Knowles's assumptions operate in the teacher-counselor collaboration?

Review of the Broader Problem

The review of literature establishes the foundation for this project study by identifying and connecting the broader problem of how teachers and counselors in NVSD are collaborating formally and informally to improve precollege curriculum, as informed by Knowles's assumptions of andragogy to the local problem in the NVSD. After establishing the conceptual framework, I demonstrate how the ASCANMF has transformed pedagogical practices of counselors' collaborative relationships with teachers who both utilize the CCSS to improve precollege curriculum. Moreover, I show how the ASCANMF, coupled with the CCSS, are the tools counselors and teachers use as they collaborate to improve precollege curriculum. I then review literature that presents

how collaboration improves outcomes. I also address teachers and counselors as self-directed learners and how this dynamic has led to andragogical practices as teachers and counselors become adult learners who employ self-directed inquiry and life experiences. I address perceived challenges facing teachers and counselors as they evolve as adult learners to prepare students to transition from high school to college. I then discuss the importance of quality professional learning communities, as well as how the challenges imposed by adult learners seeking to practice andragogy through collaborations within the professional learning communities in the secondary setting have forced leadership to reevaluate how to build effective collaborative teams. I also address the current retention rates of first-year college students to substantiate the necessity of the teacher-counselor collaboration.

Prior to submitting the project study proposal for University Research Reviewer and Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, I conducted an exhaustive search of current literature using peer-reviewed journals assessed through the Walden University's Library. I initially identified the keyword search terms *andragogy*, *collaboration*, *teachers*, and *counselors*. I then conducted a Boolean search using various combinations of the terms *teachers*, *counselors*, and *collaboration*. I targeted sources published within the past five years using the following search engines to generate over 1,000 journals and books related to the project study: Education Research Complete, SAGE, EBSCO, ERIC, and Google Scholar. I also searched over 25 online websites, including U.S. Department of Education, ASCA, and the NVSD.

Teacher-counselor collaboration through ASCANMF social support

approach/comprehensive counseling. The ASCANMF empowers the teacher-counselor collaboration as adult learners who assist students through its mission to build knowledge and skills for college and career readiness, with further emphasis on social and emotional development (ASCA, 2017). In addition, most current studies support the ASCA comprehensive counseling model as the more effective pathway for all students to increase graduation and college entrance rates as well as to acquire skills needed to succeed in college and career as opposed to the traditional counseling model, which offered only limited support services to a limited number of students with minimal impact (Martin & Carey, 2014; Salina et al., 2013; White & Kelly, 2010). Specifically, the model features four main principles that support the counselor as an adult learner: foundation, delivery, management, and accountability (Hatch et al., 2015; Sogunro, 2014). The ASCA required counselors to meet the academic, career, and social needs of every student through the use of data (ASCA, 2017; Hatch et al., 2015). To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the school's comprehensive program, ASCA created a framework that enables the counselor to lead collaborative teams with data-driven decisions to promote student achievement (Brott, Stone, & Davis, 2017). In addition, the framework redefined the counselor's role as a leader, an advocate, and a catalyst for change (Hatch et al., 2015; Martin & Carey, 2014; Studer, 2015). Given the counselor's expanded role as a leader and advocate for change, the ASCANMF allows the counselors to participate in self-directed inquiry and collaborative relationships to address various challenges within the school environment (Dougherty, 2013; Gonzalez et al., 2013).

As teachers address the academic needs within the classroom, counselors can provide support to students through comprehensive counseling services, as suggested by Williams, Greenleaf, Albert and Barnes (2014) and Bryan et al. (2015). Equally important, a collaborative effort of counselors and teachers can address the cognitive, social, and emotional dimensions each student must develop in order to succeed in college (Calvery & Hyun, 2013; Lai, 2015). Within the secondary setting, school leaders who support teacher collaborations as adult learners strengthen their positions and improve their professional space (Honingh & Hooge, 2014).

Researchers asserted that collaborations among a variety of stakeholders that grouped teachers and counselors together created the mental and emotional impetus needed to motivate students to take the necessary steps to prepare for college (Gysbers & Henderson, 2014). In addition, the collaborative effort of teachers and counselors has long-term effects beyond the college experience. According to Calvery and Hyun (2013), students whose academic commitment aligned with their college major and personal preference achieved high levels of career readiness toward the end of their college education.

In addition to addressing needs within the classroom, the teacher-counselor collaboration can help students deal with the pressures of high stakes testing. Welton and Williams (2015) confirmed that the intense pressure created by high stakes tests produced a negative impact on students in high poverty areas. Researchers noted that without the support of all school personnel participating to establish a college-going culture within the school, the achievement gap widened (Welton & Williams, 2015). More significant,

Welton and Williams cited Holland and Farmer-Hinton's (2009) social support approach as an effective model that required small learning communities to provide the social, emotional, and character skills in the form of social capital that could be used to sustain student achievement within the high school classroom.

NVSD in the southern United States has expressed the intention to research the effects the ASCANMF has on student achievement. The NVSD maintains the goal of increasing the graduation rates and entrance into postsecondary institutions for high school graduates (NVSD Research & Grants, 2014). Woods and Domina (2014) recommended that counselors employ data-supported strategies to minimize school dropouts, and the ASCANM presents a results-driven framework that empowers counselors to analyze the needs of their schools and meet the needs of their students through data collection (ASCA, 2017; Gysbers, 2010).

Common Core State Standards

The 2010 education initiative to build a rigorous set of standards that were common to all states in the country provided a bridge between teacher-informed practice and college expectations (NGA, 2010). In spite of the political controversies surrounding the adaptation of the CCSS, researchers continue to report evidence that substantiates the benefits of the standards. Rothman (2012a) asserted that the CCSS minimizes the disconnection between secondary practices and postsecondary expectations. Specifically, Rothman (2012a) asserted, "A large proportion of U.S. high school graduates are ill-prepared to meet the challenges of college and career. The new common core state standards can help" (p. 10). As such, teachers can use the CCSS academic framework to

help students develop the essential skillsets needed to succeed in their first year of postsecondary learning.

According to *The Condition of College Readiness* report of 2011, only one out of four students scored proficiently in the following four subject areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science (ACT, 2011). Even more disturbing are college freshmen enrolled in developmental courses who are more likely to drop out than those who need no remediation. The teacher-counselor collaboration can use the findings of *The Condition of College Readiness* report of 2011, high school grade point average, and the CCSS to identify and address multidimensional academic and behavioral readiness of an individual student and design and implement strategies to challenge and grow each student to enter college prepared (Radunzel & Noble, 2012; Wallender, 2014).

Rothman (2012b) asserts the need to examine how teachers implement the CCSS in order to meet the expectations of colleges and provide those additional supports of the precollege curriculum to help students. This needed examination could occur through a teacher-counselor collaboration designed to support the growth mindset, an essential skill students need to succeed in college, in career, and in life. Yeager et. al. (2013) reported that instructors who implemented growth mindset strategies with minority college students helped to improve their grades for three years. Current studies suggest that students must acquire academic, social, emotional, and ethical skillsets in order for to achieve college and career readiness (Jo & Milson, 2013; Steiner-Adair, 2013). With equal importance, with the help of teachers and counselors, underrepresented populations, such as African American and Hispanic students, may be able to improve

their performance on standardized tests when teachers and counselors collaborate to address and adjust students' testing patterns, which would involve increasing the frequency of test takers (ACT, 2016).

The CCSS serves as the academic framework designed to help teachers help students acquire the requisite skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the 21st century workforce. Nearly eight out of 10 jobs require skills beyond those of a high school diploma according to the Junior Achievement (2011) report. These demands require teachers and counselors to collaborate to equip students with problem solving, critical thinking, and teamwork skillsets characteristic of those learners poised to compete on a global stage. Thus, the CCSS framework builds and supports a precollege curriculum that enables students to succeed in a postsecondary setting and/or an entry-level position in the workplace.

The CCSS framework features two main divisions: college and career readiness standards, as well as grade-specific standards ranging from elementary to high school (Junior Achievement, 2011). The CCSS framework ensures that learners enter the postsecondary setting equipped with the skills needed to succeed. While the CCSS prepares students to experience academic success in the postsecondary setting, researchers underscore the need for teachers and counselors to build essential skillsets in other areas, such as the application of cognitive strategies, learning skills, and techniques (Conley, 2011). Teachers and counselors within the secondary setting must combine their efforts and resources as adult learners to simulate rigorous learning experiences for students they are likely to encounter in the postsecondary setting. The teacher-counselor

collaboration can become the conduit that allows students to acquire 21st century skills through the implementation of the CCSS.

How Collaboration Improves Outcomes

Multiple researchers contend that collaboration within the educational setting yields positive outcomes for teachers and students (Ainscow, 2015; Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2017; Hoaglund, Birkenfeld, & Box, 2014; Junco, Elavsky, & Heiberger, 2013; Zundans-Fraser & Bain, 2016). As teachers and counselors collaborate to implement curricula and instructional strategies, they become adult learners who use self-directed inquiry to create systematic coherence, transparency, structure, and content to address the challenge of assisting students to transition successfully out of high school into college (Zundans-Fraser & Bain, 2016). As practitioners, the teacher-counselor collaborative relationship can enhance both the educational experience and the outcome for practitioners and for the students they serve; however, collaborative experiences, especially within the secondary setting, are often challenged by lack of time and limited professional development opportunities (Honingh & Hooge, 2014; Mulholland & O'Connor, 2016).

Regardless of the lack of time and professional development, researchers find that even an average collaboration bears a positive impact on student achievement (Muijs, 2015; Ronfeldt, Farmer, Mcqueen, & Grissom, 2015). In addition, researchers discovered that the higher the quality of the collaboration, the better the student achievement outcome in reading and math (Muijs, 2015; Ronfeldt et al., 2015). By exchanging ideas, a collaborative setting improved teacher quality. High-quality collaboration involves the

interactive process of diverse people working together as equals and participating in shared decision-making (Killion, 2015). Stanton-Salazar (2016) reported that the teacher-counselor collaboration serves as an institutional network for high school students in the process of transitioning from adolescents to adulthood. Teachers and counselors can facilitate the process of developing strong, self-directed learners to meet the demands of proactive learning in the college setting.

Self-Directed Inquiry in Collaborative Teams

An outcome of highly self-directed learning is effective collaboration (Garmston & Wellman, 2016; Honingh & Hooge, 2016; Slavit & McDuffie, 2013). Self-directed inquiry, as defined by Knowles (1975) and extended by Merriam et al. (2012), is a process that allows the individual to take the initiative to assess needs, develop learning goals, identify human and material resources, choose learning strategies, and evaluate outcomes (Slavit & McDuffie, 2013). Teachers and counselors who are self-directed create buy-in for their own educational development, which is a derivative of Knowles (1970) assumption of the learner's experience (Slavit & McDuffie, 2013). The self-directed inquiry forged in the collaboration creates the developed expertise and common purpose needed to meet student needs through a precollege curriculum (Garmston & Wellman, 2016). Equally important, the self-directed inquiry leads to conversations among teachers and counselors that affect how students learn (Garmston & Wellman, 2016). Knowles reasoned that self-directed inquiry must include competencies that create a strong self-directed learning style. Those competencies include a concept of self as a

self-directed learner, the ability to collaborate with peers, and to view peers as human resources who help to diagnose needs, plan learning, and give and receive help as needed.

The theory that undergirds most precollege curriculum focuses on Knowles's theory of andragogy that promotes a self-directed learning style characteristic of adult learners who participate in an ongoing professional dialogue that differentiates to the needs of the each participant in the collaborate team (Adams & Vescio, 2015; Merriam, 2015; Merriam et al., 2012). The teacher-counselor collaboration can serve as a resource to facilitate the self-directed learning competencies endorsed by Knowles. Introducing self-directed inquiry into the collaborative team can build proactive adult learners who take charge of their learning. Lai (2015) discovered that adult learners who abandoned their traditional roles and became social agents facilitated the learning process and developed as students with a stronger self-directed learning style.

Instructional Design Paradigm: Transition from Pedagogical to Andragogical

Knowles's (1980) five assumptions of andragogy create an instructional model that allows secondary instructors to empower high school students to prepare for college and career success. Knowles asserts that teachers can design lessons built on the following six principles: (a) adult learners are motivated and self-directed, (b) adult learners bring life experience and prior knowledge, (c) adult learners are goal oriented, (d) adult learners are relevancy oriented, (e) adult learners are practical, and (f) adult learners like to be respected. Carpenter-Aeby and Aeby (2013) revealed that students perceived a greater impact on their individual learning through implementation of andragogical methods. Specifically, instructors who collaborated with students to

implement andragogical strategies experienced a positive classroom climate and differentiated learning activities. The researchers discovered that andragogy, when combined with an individual's learning style, resulted in a meaningful acquisition of new knowledge. Through process and knowledge of students' learning traits, teachers and counselors were able to accommodate their learners' needs through differentiation, which happened through the implementation of andragogical methods that resulted in opportunities for learners to develop skillsets that encouraged independent learning characteristic of those who succeed in college (Carpenter-Aeby & Aeby, 2013).

Professional Learning Communities in the 21st Century

The emergence of professional learning communities has transformed educators, including teachers and counselors, into adult learners who collaborate both formally and informally to improve pre-curricular learning for students (Cocklin, 2014; Owen, 2014; Tam, 2015). To address these challenges, teachers and counselors continue to meet in formal and informal ways to discuss ways to improve curriculum. Researchers reported that professional learning communities' cohesive structure, collaborative culture, and effective learning activities are crucial to adult learning and change in five dimensions that include curriculum, teaching, learning, role of teacher, and learning to teach (Knowles, 1980; Merriam et al., 2012; Tam, 2015). The research questions examine their perspective of the formal and informal collaboration, as seen through Knowles's theory of andragogy.

In spite of the emergence of professional learning communities, teachers and counselors deal with challenges of time and teacher-student workload in the secondary

setting (Tam, 2015). Given the structure of the school day, teachers and counselors are challenged to meet in formal and informal ways (Calvery & Hyun, 2013). Most professional data teams are homogeneous, grouped by grade level, subject, and job description. However, a new practice in the 21st century professional learning communities is the practice called cross-professional collaboration. To meet the challenges of increasing student achievement, while combating a host of challenges facing school communities, many school leaders are reaching out to other professionals within the community to begin to address the issues facing students in the 21st century (Schenke, van Driel, Geijsel, & Volman, 2017).

Critical areas of the teacher-counselor collaboration. Transitioning of high school students to college. The summer after graduation and before postsecondary fall enrollment is a critical period for high school graduates, who face challenges ranging from financial issues to completing all the necessary paperwork and procedures needed to ensure successful enrollment (Castleman, Arnold, & Wartman, 2012; Castleman & Page, 2014). While high school curriculum and instruction mainly consist of pedagogy (as lamented by Knowles), something has to take place to prepare students to become adult learners. An investigation of how teachers and counselors address this transitional gap is the focus of this study.

According to U.S. News and World Reports (2017), an increasing number of students who gain entrance into college are not retained in college, and in fact, one out of three freshmen fail to advance to their sophomore year. Family dilemmas, financial instability, and other societal problems contribute to a significant number of freshmen

who lack academic and coping skillsets needed to succeed beyond the first year of college (ACT, 2011). As a direct consequence of these issues, students with underdeveloped skillsets are placed into developmental courses, grow discouraged before they see progress, and drop out. This phenomenon underscores the need to investigate how teachers and counselors collaborate formally and informally to improve college curriculum.

High school graduation rates are improving (Bryant, 2015; Lynch, 2014; NAEP, 2013). In spite of improving graduation rates, however, a new area of concern involves students entering colleges without the academic skillsets and behaviors needed to remain in college (Petrilli & Finn, 2015; Sriram, 2014; Venezia & Jaegar, 2013). Given the high expectations of colleges and the current demands of a 21st century workforce, teachers and counselors, who serve on the front lines of equipping students with academic skills and behaviors, have to prepare students for postsecondary academic success through collaboration.

Implications

The limitations and challenges teachers and counselors face as they collaborate formally and informally to improve the precollege curriculum are well established within current research (Lai, 2015; Masters, 2013; Mulholland & O'Connor, 2016).

Collaboration within the secondary setting presents specific challenges for teachers and counselors (Stone-Jackson, 2015; Zundans-Fraser & Bain, 2016). Teachers' and counselors' ability to engage in formal and informal collaboration to improve precollege curriculum is necessary to prepare students to succeed in a postsecondary setting (Bryant,

2015; Carpenter-Aeby & Aeby, 2013; Kim, Olfman, Ryan, & Eryilmaz, 2014; Rothman, 2012b; Venezia & Jaeger, 2013).

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine how teachers and counselors collaborate as they engage in work to improve the precollege curriculum to prepare students to transition to college. Using a qualitative case study method, I gathered data from participants through the completion of a questionnaire, observations, and interviews. Based on the findings, the district will be able to ascertain how teachers and counselors are addressing the present challenges through formal and informal collaboration. The findings will provide stakeholders and district officials the guidance needed to assist teachers and counselors with necessary understanding and knowledge to establish collaborative relationships to improve curriculum and instruction. This case study provided me with the data to create the final project for an online professional development seminar to share with the district in an effort to address the teacher-counselor collaborative relationship. These professional development sessions could focus on strengthening the collaborative relationships among teachers and counselors, as well as the current implementation of the ASCANMF (ASCA, 2012; Lapan, Poynton, Marcotte, Marland, & Milam, 2017).

Summary

In Section 1, I introduced the local problem of teacher-counselor collaboration within secondary schools, and I introduced Knowles's theory of andragogy as a conceptual framework. Section 1 included evidence of the problem at the local level as well as the problem from the professional literature. In the literature review, I overviewed

the national problem and connected it to the local problem of the NSVD school district.

For Section 1 and throughout Section 1, I referenced a number of implications of the study's potential. In Section 2, I delineate my methodology through the research approach, design, participants, and data collection methods I used in the study.

Section 2: The Methodology

Investigating how teachers and counselors collaborate formally and informally to improve precollege curriculum requires a design that allows the researcher to explore the dynamics of this collaboration in a real-world condition (Yin, 2011). Yin (2014) described the features of qualitative design to include researching the meaning of people's lives in real-world conditions in addition to representing people's perspectives about the contextual conditions in which they live. Yin authorized using multiple sources of evidence to add credibility to the study. A review of literature revealed teachers and counselors as adult learners who are self-directed learners and who bring life experiences to face the challenges of improving the precollege curriculum through collaboration (Calvery & Hyun, 2013; DuFour et al., 2016; Knowles, 1980; Merriam, 2012). As such, a qualitative design allowed me to explore the real-world phenomenon of how this collaboration took place in the secondary setting to answer the questions of how teachers and counselors collaborate in formal and informal ways to improve precollege curriculum.

In Section 2, I discuss the methodology I used to address the problem of how teachers and counselors collaborate formally and informally to improve precollege curriculum, the research design, and the alignment of conceptual framework and methodology. This section also includes participant selection, the protection of participants' rights, and my relationship with participants. I also discuss data collection and analysis.

Qualitative Approach and Design

Description of Qualitative Research Design

The intent for this study was to investigate how teachers and counselors collaborate formally and informally as they engage in work to improve the precollege curriculum (see Calvery & Hyun, 2013). Interviews allowed me to gain understanding of real-world knowledge and experiences from participants and use that information to bring awareness to that community (see Yin, 2011). In this case study, I interviewed four teachers and four counselors from two schools in one school district concerning formal and informal collaborations. Yin (2014) explained that sampling could be at the broader level or narrower level depending on the nature of the study. As Yin discussed, the researcher should choose the sampling of participants based on the level of experiences and opinions that can be obtained on the situation being studied. I chose the sampling of participants in this study based on collaborative relationships of certified secondary teachers and counselors. Participants openly discussed the impact those relationships have on student success.

I included eight participants through purposeful sampling for this qualitative study, allowing me to collect detailed information and explore the collaborative relationships teachers and counselors have as self-directed adult learners who work together to enhance student success in two schools in one school district (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). School participants' existing knowledge with self-directed learning and collaboration helped me gain a deep understanding about a specific phenomenon. It was beneficial to purposefully select a smaller number of participants at two schools in the

district. The sample size allowed me to obtain comprehensive and solid evidence to address the concerns presented by each research question: How are teachers collaborating formally and informally with counselors to improve precollege curriculum, as seen through Knowles's theory of andragogy? How are counselors collaborating formally and informally with teachers to improve precollege curriculum, as seen through Knowles's theory of andragogy?

Justification for the Qualitative Case Study Design

I chose a qualitative case study approach rather than a quantitative approach because qualitative research methods help the researcher gain a deep understanding about a specific phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). According to Lewis (2015), the case study is used when there is a need to examine an event or phenomenon in depth in its natural context. The chosen qualitative method was appropriate because the purpose of this qualitative study was to examine how teachers and counselors collaborate formally and informally as they engage in work to improve the precollege curriculum. Creswell (2014) argued that the problem statement and research question(s) in qualitative methods are best addressed when participants can obtain new knowledge and understanding about phenomena being investigated. Because a case study is bounded, the case in this study was two schools in one school district, the NVSD.

I considered, but did not use, other qualitative methods. I did not use ethnographic methods, which focus on a culture of groups in a natural setting over time, because the focus of this study involved how teachers and counselors collaborate formally and informally to improve precollege curriculum and not a cultural group. A narrative design,

which focuses on life stories, would not have been appropriate because the focus in this study was on the teacher-counselor collaborative relationship and not life stories (see Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2011). This qualitative case study's objective was not to develop and employ mathematical models, theories, and hypotheses about a phenomenon (see Creswell, 2014). Quantitative measures would be inappropriate for this investigation, because quantitative research involves looking at relationships between variables over time and may require numerical data (Creswell, 2014). The method chosen for this qualitative study was a single case study because the purpose and research questions focused on participants' roles as adult learners.

To gain insight from multiple participants who possess knowledge of a common subject, I created a questionnaire that asked teachers and counselors their perspectives about collaborations based on Knowles's theory to use as a method of data collection (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). According to their Office of Research and Accountability, the NVSD is interested in exploring ways to help educators effectively prepare students to transition from high school to college with the social, academic, and career skillsets to succeed once in college. In addition to the questionnaire, I conducted an interview with each participant using a checklist informed by Knowles's theory of andragogy.

I employed semistructured interviews in this investigation. The focus of the interviews was a single case that consisted of two high schools in the NVSD. This current study aligned with the case study design because I focused on a particular group of people who are professionals in the field of curriculum and instruction and who have an existing collaborative relationship.

Case study research is different from other qualitative research because it involves looking at a bounded system. In bounded systems, there is a specific number of participants who can be interviewed. Researchers can use qualitative case studies to render a rich, thick description of a given group examined. Yin (2014) argued that case study research allows the researcher to gain real observable information from each participant while data collection is taking place. This study design was most appropriate because a specific group of people (teachers and counselors) have existing collaborative relationships with curriculum and instruction. Questions were broad, allowing each participant to construct individual meaning derived from personal experiences in their responses (see Creswell, 2014).

Participants

Criteria for Selecting Participants

I purposefully selected participants for this study based on years of experience, an awareness of Knowles's theory of adult learning (andragogy), and participation in the ASCA for counselors. As such, I selected certified secondary teachers and counselors who had taught/counseled for a minimum of 3 years in order to understand their perspective of formal and informal collaborations. Participants were employed in the NVSD and voluntarily agreed to participate in the study through the means of a signed, written consent form (see Creswell, 2014). I employed a selective sampling method to select eight participants consisting of two teachers and two counselors from each of two schools in the district to participate in the study. I selected eight participants in order to explore a variety of views about the collaborative processes of adult learners and sought

an equal number of teachers and counselors to obtain a balanced exploration of each educator's views. All eight participants completed a questionnaire. In addition to the questionnaire, I conducted an interview with each participant using a checklist informed by Knowles's theory of andragogy.

Justification for Number of Participants

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore how teachers and counselors collaborate formally and informally to improve precollege curriculum. Creswell (2014) examined the prominence of the inclusion of samples that are substantial in size and can supply salient perceptions about a phenomenon. In qualitative measures, it is suggested to choose fewer rather than more participants to obtain a deeper understanding (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2014). In an effort to discover distinct and in-depth perspectives of each participant and capture rich, thick descriptions of each participant's perspective, I interviewed four teachers and four counselors from two high schools in the NSVD (see Merriam et al., 2012; Yin, 2014).

According to Creswell (2014), the main goal of qualitative research is "to collect extensive detail about each site or individual studied" (p. 157). As such, Creswell contended that by limiting the number of case study participants to four or five, the researcher has ample chance of discovering common themes. Based on researchers' recommendations (Creswell, 2012; Merriam et al., 2012; Yin, 2014), I interviewed eight participants (four teachers and four counselors) to add proper depth to the study. I selected eight participants based on years of experience, an awareness of Knowles's theory of andragogy, and participation in the ASCA. Teachers and counselors with 3 or

more years of experience may have accrued a variety of collaborative experiences needed to develop thick description (Creswell, 2014).

Researcher-Participant Relationship

As a researcher, I sought to explore phenomena in its natural setting to capture a thick description of participants. Authentic application of the qualitative process involves establishing the relationship between the researcher and participant; specifically, the relationship reflects a power balance between the researcher and participant built on trust. This trust, once established, frees the participants to function in a normal manner within their natural setting. The participants must serve willingly without any coercive pressure applied by the researcher (Orb, Eisenhauer, & Wynaden, 2001; Yin, 2014). Moreover, the participants must be informed about their rights to decide to participate or cease to participate. Likewise, as the researcher, I bore the responsibility to protect each participant through enforcement of the ethical standards.

Ethical Treatment of Participants

To protect the rights, safety, and confidentiality of the participants, I enforced Walden's and NVSD's IRB protocols to minimize risks to participants. Namely, I protected the confidentiality of all participants through code names/pseudonyms. I provided participants with an electronic and paper copy of the consent form and asked them to review, sign, and return it to me within 48 hours. Participants could return the form through a non-district e-mail or by using the prestamped, self-addressed envelopes. The consent form stated that they were aware of the purpose, procedures, voluntary nature, risks and benefits, confidentiality, and contact information for my doctoral chair

and for me. Equally important, I informed participants that they could discontinue participation in the study at any given time. I obtained permission from the NVSD's and Walden University's IRBs before beginning the study. The Walden IRB approval number was 05-08-18-0412055. Participants, their sites, and any identifying factors were kept confidential. Furthermore, I will secure any hard copies of the collected data at home in a locked file cabinet for 5 years.

Data Collection

Creswell (2014) stated that the type of data collected depends on the research question. Given the qualitative design of my study, I collected data about formal and informal collaborations from teachers and counselors through the following data collection tools and sources: a questionnaire and an interview protocol. I created a modified version of the published questionnaire *Motivation in Relation to Self-Directed Learning and Collaborative Learning Questionnaire* (Choy, Deng, Chai, Koh, & Tsai, 2016), with permission from the authors. My modified version of this published questionnaire was designed to collect data that asked how teachers and counselors perceive self-directed learning and collaboration, formally and informally, to answer my research questions. This instrument can be accessed through the EBSCO host of Walden library database. The data collected through the questionnaire covered Knowles's principles related to self-directed learning, such as planning, goal-setting, tracking progress, working together to understand material, and problem solving.

In addition to the questionnaire, I interviewed teachers and counselors to discover their perceptions about how to improve collaboration through a self-developed, 10-

question interview protocol based on Knowles's theory of andragogy. My committee chair and second member reviewed the interview protocol. The protocol asked questions designed to allow teachers and counselors the opportunity to describe their formal and informal collaborative experiences and to offer ways and suggestions to improve collaborations that could be useful for the district. Together, the questionnaire and the interview protocol may provide the district with informed perspectives that answer the research questions of how teachers and counselors collaborate formally and informally to improve precollege curriculum, as seen through Knowles's theory of andragogy.

I purposefully selected two sites with similar demographics to collect data. I employed purposeful sampling to select two counselors and two teachers from each of the two schools. I obtained informed, written consent and collaborated with participants at each site to create a timeline to issue the self-directed learning and collaboration questionnaire and to conduct interviews within their natural setting. I collected data in a way that allowed participants to respond with their perspective in an unconstrained way. I triangulated the questionnaire and interview data to identify patterns and/or themes that emerged from such data (Yazan, 2015). My sources for data collection involved two individual teacher interviews and two individual counselor interviews for each of the two schools.

Justification for Data Collection Methods

Based on the timeframe established by the collaborative process between the researcher and participant at each site, I administered a questionnaire and scheduled an interview with each teacher or counselor. Each participant received the questionnaire via

email, with a request to complete and return to me within a two-week timeframe. Once the participant completed and returned the questionnaire, I conducted an interview with each participant within a 30-day period to discover how each participant, as an adult learner, collaborates formally and informally.

To protect the participant's identity, I assigned an alphabetical code that identified the participant and assigned this code to the questionnaire and any notes or ancillary materials that pertained to said participant. Due to the qualitative design of my study, individual interviews allowed the participants to articulate their perspectives and allowed the researcher to gain rich, thick descriptions. In addition to interviews, I distributed a questionnaire with both open- and close-ended questions to provide information to support my understanding and triangulate the results with other findings (Creswell, 2014). These data can reinforce the understanding of the central phenomenon of the how teachers and counselors collaborate formally and informally to improve precollege curriculum.

Data Collection Procedures

Because data collection and validity are essential to the qualitative process, systematic procedures and protocols designed to protect the participants and ethics of this study must be approached with integrity to ensure credibility and quality (Creswell, 2014). Data credibility and quality hinges on data-recording protocols. I collected data within a two-month period. Furthermore, to ensure a logical development of themes and patterns, I employed triangulation of the data to confirm insights and the informant's

perspective (Yin, 2014). Therefore, I implemented the following protocols when collecting data.

I contacted selected participants via email and sent them an electronic questionnaire to complete prior to the scheduled interview. I allowed one week for participants to complete and return the questionnaire. Once I received the completed questionnaire, I collaborated with each participant to schedule the interview. I then conducted all scheduled interviews. Interviews took 30 minutes to 50 minutes, depending on the timeframe and location agreed to by the participant. I used the interview protocol that presented questions aligned with the research questions and based on Knowles's theory of andragogy and a voice recorder to ensure the accuracy of the data collection. Once the data were collected, I transcribed the field notes in an effort to maintain the clarity of each participant's response. I sent each participant a copy of the draft findings to check their own data used in the findings for accuracy of interpretation (Creswell, 2014). I provided each participant an opportunity to discuss my interpretations of their data with me. According to Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, and Walter (2016), member checking not only ensures accuracy, but also provides resonance of the participants' experiences. Through member checking, I provided each participant with a final report of his/her experience to ensure that I succeeded in capturing the accuracy of each participant's interpretation, as well as protected his/her identity.

Systems for Keeping Track of Data

To ensure the quality of the data and to protect participants, I created a code identifier to protect the identity of each participant (Creswell, 2014). To keep track of the

data, I used Computer Aided Textual Markup and Analysis (CATMA), a computer-assisted quality data analysis software (CAQDAS), to discover patterns and identify themes within the data, as well as to assist with efficiency and accuracy. I transcribed the field notes into a Microsoft Word document on my personal, password-protected computer. Furthermore, I stored any electronic information on my private and password-protected personal computer, which I alone was able to access (Yin, 2014). I coded any hard copies collected from participants and stored them under lock and key in my home. Any software to transcribe data or detect themes was pre-approved by the IRB. The data will be kept on file for a period of five years. After five years, all hard copies of the data will be disposed in a shredder and will delete all electronic forms of data from my personal computer.

Procedures to Gaining Access to Participants

I gained access to participants by obtaining and securing permission from the NVSD's Department of Accountability, Research, and Grants. I completed their IRB application, as well as completed and obtained approval from Walden University's IRB. I emailed a request letter to the assistant superintendent of the NVSD asking for recommendations for counselors and teachers. Once both IRB committees granted their approval and once the district sent a list of recommendations, I sent invitation emails to teachers and counselors. From the pool of respondents willing to participate, I purposefully selected participants based on years of experience, participation in the ASCA, and participation in formal and informal collaborations in the school setting as adult learners.

Through an initial email to teachers and counselors that asked about their participation in collaborations, I selected teachers and counselors who met the criteria based on their positive responses to the initial email. Once I received a response from the teachers and counselors, I invited two teachers and two counselors from two schools in the district to participate in the study. The sample size of eight participants, consisting of two teachers and two counselors from each of the two schools in the district, allowed for saturation of the data (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2014).

Role of the Researcher

I have served as a teacher in the NVSD for the past 10 years. I have taught English Language Arts, as well as Yearbook Journalism, in the secondary setting. In addition to serving on the Governor's Honor Committee at my local school, I have been appointed to lead the Tenth Grade English Professional Learning Community (TGEPLC) for my school. The TGEPLC is responsible for supporting the principal with implementing the district's initiatives for tenth grade. While excited about the new opportunity to serve in a leadership capacity, I have not worked as a supervisor or evaluator for any of the potential participants of this project study.

The NVSD has 16 high schools, of which five met the criteria of my study due to their similar demographics. Of the five schools, I selected two high schools with similar student demographics, as well as similar faculty and staff. Because I teach within this district, I excluded my local site from the selection process. My experience as a teacher who has collaborated with counselors has informed my opinion of growth mindset. To remain aware and forthcoming about my own biases, I recorded my ideas and opinions in

a reflection journal. During the data collection process, I created a double-columned journal that allowed me to record my views on one side and the participants' views on the other side (Creswell, 2014). This technique allowed me to ensure the credibility of the data collected and to ensure that it was free of bias.

Qualitative design allows the researcher to study participants in their natural setting (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Within this natural setting, my role as a researcher requires me to act ethically by protecting the rights and increasing the comfort level of the participants. Because I am the data-collecting instrument in my study, I must participate in the environment while remaining detached from the environment. I acted as the data-collecting instrument by posing open- and close-ended questions through the conducted interview. With the interview, I allowed participants the comfort to respond in the way they choose to respond (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Creswell, 2014).

Data Analysis

Procedures

A strong and credible analysis of data requires a rigorous and recursive five-step process of compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting, and concluding (Yin, 2014). Utilizing Yin's (2014) five-step process, I compiled and sorted through collected data to establish order. Next, I disassembled and broke down the data into smaller fragments and assigned and/or tested possible codes to distinguish the data. After disassembling, I reorganized the disassembled fragments into codes, then I developed themes that emerged from the disassembling process. Once reassembled, I interpreted the data. When I completed interpretation, I concluded the analytical process by drawing

conclusions from my entire study about how teachers and counselors collaborate formally and informally to improve precollege curriculum.

I analyzed data by implementing the five-step process outlined by Yin (2014). Specifically, I ordered and prepared the field notes from the questionnaire and interviews for analysis by transcribing the material into a Microsoft Word document immediately after each interview session. I used CAQDAS to transcribe the questionnaire and interview responses to begin the preliminary coding process. To gain a general understanding of the analysis, I recorded my thoughts about the data. I began triangulating data derived from the questionnaire and interviews to look for emerging themes and patterns. I then organized and constructed emerging, recurring themes of the teacher-counselor collaboration for growth mindset into categories for coding (Yin, 2014). Once coded, I began interpreting the coded data, combining categories, if needed, from which to build an accurate, rich narrative of the formal and informal teacher-counselor collaboration. Finally, I drew conclusions about the analysis using a wealth of information derived from the questionnaire, interviews, and literature review to develop a rich, thick description about the teacher-counselor formal and informal collaboration.

Qualitative Credibility and Trustworthiness

Validity in qualitative design involves ensuring that all data have been properly collected and interpreted in a way that results in an accurate representation of the real-world setting (Yin, 2014). I ensured the quality of my research by applying and implementing strategies that confirmed the credibility and trustworthiness of my study. Creswell (2014) contended that validity in a study could be determined by the degree to

which the researcher has accurately interpreted the data. To establish accuracy, I implemented several strategies to confirm the accuracy of the data. To begin, I used devices such as audio recordings to capture the data as accurately as possible. I also checked and rechecked all transcripts for accuracy against the audio recording. To justify the findings of my study, I used triangulation of multiple sources to find the areas where the data converged and to establish credibility. I also employed member checking to ensure that interpretation of the data matched the authentic perspective and voice of each participant and, thus, substantiated the trustworthiness of my study. To clarify research bias, I kept a reflective journal that recorded my own awareness about the data and assisted me in separating my personal bias from the findings. Because the qualitative study of teacher-counselor collaboration for growth mindset cannot be generalized to a population, the issue of external validity was not a threat to the study. In an effort to allow for replication of this study, I provided a clear context that can either enable other researchers to implement procedures in their studies or transfer findings to similar contexts.

To address discrepant cases, I allowed participants to view drafts of the findings and narrative, providing them the opportunity to confirm the narrative or address areas of concern. If the participant had a different idea about the narrative, I collaborated with the participant to address and resolve the concern and continued to explore and investigate the concern to ensure accuracy and review findings for viability in setting (Creswell, 2014). To ensure quality and credibility, I maintained minimal contact with participants

to avoid influencing the study (Creswell, 2014). As the data-collecting instrument in my study, I participated in the environment while remaining detached from the environment.

Conclusion

The purpose of my qualitative study was to examine how teachers and counselors collaborate formally and informally to improve the precollege curriculum for students transitioning from secondary to postsecondary education. Therefore, the case study method outlined in Section 2 provided the flexibility needed to gain rich, thick descriptions of the teacher-counselor collaboration in the secondary setting. Utilizing the questionnaire and interviews, I explored the dynamic of the teacher-counselor collaboration with the framework of Knowles's theory of andragogy. Yin's (2014) five-step data collection process allowed me to collect data in a systematic way that yields thick, rich descriptions of participants' perspectives about the teacher-counselor collaboration. I utilized the questionnaire, interviews, and literature reviews to triangulate and to construct a rich description that accurately describes participants' experiences in the natural setting. I also used CAQDAS, such as CATMA, to assist with detecting and coding themes I used to build accurate, thick descriptions. In addition to addressing the procedures, I explained and addressed the ethical concerns involved in my study and stated my awareness of ethical behavior in my role as researcher. Eight participants (four teachers and four counselors) from two selected sites with similar demographics formed the basis of my study. The goal of this study was to provide effective ways for teachers and counselors to collaborate to build growth mindset in students of the NVSD.

Findings

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore how teachers and counselors in the NVSD collaborate formally and informally to improve precollege curriculum. The primary method of data collection was derived from a six-item questionnaire and a follow-up 10 question semi-structured interview. The data collection process required selected participants to first complete the questionnaire and then agree to a follow-up interview. Each interview required a 20-minute timeframe to complete and was conducted in the participant's natural setting or a setting of their preference. During each interview, I asked follow-up questions in addition to the semi-structured questions and gained each participant's permission to record an audio version of the interview to achieve accuracy of each participant's insights. Saldana (2015) stated that coding is an act of interpretation, and when coding data, a researcher can find common yet distinct at the same time. Utilizing this coding technique, I was able to gather a rich description of each participant's concepts, sentiments, and experiences, while simultaneously recognizing the larger pattern of information. Furthermore, using a qualitative data analysis software known as NVivo 12, I was able to run queries and implemented auto-coding, as well as manual coding, to identify and clarify common themes and subthemes regarding collaboration that presented a clear depiction of each participant's concepts, sentiments, and experiences (see Appendix). NVivo, a computer assisted qualitative data software, was the most appropriate software to use because it allowed me as a researcher to remain in control of the analytical process while providing assistance and efficiency of the analytical process (Creswell, 2016).

The descriptive thematic analyses provided a rich understanding of secondary teachers' and counselors' perceptions of how they collaborate formally and informally. Through thematic analysis, I was able to organize each participant's perceptions into broader themes that explore how teachers and counselors collaborate in formal and informal ways to improve the precollege curriculum. Furthermore, I conducted the data analysis through the lens of Knowles's (1970) theory of andragogy to discover how teachers and counselors in the NVSD collaborate formally and informally to improve implementation of the precollege curriculum for students. Throughout my interview with each teacher and counselor, Knowles's (1970) theories created the framework for exploring the phenomena of how teachers and counselors collaborate to improve the implementation of the precollege curriculum for students. The following section summarizes the findings in the form of themes and subthemes that emerged from the analysis (see Appendix).

Table 1

Themes for Research Questions 1 and 2

Research Question	Themes (Formal collaborations to improve precollege curriculum)	Themes (Informal collaborations to improve precollege curriculum)
RQ1: How are <i>teachers</i> collaborating formally and informally with counselors to improve precollege curriculum, as seen through Knowles's theory of andragogy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrequent formal collaborations with counselors • Formal collaborations in the form of parent-teacher conferences • Topics involve student performance within classroom regarding curriculum mastery • Barrier to formal collaboration: (1) No official implementation of ASCA Model Program, (2) Limited understanding of broader role of counselor as defined by ASCA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent informal collaborations with counselors • Informal collaborations in the form of intermittent face-to-face conversations and emails • Best practices to assist teachers who assist students • No major barrier to informal collaboration
RQ2: How are <i>counselors</i> collaborating formally and informally with teachers to improve the precollege curriculum, as seen through andragogy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrequent formal collaborations with teachers in non-RAMP schools; more frequent in RAMP school • Formal collaborations in the form of parent-teacher conferences • Topics involve student performance within classroom regarding curriculum mastery for students • Barrier to formal collaboration: (1) Finding common time with teachers, (2) No scheduled classroom visits, (3) Environmental barriers (i.e., physical separation of counselors and teachers' offices) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent informal collaborations with teachers • Informal collaboration in the form of role-playing ideas, administering needs assessments, informal meetings, and conversations • Topics involve problem-solving, sharing adult-learning experiences • Barrier to informal collaboration: No major barrier to informal collaboration.

Findings for Research Question 1

Research Question 1 asked, How are teachers collaborating formally and informally with counselors to improve precollege curriculum, as seen through Knowles's theory of andragogy? Knowles's (1970) theory of andragogy encompasses how adults use self-directed learning, their life experiences and prior knowledge, and their readiness to learn to collaborate in formal and informal ways to ensure student success. In the NVSD, Knowles's theory of andragogy occurred within the context of collaboration within the professional learning communities established by the district.

Theme 1: Formal and informal collaboration for teachers. The teacher-counselor collaboration yields a rich learning experience as adult learners collaborate to explore ways to improve implementation of the curriculum, which can result in a common framework that establishes how teachers and counselors can help students master the challenges of the curriculum (David, 2011). However, the collaborative process between teachers and counselors within the secondary setting often reveals barriers and yields differing perceptions and levels of satisfaction with such collaboration, as well as continued discovery on ways to revise and improve curricula (Harron & Hughes, 2018; Taylor, Morgan, & Callow-Heusser, 2016). NVSD strives to create a collaborative community that promotes student success through the implementation of professional learning communities. Specifically, the district's initiative strives to conduct weekly, collaborative meetings within all schools that drive student success. Within each school, several collaborative communities use data to inform them on ways to adjust curriculum to help students succeed.

Formal collaboration for teachers. Based on the questionnaire and the follow-up interviews, teachers experience infrequent formal collaborations. Formal collaborations in the secondary setting are arranged to support teacher-to-teacher collaboration rather than teacher-to-counselor collaboration, which results in limited, infrequent teacher-counselor collaboration. Teacher A asserted, “I do not usually collaborate with counselors except in a parent-teacher conference setting or in preparation for one. Counselors send requests for information from me, but I could not say that we collaborate in any substantial, formal way.” On the contrary, Teachers B, C, and D responded in light of their interactions with other teachers in their collaborative teams, as opposed to counselors. Results from the interviews revealed that teachers in the secondary setting have limited, infrequent collaboration in the form of parent-teacher meetings such as 504 or Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings with counselors. Both the 504 and the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) are protocols designed to ensure that students with disabilities receive equal access to education. The IEP provides a comprehensive, detailed, specialized instruction and support for students who require services as outlined under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Fain, 2019). A 504 plan dictates how students who do not require detailed, specialized instruction will learn within the general educational environment with stated modifications (Fain, 2019). Teacher D stated, “I don’t have a lot of work with counselors, but every once in a while, I do have to go visit with them when I don’t have grades from previous schools.” Teacher D asserted, “If there’s a suicide type of thing, which has occurred on occasion, then it would be more to me, personal issues with kids or emotional issues with kids.” Teachers A and C

explained that while they have experienced formal collaborations with counselors in other schools within the NVSD, their current school was “not as active.”

Informal collaboration for teachers. Teachers, as self-directed learners, are having informal collaborations with counselors to explore the best ways to implement the precollege curriculum. Informal collaborations are centered around acquiring knowledge from counselors that helps teachers gain additional understanding of students in order to implement the required curriculum more effectively. Teacher D expressed that she deals with counselors to gain knowledge of the “type of curriculum” the student has learned, in order to close learning gaps and seek help on how to deal with the student’s personal or emotional issues. Teacher C first analyzes the students’ needs, then converses with the counselor to find out what interventions, if any, are in place to help the student master the curricular challenge. Teacher C went on to discuss interventions he has in place and tries to get resources from the counselor that can help him effectively help the students. Teacher B sees the counselor to address the specific needs of the population of students to discover the motives for student behavior in order to address specific needs of the population.

Informal collaborations within the secondary setting, unlike formal collaborations, occur with greater frequency and breadth and preference. Based on the questionnaires, informal collaborations between teachers and counselors occur in the form of intermittent conversations, in which teachers explore how to adjust their curriculum to meet the needs of students. Teacher C seeks to “discuss best practices and how bringing innovating teaching methods either improve or take away from students learning experiences.”

Teacher B collaborates via “short emails and quick conversations” about how “to improve student learning.” He asserted that “informal collaborations tend to be more anecdotal.... We share ideas on what activities/strategies are most effective [to make] the required curriculum relevant for all of our students.”

As self-directed learners, teacher participants prefer informal collaboration. Based on Knowles’s three principles, self-directed learners need the freedom and unstructured nature of the informal collaboration to actively share ideas and information to promote precollege curriculum, determine the best way to problem solve, and actively work together to improve the precollege curriculum. The teachers in this study demonstrated the following Knowles’s Principles of Andragogy in their collaborations.

Knowles’s principles of andragogy in teacher collaborations. Knowles put forth three key principles of andragogy. Principle 1 described how adult learners manage their educational needs. Principle 2 described how adult learners bring their life experiences and prior knowledge to collaborations. Principle 3 described how adult learners exhibit a readiness to learn. However, barriers in the secondary school environment made adopting these principles challenging.

Knowles’s Principle 1. Adult learners manage their educational needs. Teacher A uses the Teams platform to share documents and learning experiences. All teachers shared ideas and teaching strategies that work to advance student’s mastery of the precollege curriculum. Teacher D explained that she “share[d] teaching strategies that have worked well and that have flopped” in the collaborative team meetings. She gained knowledge to help her differentiate tasks. Teacher C noted his

“conversations/collaborations with counselors have to be ongoing in order to take effect” on student learning.

Knowles’s Principle 2. Adult learners bring life experiences and prior knowledge to collaborations. Teacher B stated his informal collaborations tend to be “anecdotal.” He concentrates on the most effective strategies “in our classes at making the required curriculum relevant for all students.” Teacher C noted the importance of “ongoing” collaborations “to improve the experiences of students.” Teacher A emphasized reflection as an integral part of her informal collaborations. She asserted, “I often think of the students’ point of view and use my own memories and experiences with my own children to inform my perspective.”

Knowles’s Principle 3. Adult learners possess a readiness to learn. Teacher C discusses “challenges and innovative techniques with counselors” to address the issues and best-working parts of the curriculum. His goal is to problem solve through dialogue with counselors. Teacher B noted how his informal collaboration tends to be “looser,” and this allows him to exchange those ideas “in the period of time between formal collaborations” that he believes are most beneficial to address the challenges of the curriculum.

Barriers to formal collaboration for teachers. Teacher participants in this study are willing to engage in formal collaborations, but barriers within the secondary school environment limit formal interactions. Teacher-counselor collaborations occur during parent-teacher counselor meetings, such as 504 or IEP meetings. Outside of these meetings, formal collaborations were limited. School A did not have official

implementation of the ASCA model and lacked the infrastructure needed to create additional collaborative experiences with counselors. Teacher A confirmed that “there are not enough conversations” happening between teachers and counselors. For the 2019-2020 school year, however, School A will be in the process of applying to become a Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP) school. An administrator within School A verified that the goal is to require counselors to make additional classroom visits, as well as visits to collaborative teams to ensure more frequent teacher-counselor collaborative experiences. Furthermore, Teacher A noted, “I have received an email from a counselor wanting to attend our [collaborative team] sessions, so maybe that’s in the process of changing.”

Barriers to informal collaboration. Compared to formal collaborations, informal collaborations occurred with greater frequency and were the preferred mode for teachers. Teacher participants in this study felt more comfortable with their informal collaborations with counselors. Teacher participants appreciated the flexibility of the informal collaborative mode.

Roles and responsibilities. Teacher participants struggle to understand the broader roles of counselors in the formal and informal collaborations. The teacher participants tended to seek counselors’ help on a “case-by-case basis” (Teacher B). Teacher A stated that the lack of teacher-counselor collaborations in her current setting may be the “result of everybody being on their own island ... and not necessarily ... connected in terms of time or in terms of students. I might want to talk about a certain student, but the counselor has a different roster.” Teacher C stated, the counselors in his

current setting were not as “active” as counselors in his previous secondary school setting. Teacher D stated, “I don’t have a lot of work with counselors, but every once in a while, I do have to go visit them when I don’t have grades from previous schools.” This lack of understanding of roles and responsibilities may limit the interactions between teachers and counselors.

Findings for Research Question 2

Research Question 2 asked, How are counselors collaborating formally and informally with teachers to improve the precollege curriculum, as seen through andragogy? Knowles’s (1970) theory of andragogy posits that adult learners are self-directed and use their self-directed learning style by actively sharing ideas, accessing their prior knowledge and life experiences to address professional challenges within their environment, and demonstrating a readiness to learn new information to help solve problems. In the NVSD, counselors engaged in these activities through their formal and informal collaborations with teachers.

Theme 1: Formal and informal collaboration for counselors. Formal collaborations for counselors with teachers in the secondary setting from a counselor’s perspective happen within the context of the IEP and 504 meetings in non-RAMP schools; however, for RAMP schools, counselors seem to have more focused and more specific collaborations centered on improving the implementation of the precollege curriculum. Counselor A reported that the formal context of the IEP and 504 meetings with teachers allow them the chance to explore “ideas to assist the student in the classroom.” Counselor B uses the formal context of the parent-student conference to

work with teachers “to learn how they structure their teaching time and how information is disseminated to students.” Counselor B elaborated on the importance of the formal teacher collaboration that allows her “understanding [of] a teacher’s teaching style and how their class is structured to allow me to help students when they are struggling.”

Full implementation of the teacher-counselor collaboration in a RAMP school has more direct involvement with the curriculum. Counselor D, who serves in a school that has applied to receive RAMP status, asserted that counselors in her school “are required to use Career Cruising to the requirements for [the state’s] Bridge Law.” She continued to elaborate on the specific collaborative process with the teacher centered around combining the counseling curriculum with the academic curriculum, “To ensure the task is more meaningful, we work with the Economic teachers to merge the lessons.” In addition to merging purposeful lessons to improve the precollege curriculum, counselors in Counselor D’s school invite teachers “to attend the counseling CCC [collaborative team] meeting to discuss ways in which teachers’ lesson plans can incorporate counseling.”

Informal collaborations. Counselors, like teachers, preferred the mode of informal collaboration. Counselors stated that informal collaborations happen in the form of role-playing ideas, administering needs assessments, and inviting teachers to informal meetings and informal conversations. Counselors, like teachers, noted the benefits of informal modes of collaboration. Counselor D asserted, “Teachers are able to be more relaxed and comfortable and able to open up about what they would like. Just to be honest about whatever it is we’re talking about.” Counselor A noted,

When it comes to teachers, it's more just an informal conversation. Maybe they come up with a situation or maybe I have a curious situation, and you're just trying to figure out what is happening. So, I would think it's more informal type of learning setting, collaboration.

Counselor B reflected that with informal collaborations, "I can drive any which way I want. Like I can draw from my experiences, I can work from my knowledge of the student. And, I can drive those conversations, basically, any which way they want."

Counselor B, in particular, noted, "If it was as parent-teacher conference ... not that I don't have that flexibility there, but I think I am bound more by what the parent wants to get out of that meeting with the teacher."

Knowles's principles of andragogy in counselor collaborations. Challenges also existed for counselors adopting Knowles's principles of andragogy. Principle 1 described how adult learners manage their educational needs. Principle 2 described how adult learners bring their life experiences and prior knowledge to collaborations. Principle 3 described how adult learners exhibit a readiness to learn.

Knowles's Principle 1. Adult learners manage their educational needs. As self-directed learners, counselors manage their collaborative experiences with teachers as they address ways to help teachers help students master the precollege curriculum. Counselor B seeks to understand how teachers structure their classrooms in order to "use that knowledge to direct the strategies I give to students to use to get better academic outcomes." Counselor D, who works with teachers to merge lessons, also meets with teachers and local businesses "to help determine role-play ideas for students who plan to

attend college or join the workforce.” Both formal and informal collaborations allow self-directed learners the opportunity to explore ways to problem solve the challenges student faces in order to master the precollege curriculum.

Knowles’s Principle 2. Adult learners bring life experiences and prior knowledge to learning experiences. The learning experiences for counselors as self-directed learners significantly enhances the application of prior knowledge and life experiences they bring to their collaborations. Counselor A expressed the importance of brainstorming with teachers and parents in 504 and IEP meetings. Counselor B brings “a unique perspective in understanding what students go through academically and emotionally.” Counselor B, who had a daughter in high school, is able to relate to the experiences of the students she’s serving. Counselor D invites teachers to counseling meetings, merges teacher-counselor lessons with them, and gives needs assessment to evaluate curricular options based on teacher responses.

Knowles’s Principle 3. Adult learners possess a readiness to learn. As self-directed learners, counselors are eager to acquire and disseminate information with teachers to help them improve the precollege curriculum. Counselor B endeavored to understand a teacher’s teaching style and classroom structure to help the student succeed with the curriculum. She mentioned specifically,

For example, in working with a student who was struggling in Chemistry, I was able to use my knowledge of how the teacher structures their class to identify the fact that the student was not working their web-assignments in the classroom and

consequently lost out on the ability to collaborate with the teacher and other students on concepts he struggled in.

Counselor D meets with local college representatives, disseminates needs assessments, and invites teachers to meetings. Counselor C admitted that factors such as teacher and counselor absenteeism hinder collaborations. This may indicate in some ways a general lack of readiness to learn.

Barriers to formal collaboration for counselors. Formal collaborations for counselors who seek to collaborate with teachers face numerous challenges within the secondary setting. Counselor C admitted, “We can work together more, and it’s about finding time. It’s hard to do that.” Counselor C also reflected, “We need to be coming up and visiting the classrooms.” Counselor B confirmed that the “ongoing collaborative piece [with teachers] is missing.” In addition to the challenges of time and consistent collaboration with teachers, counselors noted that the environment also affects the teacher-counselor collaboration. Counselor D explained the importance environment plays in in collaboration, “If we make it a more comfortable environment for teachers, they’re going to want to come in. They’re going to want to share and come back and share more.” Counselor A confirmed “You feel more pressure when it’s a formal setting ... everybody feels like they have to come with something.”

Barriers to informal collaborations. Though counselors did not mention explicit barriers to informal collaborations, they expressed an overarching concern about the teacher-counselor collaboration within the secondary environment. Counselor C stated, “There are some things that we, as all of us together need.... And it’s about finding time.

We need to be coming up and visiting the classrooms.” Counselor B confirmed the ongoing collaboration between teachers and counselors is missing. Counselor B stressed the importance of getting the information needed to help the student master the curriculum, regardless of the mode, when she reflected, “At the end of the day, it’s just getting the job done.” Counselor C admitted that absenteeism plays a role in the lack of more frequent teacher-counselor collaborations.

Roles and responsibilities for counselors. In this study, counselors seemed to possess a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the teacher-counselor collaborations than teachers did. However, counselors who are in official RAMP schools that consequently execute a full implementation of the ASCA model have more frequent and structured collaborations with teachers than counselors in non-RAMP schools. Counselor D, who works in a school that has officially applied to receive RAMP status, expressed more frequent collaborations that involved improving the precollege curriculum than those in the non-RAMP school. In addition to actively inviting teachers to collaborative team meetings, Counselor D possessed knowledge about the state laws that governed collaborations, reached out to stakeholders at the college level, and helped organize a Counseling Advisory Board that connects teachers, administrators, students, a variety of stakeholders. Schools with a full implementation of the ASCA model are likely to have more frequent and meaningful collaborations to explore more ways to improve the precollege curriculum.

Discussion

The data collection process was influential in revealing how teachers and counselors collaborate in the secondary setting, as well as in identifying what they need to become more effective collaborators in order to improve the precollege curriculum. The participants willingly participated in the interview and in completing the questionnaire process, and they attempted to answer each question with honesty. As a result of their willingness, I trusted that their comments and explanations were honest. Two of the teachers did not engage in frequent collaborations with the counselors, and one of the counselors did not engage in frequent teacher collaborations outside of 504 or IEP meetings. The majority of the teachers and counselors indicated that they are in need of more time to engage in effective collaborations. I observed that in the non-RAMP schools, the partial implementation of ASCA model affected the quality of collaborations between teachers and counselors, due to the lack of understanding of the counselor's role under the ASCA model. I also observed that in the school in the process of applying for RAMP status, a full implementation of the ASCA model produced more frequent teacher-counselor collaboration experience and empowered the counselor to have a lead role in the collaborative experience with teachers. The most common need identified by the participants was finding the time to engage in formal and informal collaborations. Consequently, both teachers and counselors need professional development to explore additional formal and informal ways to engage in collaborations to improve the implementation of the precollege curriculum (Kelly & Cherkowski, 2015). As a result,

based on the data, the participants' comments, and current research, I have created a professional development session.

Discrepant Cases

Through the data collection process, I identified that all teachers and counselors who collaborated had varying degrees of perceptions of the importance and possibilities of the teacher-counselor collaborative experience in the secondary school setting. The variation in the data appeared in the manner in which teachers and counselors understood and accepted their roles and responsibilities in their collaborations in improving the implementation of the precollege curriculum. Based on the questionnaire analysis, some teachers and counselors had a difficult time understanding how their collaboration improved the precollege curriculum. Hence, when completing the questionnaire, a counselor gave a "not applicable" answer to one or more of the prompts, and a teacher responded that she did not engage in collaborations with counselors in a "substantial, formal way." However, their participation in the follow-up interview provided clarity that they needed to answer the questions they labeled as "not applicable." In the future, I will add extra details to the prompts on the questionnaire to ensure that teachers and counselors fully comprehend the prompt.

Based on the interview analysis, all participants acknowledged how their collaborations affected the implementation of the precollege curriculum, and all desired more time and creative ways to engage in informal collaborations to have a stronger impact on student outcomes within the classroom. I developed a professional development session to address and explore more creative ways to improve the quality

and frequency of the collaborative experience between teachers and counselors through innovative practices, as well as ways to plan, monitor, and assess the outcomes of their collaboration.

Evidence of Quality

I completed the data collection for this qualitative study through questionnaire and interview data. I chose this design in order to explore how teachers and counselors collaborate to improve the precollege curriculum in the secondary setting. The goal of the study was to understand how teachers and counselors use their knowledge as adult learners to collaborate to improve the precollege curriculum. Saldana (2015) asserted that human reality derives from their experiences and relationships. Based on Saldana's assertion, I collected and analyzed data in order to discover the reality of teachers and counselors in secondary schools and to produce a rich description of their perceptions. In addition, I used member checking to ensure the accuracy of participants' perceptions and to establish the credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings.

Once I had completed the data collection, I transcribed my interview data. I then annotated the transcripts and assigned pre-codes to the data. I used NVivo software to enter the pre-codes and to auto-code the questionnaire and the transcripts to detect patterns and themes. I then identified the dominant themes. Once the data analysis was completed, I conducted member-sharing by sharing the results of my interpretation with the participants to ensure accuracy of interpretation based on their responses.

Summary

The data collection process for this study included a questionnaire and interview. I referenced the district's 2018-2019 strategic plan that emphasized the importance of improving school processes. Collected data revealed that teachers and counselors collaborate formally and informally within the secondary setting to improve the implementation of the precollege curriculum. All eight participants engage in collaboration; however, schools that have applied to obtain official recognition of full implementation of the ASCA model have more frequent and dynamic formal and informal teacher-counselor collaborations than schools who have not applied to receive such recognition. Based on questionnaire findings for Research Question 1 and Research Question 2, all participants valued their ability to apply self-directed learning to problem solve issues by sharing instructional strategies and ways to improve implementation of the precollege curriculum and preferred, as well as desired, more opportunities to engage in informal teacher-counselor collaborations. In contrast, the interview data revealed formal collaborations, though less-preferred, are necessary to produce more effective engagement within the entire school setting to improve student outcomes.

In Section 3, I will explain the project I have designed to address ways to enhance formal collaborations for teachers and counselors. The ASCA model includes the four themes of leadership, advocacy, collaboration, and systemic change as a framework for counselors to lead the process of establishing social change within the secondary setting. Fye, Miller, and Rainey (2018) argue the importance of the full implementation of the ASCA model to empower counselors to lead collaborations with other stakeholders,

including teachers. The ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors provides the standards that teachers and counselors can utilize to develop the instructional strategies needed to address the precollege curriculum. Barrow and Mamlin (2016) suggest best practices for improving collaborations between teachers and counselors.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore how teachers and counselors in the NVSD collaborate in formal and informal ways to improve the precollege curriculum in the secondary setting. The findings of this study revealed that professional development is needed to enhance the understanding of how to improve the precollege curriculum for teachers and counselors in the secondary setting through the comprehension of roles and responsibilities; obtainment of best practices; and creative, time-saving modes of collaboration, instructional strategies, and full implementation of the ASCA model. Furthermore, teachers and counselors need to explore ways to increase the frequency of their collaborative experiences as adult learners through the understanding of the importance of counselors' newly-defined role, as stated in the ASCANMF. In this section, I present a description of the project goals, project rationale, project content rationale, review of the literature, project implementation, project evaluation, and implications for social change.

Description and Goals

The 21st century pedagogical shift in education is documented in a movement from traditional 20th century isolation models to 21st century collaborative models, better known as professional learning communities. The current collaborative model applies to all K-12 educators and beyond, including teachers and counselors (Barrow & Mamlin, 2016; Bigsby & Firestone, 2017; Cholewa, Goodman-Scott, Thomas & Cook, 2016; Stone-Johnson, 2016). The challenges and issues of collaborating in the secondary

setting, including the implementation of the ASCANMF for counselors who collaborate with teachers, as well as time constraints, were addressed as a means of supporting the teacher-counselor collaboration to reveal the best ways to implement the precollege curriculum to ensure student success.

To understand why teachers and counselors were having difficulty engaging in more frequent formal and informal collaborations was essential to understanding how teachers and counselors collaborate in the secondary setting. I selected four teachers and four counselors based on their years of experience, knowledge of Knowles's theory of adult learning, and familiarity with ASCA to develop a clearer understanding of how to support teacher collaborations. Gaining insight into how teachers and counselors were collaborating formally and informally in the secondary setting to improve implementation of the precollege curriculum was essential to ensure appropriate professional development, resources, and collaborative time.

Based on the literature review in Section 3 and the study's findings, teachers and counselors require and desire frequent, purposeful, and well-timed professional development (DuFour et al., 2016). According to the study's findings, teachers and counselors prefer professional development that focuses on the establishment of a common language, informed roles and responsibilities, and understanding common standards to address their lack of understanding about the importance of their collaborative relationships (Stone-Jackson, 2016). Therefore, the goal of this study was to support the teacher-counselor collaboration in the NVSD as they strive to fully implement the ASCA model in all their schools through the RAMP application process.

I designed the project to provide a professional development option that addresses the areas of need through a supportive platform that is job-embedded, collaborative, flexibly-timed, and comfortable as teachers and counselors seek to implement the ASCA model to enhance a stronger collaborative experience and sustainable implementation with the precollege curriculum in the secondary setting (see Harron & Hughes, 2018). The flexibility of the project, in terms of time and mode of communication, allows both teachers and counselors to participate in a seven-session online professional development offered during the district's professional development and early release days, as well as throughout the school year. Teachers and counselors will work to collaboratively build their understanding of the elements and the jargon pertaining to the ASCANMF. During the sessions, teachers and counselors will take part in interactive assignments designed to increase their modes of formal and informal collaboration through discussions, video clips, curriculum planning, and best practices strategies. These sessions will allow both teachers and counselors to work in tandem to define and explore best collaborative practices and instructional and assessment strategies of the precollege curriculum.

Rationale

Collaboration in the 21st century requires more than traditional pedagogical practices; in fact, collaboration has become educators' main foundational practice and process to explore creative ways to implement the precollege curriculum (DuFour et al., 2016; Jensen, Sonneman, Roberts-Hull, & Hunter, 2016; Voelkel & Chrispeels, 2017; Von Davier, Zhu, & Kyllonen, 2017). Effective collaborators must be able to define a clear and compelling purpose, build a culture of professional learning, create a results

orientation and expectation, establish a focus on learning, create common assessments, devise interventions when students have not mastered the precollege curriculum, and extend learning and rigor for students who have mastered the curriculum (DuFour et al., 2016). As teachers and counselors abandon the traditional pedagogical models that resulted in isolation, their need of support becomes essential as they move to the collaborative model in order to better position themselves to address the challenges of implementing the precollege curriculum (Alismail & McGuire, 2015).

My intention for this study was to explore both the formal and informal modes of collaboration between teachers and counselors in the secondary setting and to locate those areas of collaboration that needed additional support, resources, and professional development to become more effective. As a district initiative, successful implementation of the ASCANMF requires understanding how to best support teachers and counselors as they alter and shift their practices to become more effective collaborators who seek to implement the precollege curriculum in the secondary setting. Based on this study's findings, teachers and counselors in the NVSD needed to achieve a formal understanding of their roles and responsibilities under ASCA, develop a common language and mutual understanding of ASCA model standards, and explore creative, time-saving strategies to collaborate and to address ways to strengthen their collaborative experiences as self-directed learners seeking to improve their implementation of the precollege curriculum through a refinement of best collaborative practices.

Review of the Literature

I relied on peer-reviewed journals, educational journals, academic journals, and resources made available by the NVSD and Walden University to gather articles for this literature review. Specifically, I searched for articles through the Walden library website to access the following databases: Education Research Compiles, Sage, and ERIC. I also used Google Scholar to expand my acquisition of articles and reports. The key phrases used to conduct the search and to locate articles included the following: *teacher-counselor collaboration, professional learning communities, professional development, curriculum in secondary schools, online collaboration, and implementing ASCA in the secondary setting.*

Effective collaboration among educators in the secondary educational system is required to ensure all learners acquire the cognitive, social, and behavioral skillsets needed to acquire college-readiness (DuFour et al., 2016; Stone-Johnson, 2016). Varied implementation of the ASCANMF and of professional learning communities has created gaps of understanding the roles and responsibilities of teachers and counselors to form a coordinated effort to address curriculum implementation (Alismail & McGuire, 2015; Heggart, 2015; Hunzicker, 2018). Considering implementation for 21st college-readiness for the whole student requires a common understanding of the roles and responsibilities of teachers and counselors, as defined by ASCA, as well as flexible yet effective professional learning communities designed to meet the demands of the secondary setting (Choy & Chua, 2019; Fischer et al., 2018; Kleinman, 2018).

A New Approach to Curriculum

The ASCANMF contains a curriculum with standards that allow counselors the ability to collaborate with teachers who also have a common core or similar curriculum to engender student success. Under ASCA, curriculum planning is a fundamental component of a counselor's leadership responsibilities in the school setting (Lopez & Mason, 2017). Under ASCA's curriculum, , students are presented opportunities to acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes in the areas of academics and social/emotional development to maximize college readiness (ASCA, 2014). Furthermore, *ASCA Mindset and Behaviors* contributes to a positive school climate and assists with the implementation of positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS). More importantly, the *ASCA Mindset and Behaviors* are realized in a series of lessons designed for counselors to use in the classrooms. It is recommended that the counselors should spend approximately 15% to 25% of their time in the secondary setting (ASCA 2012). ASCA's classroom curriculum takes into consideration the time needed for counselors to address developmental issues with students in the classroom (Lopez & Mason, 2017). Consequently, one best practice or recommended strategy for counselors is to connect the core curriculum implemented by teachers in the classroom to a multitiered system of counseling within a school system that addresses academic and behavioral needs. Counselors need to collaborate with teachers to integrate both ASCA and core curriculum standards through the development of collaborative relationships.

Implementing American School Counselor Association National Model Framework in the Secondary Setting

Researchers indicate that students in high schools with fully-implemented comprehensive counseling programs, such as ASCANMF, achieve higher grades, contribute to a positive school climate, and acquire college-readiness (Lopez & Mason, 2017; Mau, Li, & Hoetmer, 2016). However, the role of the school counselor has continued to be surrounded by confusion and a lack of understanding in regard to their roles. The professional school counselor's role has experienced a dramatic evolution due to legislative changes, such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 designed to serve the needs all students, including marginalized students who are required to master the general education curriculum (Barrow & Mamlin, 2016). This expansion of the counselor's role creates a need for a common language to effectively collaborate with other educational stakeholders, such as administrators and teachers. Due to the legislative changes, ASCA (2012) requires counselors to address developmental needs for every student through the implementation of a comprehensive school counseling program that considers each student's academic, career, and personal/social development.

Agents of Social Justice

As agents of social justice, counselors create equal access and success of education for every student. The passage of the Disabilities Education Improvement Act 2004 entailed the creation of a counselor-led collaborative team and an IEP for marginalized students to receive a public free education. As advocates to the students'

learning, counselors serve as invaluable liaisons to the classroom teacher (Barrow & Mamlin, 2016). Barrow and Mamlin (2016) suggested that early identification and involvement of the school counselor, who collaborates with the classroom teacher, can develop research and evidence-based interventions to provide equitable access to a student's education. An indirect result of an early collaborative intervention of a counselor and a teacher can enhance the communication between the school and home.

In addition to formal collaborations, counselors must also mandate accommodations for all students, which allows them to serve as classroom consultants to teachers in either formal ways or informal ways. Barrow & Mamlin (2016) confirmed that enhancing the counselor's role demands systemic change through professional development and collaboration. Along with this enhanced role, counselors must be equipped with additional professional development; professional learning communities provide the venue for this to happen.

As agents of social justice, school counselors close the achievement gap and work to ensure all students, especially marginalized students, have equal access to a public free education (Hines et al., 2017). Under the ASCA model, counselors are in a unique position to glean data, provide interventions, and offer strategies to improve student performance within the classroom (Cholwea et al., 2016; Hines et al., 2017). Through comprehensive school counseling programs established by ASCA, counselors are empowered to create avenues for students' academic, personal, and social and career development, uniquely preparing them to thrive in postsecondary endeavors (Hines et al., 2017). However, given all of the challenges within secondary settings, counselors must

be equipped with the necessary skills, such as cultural awareness, which can be acquired through professional development. My sessions will involve ways to increase cultural awareness for counselors and teachers.

Leveraging Learning through Purposeful Professional Development for Counselors

School counselors can maximize their goal of reaching more students in less time through collaborating with teachers (Cholewa et al., 2016). Within a professional learning community, this can be more readily accomplished through formal and informal collaboration (Barrow & Mamlin, 2016; Cholewa et al., 2016). In fact, ASCA (2012) stated that consultation (i.e., collaboration) is a best practice to influence a student's mastery of the curriculum. Cholewa et al. (2016) acknowledged that more discoveries must be made to explore teachers' perceptions of counselors in order to strengthen the collaboration. Through the shift from traditional consultation that viewed only the counselor as the expert to collaborative consultation that views both the counselor and the teacher as co-experts, both counselors and teachers can engage in shared decision-making that affects the students' mastery of curriculum within the classroom. My professional development sessions for counselors and teachers will involve shared decision-making, as they consider which standards to prioritize and implement within the classroom for the 2020-2021 academic school year.

Systemic Change

To achieve systemic change, counselors can consult with teachers to impact students' personal and academic success (Chandler et al., 2018). Chandler et al. (2018) asserted that the teacher-counselor collaboration creates the context for teachers to

acquire knowledge, skills, and awareness to either prevent or more easily anticipate and maneuver future challenges. Results of the teacher-counselor collaboration will prepare the teacher to succeed with all students in both their present and future classes. The teacher-counselor collaboration is important because teachers who engage in frequent collaborations with counselors reported a feeling of improvement in their personal and professional relationships, as well as in their wellbeing (Cholwea et al., 2016). Cholwea et al. (2016) revealed that counselors must invest in establishing relationships with teachers before the consultation process begins and must take an egalitarian approach to problem-solving. My session will involve problem-solving brainstorms that challenge the teachers and counselors to explore ways to create buy-in from other teachers and stakeholders to increase social network capacity throughout the school. The sessions will present activities that build social capital and establish trust.

Another strategy suggested that counselors enact strategies to increase their visibility and availability throughout the school building to increase informal collaborations. To educate stakeholders, counselors could hold staff presentations that explain their expanded roles as counselors. Counselors can use the social media and digital technology to provide resources needed to communicate with and to educate teachers, especially in areas of their expertise. The session will involve andragogical exercises that provide opportunities for counselors and teachers to consider ways to increase their visibility and availability throughout the school through the use of social and digital media technology.

Current researchers have established that collaboration is essential to school counselors and teachers to succeed in empowering students (Barrow & Mamlin, 2016; Cholwea et al., 2016; DuFour et al., 2016; Hines et al. 2017; Sink & Ockerman, 2016; Stone-Jackson, 2016). Counselors can help teachers avoid mislabeling students' ethnical characteristics by building cultural bridges between teachers and the student populations they serve. One strategy involves helping teachers focus on the cultural strength of the students. In addition, the ASCA model creates the capacity for counselors to address the precollege curriculum by developing instructional teams to increase teacher collaboration by subject and grade level, as well as engage in vertical teaming that can include feeder schools. They can help principals create professional development exercises designed to help teachers in establishing more effective relationships with students (Hines et al., 2017). Griffeth, Greenspan, and Dimmitt (2018) cited counseling interventions, such as classroom social-emotional learning strategies, to empower students; ASCA (2012) proposed the *Closing the Gap Action* plan.

Leveraging Learning through Purposeful Professional Development for Teachers

Biggsby and Firestone (2017) reported that teachers considered the following characteristics essential in their professional development: (a) focus on both the content and how they will teach the content; (b) provide opportunities for active learning and feedback, which includes student samples; (c) theme/issued based focus with trial-and-error opportunity in the classroom with feedback; and (d) collective opportunity to share with other teachers and give feedback. Teachers need strong social capital to invest in professional learning for the long term. Social capital establishes trust and facilitates

influence of decision-making because of the strengths of relationships among the members, which results in strong social norms, expectations, and behavioral constraints. The overarching result is social cohesion among the members, which facilitates the ease of coordinating and aligning the flow of information among larger groups within the schools or social network.

Barriers to professional development for teachers who are adult learners fall within the following six categories: (a) lack of confidence, (b) lack of course relevance, (c) time constraints, (d) low social priority, (e) cost, and (f) personal problems. By contrast, factors that influence teachers' willingness to participate involve the following: (a) establishing social relationships throughout activity; (b) developing skills to improve others' social welfare; (c) meeting external requirements; (d) acquiring skills, knowledge, credentials for job enhancement; (e) experiencing stimulating experiences to eliminate boredom; and (f) learning for learning's sake. Of the six factors, professional advancement, learning to learn, and social wellbeing were most important to teachers (Biggsby & Firestone, 2017; Morstain & Smart, 1974). Biggsby and Firestone (2017) noted that teachers who belonged to denser networks were more likely to participate in professional development; however, school leaders should analyze the patterns of social networks within their schools and find ways to create both the time and the space for frequent, regular interactions to sustain the strengths of their social networks.

The educational landscape of the 21st century has ushered in a new approach to curriculum as a response to meet demands of a shift from teaching to learning, evidence of the learning, and decentralizing public schools (Stone-Johnson, 2016). Stone-Johnson

(2016) asserted that such demands have resulted in negative effects of teachers' and counselors' work due to alienation. Stone-Johnson noted that such alienation ultimately diminishes student success and increases difficulty in transitioning from secondary to postsecondary schools. Specifically, this alienation is a result of teachers' feelings of negativity, which lead to disengagement from work, isolation, and neglect. When teacher alienation encounters the counselors' current mandate to strengthen collaboration with other educators, as prescribed by ASCA, both teachers and counselors must find ways to bridge the gap in order to maximize student college and career readiness. Stone-Johnson (2016) responded to this issue by creating a new curriculum to address teacher alienation and present revised professional norms for school counselors.

Due to the intensification of the work of both counselors and teachers, a new approach to curriculum is necessary. Specifically, Stone-Johnson's (2016) study confirmed that a counselor's role must be understood by teachers and administrators. Stone-Johnson's approach was to create a new curriculum that defined the counselor's roles for others within the school, as well as creating a curriculum map that links the ASCA-prescribed activities of the counselor alongside the activities of the teacher to give administrators and department heads (Kleinman, 2018; Stone-Johnson, 2015).

Another finding revealed that teachers should not send students to counselors for disciplinary actions. These are the responsibility of the teacher. In addition to being supported by administration, teachers and counselors must see their work as closely related in order to maximize the collaborative relationship. Because counselors and teachers serve on the frontlines of dealing with students' academic, social, and career

development, professional development is needed to equip counselors and teachers with strategies to not only deal with students effectively but also protect their own wellbeing (Dowling & Doyle, 2017). In fact, researchers have shown that teachers and counselors are often ill-equipped to deal with the socio-emotional needs of 21st century students effectively (Griffeth, Greenspan, & Dimmitt, 2018; Reupert and Hasking, 2015).

Educational practitioners, such as teachers and counselors, need professional development to effectively serve students of diverse populations (Larson & Bradshaw, 2017). According to the NSVD interval report (June 2019), student populations within the district consist of 37.2% White, 30.3% Black, 22.4% Hispanic, and 6.0% Asian. With a current graduation rate of 85.2%, the district endeavors to develop stakeholder involvement to promote student success by utilizing stakeholder involvement to improve school processes (NVSD Strategic Plan, 2016-2019). The district's goal reflects the broader awareness that educators need ongoing professional training to effectively serve diverse populations (Larson & Bradshaw, 2017). The findings from my study revealed the desire to develop cultural competence (Counselor A). Larson and Bradshaw (2017) asserted the need to continue developing to improve cultural competence among teachers and counselors to increase awareness of effective interventions. My professional development will include cultural competency strategies to help reduce disparities between teachers and counselors.

Effective Professional Development

Villardón-Gallego (2016) asserted the need for practitioners to research in order to stimulate the learning process that builds knowledge, is student-centered, and requires

active engagement. According to Villardón-Gallego, inquiry-based learning (IBL) is a process that structures learning. In IBL, research is the active learning strategy that requires autonomy, type of knowledge, and reach. Within my professional development, my goal is to lead teachers and counselors through active learning discussions that are designed to address common problems shared between their common issues of student achievement. IBL can be implemented in a variety of ways, which include guided or open inquiry. If implementing IBL through a guided inquiry, the instructor will simply present a topic, and the students will engage and explore the solution to the topic together. IBL allows teachers and counselors to engage in self-directed learning, as prescribed by Knowles (1970), as well as collaborate to create the best solutions to solve common problems facing the curriculum. For my study, as teachers and counselors work together to find the common ground to move forward, IBL will provide the venue by which to do so as self-directed adult learners and collaborators.

Coaching, the process of unlocking a person's potential to maximize the individual's performance, can be an effective professional learning strategy to implement between teachers and counselors. Gómez Palacio, Gómez Vargas, and Pulgarin Taborda (2019) asserted that when administrators, with a genuine interest and trust, coach and support educators, the results are increased opportunities in self-leadership and self-directed learning, which creates stronger relationships. Coaching happens in conversations between individuals (the coach and the coachee) and can bring an awareness of the need to take responsibility for one's own actions. Coaching also results in both personal and professional growth. Within my professional development sessions,

I plan to provide a set of questions designed to bring about of coaches' and coachees' self-assessment (Gómez Palacio et al., 2019).

Teachers and counselors are leaders within the secondary setting. Seemiller and Priest (2017) created the leadership educator professional identity development (LEPID) conceptual model, which can be a representation of shared language, conventions, codes, and values within a person's social, historical, and cultural experience. An educator's professional identity serves as a framework that dictates how the educator will see, will act, and will understand life. LEPID entails four identity spaces: (a) exploration of possibility of leadership, (b) experimentation with possible roles, (c) validation from others to enhance self-perceived identity, and (d) confirmation in guiding less-experienced professionals on their path to leadership. Because LEPID is an ongoing process, providing more opportunities for leadership development and mentoring are effective ways to develop leaders. My professional development session will offer space for teachers and counselors to develop their identity as leaders, perhaps with recommendations to administration for additional guidance.

Collaborative Competency for Teachers

Competent teachers need to create intercultural exchanges with online students. Though researchers Dona and Ross (2015) examined the competences needed by online teachers to have a successful teaching experience, the focus on the development of an intercultural awareness is key to any teaching situation. I will investigate how to build an intercultural awareness in teachers and counselors in my professional development.

Choy and Chua (2019) analyzed the effectiveness of professional development communities in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Singapore, and British Columbia. The executive summary first established the premise that professional learning is not a way, but the way that teachers will improve their effectiveness. High-performing systems focus on implementing the best research-based strategies for teachers. One of the main tenets of this article emphasizes that the improvement cycle of professional learning must be tied to student learning in order to be fully effectively (Choy & Chua, 2019). Subsequently, my professional development must address the main areas of student learning within the secondary school setting to devise a cycle of professional learning that counselors and teachers can engage. The cycle occurs in the following three phases: (1) assess current student learning in order to identify the next phase of their learning (either individually or as a school), (2) develop teaching and counseling practices that bridge the gap for the next stage of student learning, and (3) evaluate the impact of practices on student learning in order for teachers to refine their practices. My professional development for teacher-counselor collaborations will focus on investigating and determining the best practices for the teacher-counselor duo. Most important, Choy and Chua (2019) emphasized that this cycle must be accompanied by a connection between appropriate structuring of leadership roles, sufficient allocation of resources, and adherence to sustainable evaluations and accountability. My professional development will involve including administrators, along with teachers and counselors

Harris, Jones, and Huffman (2017) stressed the importance of including the teacher's perception of student learning in the professional learning community, as well

as the opportunity to lead the reform within a school. Harris et al. emphasized that borrowing policies without gaining sufficient evidence or outcomes before implementing can also result in failure to reform. They argued that teachers must move from the sidelines to the frontlines to enact change. Engagement is the key word for teachers. Within a school system, sustainable change cannot happen with individuals alone; they need to be in groups. This collective enterprise of educators entails human, social, and decisional capital, which combined becomes professional capital. My professional development will entail the common language of capital, as teachers and counselors explore ways to increase their professional capital in their schools to impact student learning.

Evolving Professional Development

Gray, Kruse, and Tarter (2016) explored how to develop effective professional learning communities. The three elements considered are enabling school structure, collegial trust, and academic emphasis. They confirmed that the benefits of an effective professional learning community result in improved school culture, climate, and academic achievement. Gray et al. also confirmed an emphasis on educators' sense of professionalism and collegial trust. The researchers defined enabling school structure as a teacher's belief that administration and rules of the school help and support them in their work to help students learn. Enabling school structure guides a problem-solving rather than a punishing mentality. The rules (enabling school structure) provide the structure and support for teachers to perform their tasks effectively. Collegial trust involves teachers' confidence that they can rely on in difficult situations—a form of integrity.

Collegial trust involves vulnerability, and this level of trust is just as important to learning as the socioeconomic level of the school (Gray et al., 2016). The condition of trust is an essential pre-requisite to a professional learning community. Academic emphasis is the extent to which a school is driven to excel academically. All stakeholders within the community value this with positive outcomes, regardless of the socioeconomic status of the school. Members of a professional learning community tend to experience a more formalized expectation for achievement and results in a perception that their school is more effective. My professional development will address ways to improve school structure, collegial trust, and academic emphasis.

The *Race to the Top* initiative called for the creation of professional learning communities with an emphasis on professional development for educators that focuses on understanding what and how students learn. Professional learning communities provide infrastructure needed for ongoing, sustainable professional development. Professional learning communities focus on learning, collaborative culture of collegial trust, collaborative inquiry into best practices, action-mindedness, commitment to continuous improvement, and results. My professional development will include a plan that allows for participants to leave with a feasible agenda to implement based on these six stages. In addition to this, one of the outcomes of professional development is the bonding or the trust that takes place between the two members.

Schmoker (2018) asserted that school performance would dramatically increase by adhering to the following three elements: a reasonably coherent curriculum, soundly structured lessons, and large amounts of purposeful reading and writing in every

discipline. Schmoker noted that simplifying processes, clearing away the clutter, and focusing on the three essential elements will dramatically improve school performance. In addition, Schmoker confirmed that literacy should be taught in every discipline within a school. Surprisingly, he argued against the strict enforcement of the CCSS, which he believes robs students from a rich, deep, and simultaneous reading process that could be derived effortlessly from reading and writing in every discipline, in addition to reading full texts (Schmoker, 2018).

Bernhardt (2017) argued for the need to create an environment that allows for all administrators, teachers, and educators to use all of their data to help them solve problems. Schools must rethink and improve their existing school structures instead of simply adding more to the structure. To improve learning for all students, systematic structures must be put in place in order to review all the data to accurately assess the best ways to engage student learning. Bernhardt insisted the vision of the school must be tied to the use of all data. Schools must adapt a framework that will enable continuous improvement. My professional development will involve thinking of ways to provide this systematic improvement.

Successful teacher communities include leadership, group dynamics, trust, and respect. Teacher communities play a central role in a teacher's professional development. This study presented three types of teacher communities: formal, member-oriented with a pre-set agenda, and formative teacher communities. Teacher communities are affected by various stakeholder (i.e., administrator, government) involvement and perspectives. To

ensure success of teacher communities, they must have supportive leadership, group dynamics and arrangements, trust, and respect.

When leading change within a school, a principal's professional and moral authority matters the most. The principal within the study sought to lead change through a collaboration with teachers in the development of a vision statement for the school. The principal employed the change model of engaging key stakeholders or teachers within the school. He allowed teachers to collaborate and to be included in the decision-making process. He also used his moral authority, which reflected the beliefs and values of the principal and the teachers. When bringing in teachers and counselors, the goal of my professional development is to explore ways to help teachers and counselors wield their professional and moral authority as educators to affect social change within their schools.

Summary

The element of time, along with an understanding of roles and responsibilities within the context of the secondary setting, is essential to full implementation of the ASCA model to empower counselors and teachers to collaborate to improve the precollege curriculum. Secondary schools with full implementation of the ASCA model create additional collaboration between teachers and counselors who endeavor to help students succeed. Providing counselors and teachers with flexible, time-saving opportunities to collaborate is an essential for their professional development. Providing teachers and counselors with an online collaborative professional development allows a chance for both formal and informal collaborations to occur, as well as creates time-saving opportunities to increase knowledge and establish more frequent connections

(Pella, 2015; Soebari & Aldridge, 2015). Continuous, job-embedded professional development can address counselors' and teachers' varying levels of comfort and knowledge. Flexible, time-saving professional development enables ongoing, sustainable learning, while building capacity and social capital within the secondary setting (Biggsby & Firestone, 2017).

Project Implementation

Resources and Existing Supports

The district's Office of Accountability and Research (OAR) gave their permission for the study. The NVSD created their 2016-2019 strategic vision to provide the pathway to create an action plan to implement the ASCA model across the district. The strategic vision outlines a plan of action that provides teachers and counselors support through ongoing, sustainable professional development, resources, and flexible building initiatives. As a result of these initiatives, the OAR provided permission to allow the researcher information to obtain information about how their 2016-2019 strategic vision supports teachers and counselors as they implement the ASCA model within their professional collaborative learning communities. The OAR supported the study.

Potential Barriers

Although the district provides ongoing professional development for educators, not all professional developments are mandatory. Potential barriers could include educator resistance to change, in addition to a lack of professional development attendance. Due to multiple meetings and schedules within a given day or week, finding the time for additional professional development is also a challenge for many educators.

My intention is to provide professional development through the NVSD's online professional learning system portal (PLSP). As teachers and counselors are free to self-select professional development sessions, there may be some difficulty encouraging teachers and counselors to select specific course offerings. Because my intent is to utilize job-embedded district professional development days, this should encourage teacher and counselor participation. Furthermore, utilizing the district's PLSP permits teachers and counselors the flexibility and opportunity to access the professional development sessions at any time, which will provide additional support.

Implementation and Timetable

I will share the findings of this study with the NVSD staff through the creation of a PLSP course available for staff members at any time, as well as during a one-day professional development session in the annual district-wide NVSD professional development during pre-planning. Teachers and counselors have access to the *Frontliners Professional Development for Teachers and Counselors* for the initial session (see Appendix), as well as to the PLSP course at any time for the subsequent online sessions. Members were provided with job-embedded professional development and collaborative time to assist in the completion of the course within the academic school year. The PLSP platform served as the enrollment and resource center to assist teachers and counselors in collaboration, submission, and completion. The NVSD's one-day professional development session, as well as the PLSP, includes teachers' comments, ideas, or questions with colleagues, in addition to discussing strategies, best practices, implementation methods.

The goal of this project was to utilize the findings to provide professional development opportunities that increase collaborative instructional opportunities, as defined by the ASCA model and the NVSD. Teachers and counselors were encouraged to participate in the *Frontliners Professional Development for Teachers and Counselors* session during the district's mandated pre-planning professional development sessions, as well as complete the PLSP online sessions throughout the academic school year to collaborate and enhance their knowledge and implementation of the ASCANMF. Once the sessions were completed, teachers and counselors completed a session evaluation. The course evaluation collected the participants' comments, suggestions, and ideas for implementation gained from the course, as well as identified areas needed for further support in the future.

Roles and Responsibilities

My role as researcher is to share the findings of this study with NVSD's OAR after my study has been approved by Walden University. My presentation will communicate the findings, as well as will offer suggestions and will respond to any questions or concerns. Once my study has been approved by Walden University, I plan to present the project findings to the OAR, and I will meet with the counseling and teacher leadership teams to schedule dates for implementation of the pre-planning and online professional development sessions. Once the dates are confirmed, my responsibilities will include sending out invitations through the PLSP, a portal that assists teachers and counselors in registering for all the *Frontliners* sessions. I will conduct the initial pre-planning session in the fall of the 2020-2021 academic school year. Near the end of the

initial session, I will ask members to register for the subsequent online sessions they can access and complete between October and April of the 2020-2021 academic school year. Lastly, when the session ends in April, I will modify or update materials from the teachers' and counselors' feedback on the forms.

Project Evaluation

The evaluation is outcome-based and grounded on the tenets of the constructivist approach. The first criterion addressed in the assessment is building new knowledge based on previous learning. I will check for this based on reflections from the one-day initial professional development session. At the end of the day, participants will give feedback on what they have learned, and participants will also share their experiences during the workshop as a way to build new forms of action. The second assessment criterion is that participants' learning is actively collaborative, not passive. This will be evident from the setting of the professional development session, based on the determination of how well the participants take part in the collaborative discussions and formulate new responses to identified problems. The session will allow participants to collaborate to identify challenges and then work together on probable solutions. The third criterion in the evaluation is whether the session is learning-centered, as constructivism encourages the development of a learning environment that responds to the learner. The participants will fill out an evaluation form that I will use to determine how well the session responds to their expectations, as well as the established goals of the session. The evaluation is formative, as it will involve the consideration of ongoing feedback through the online professional development sessions. Based on their feedback, it is possible to

make updates and adjustments to materials to make them more effective in future professional developments.

Implementation Including Social Change

Local Community

The findings of this study could enhance teachers' and counselors' collaborative efforts to implement the precollege curriculum more effectively within the secondary setting as they prepare learners to think critically, self-reflect, and gain the skillsets needed to acquire college readiness. This andragogical transition is essential for learners in the local community as teachers and counselors prepare students for success in the 21st century. The demands, protocols, and advancements of the 21st century require ever-changing skillsets that both teachers and counselors must be comfortable navigating. Based on the shift in instructional practices, teachers and counselors, students, parents, administrators, and business partners could notice a drastic shift in the classroom dynamic. Offering flexible, professional development options can reinforce collaborative learning and forge ongoing, sustainable collaborative relationships between teachers and counselors, as well as with all stakeholders of the professional learning community. As these collaborative relationships develop, all stakeholders involved may likely increase their changes to experience enhanced learning as they learn to think critically to develop workable, sustainable solutions as learners.

Far-Reaching

Student success and achievement begins with teachers and counselors; as a result, it is imperative that teachers and counselors receive and participate in professional

development sessions to ensure they are prepared to effectively implement the precollege curriculum in a way that benefits all learners. This study's results could also contribute to the larger community through the creation of effective and targeted development. The *Frontliners Professional Development for Teachers and Counselors* session could serve as a template for the creation of other professional development opportunities throughout the district. Teachers and counselors could collaborate with other educators and share how their collaborative modes have improved how they implement the precollege curriculum, as well as how they can further improve instructional practices. Furthermore, the district's PLSP could be made public and could serve as an online session that allows for collaboration and discussion among teachers and counselors across the nation. Therefore, this project could potentially impact schools and school systems across the country.

Conclusion

I created the project based on the data collected from the teacher-counselor questionnaire responses and teacher-counselor interviews concerning how they collaborate formally and informally to improve the precollege curriculum. I designed the project based on current research regarding effective professional development, thus ensuring that the sessions were authentic, purposeful, and sustainable. I designed a one-day, face-to-face initial professional development session to address the development of a common language and roles and responsibilities of teachers and counselors, as defined by the ASCA model and the NVSD to forge collaborative relationships and generate

collaborative solutions to improve their implementation of the precollege curriculum through critical thinking, problem-solving and reflection.

Section 4 will be a series of reflections on the strengths and limitations of the project and my analysis as a scholar, practitioner, and project developer. I will address recommendations as to how I might approach the project differently. Section 4 will also include an analysis section on scholarship, project development and evaluation, and leadership and change.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore how teachers and counselors in the NVSD collaborate formally and informally to improve the precollege curriculum. In Section 4 I reflect on the study and address leadership and the project's strengths and limitations. I review my role as a scholar, practitioner, and developer. Finally, I discuss areas for future research.

Project Strengths

The findings provided several positive and impactful outcomes. Throughout the study, it was evident that teachers and counselors were collaborating in very limited formal ways and less limited informal ways, albeit without a true understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities as understood through the lens of the ASCANMF. Through the interview and questionnaire data, it became evident that the participants wanted to collaborate effectively, but they encountered serious barriers, such as time to collaborate, a proper understanding of the roles and responsibilities both teachers and especially counselors play together in implementing the precollege curriculum, and a common language of standards that would create the grounds for collaboration regarding implementing the precollege curriculum. Based on the questionnaire, interview, and research data, I developed a project that will help foster collaborative relationships between teachers and counselors as they understand their roles and responsibilities regarding the precollege curriculum under the ASCANMF and the CCSS (see Creswell, 2016; Saldana, 2015). This study may assist school administrators, leadership teams, and

educators with collaborative, professional development that is job-embedded, flexible, and self-paced, with time for reflection. In this project, I offered teachers and counselors a platform for sharing ideas, questions, and reflections. In addition, I provided time for them to develop their knowledge, establish common goals and a common language of standards, and a chance to continually improve their practice in the classroom (see Creswell, 2016). I will implement a professional development program that prompts collaboration, discussion, and revision of pedagogical practices. This project has the potential to broaden teachers' and counselors' professional knowledge, expand their modes and frequency of collaboration, and promote a mutual team-based approach for implementing the precollege curriculum (DuFour & Reason, 2016).

Recommendations for Remediation of Limitations

I designed the project to assist the NVSD teachers and counselors in enhancing their understanding and their ability to collaborate, both formally and informally, to improve the precollege curriculum. Teachers and counselors are key to ensuring change in the form of student success (Alexander & Miller, 2017; Hotchkiss et al., 2016; Stone-Johnson, 2015); therefore, the success of the project depends on their willingness to participate through ongoing, sustainable means. As teachers and counselors are feeling overwhelmed with new initiatives, balancing core curriculum, differentiating instruction, creating assessments, and large class sizes, their willingness to take part in collaboration is greatly diminished due to time constraints and a heavy workload (Hernandez, 2017). Because the success of the project relies on the teachers' and counselors' willingness to participate, the limitation of this project focuses on participation. If teachers and

counselors are unwilling to seek opportunities to grow together as effective collaborators, they will continue to struggle to find ways to effectively implement the precollege curriculum to serve the whole child (ASCA, 2014; Atik & Atik, 2017). As my sample size was limited to four counselors and four teachers in the secondary school setting, further research may include an increased number of participants across all levels of the school systems (i.e., primary, elementary, and middle schools). For further research, I recommend exploring participants' views on professional development formats and options that offer greater flexibility to meet the needs of overwhelming time constraints. Examining teachers' and counselors' ideas, opinions, and needs regarding professional development could provide additional data needed to design a more effective professional development (DuFour & Reason, 2016; Muijs, 2015).

Scholarship

Throughout the study, I developed a deeper understanding of current pedagogical and andragogical practices, especially collaboration. I developed an enhanced understanding of the nature of and appreciation for the intense challenges educators encounter as they attempt to collaborate effectively in the secondary setting (DuFour & Reason, 2016). Although I had observed teachers and counselors facing the challenge of adjusting their pedagogical practices to become functioning members of professional learning communities, I did not fully realize the extent of the challenges teachers and counselors face to collaborate in an ongoing, sustainable way through a mutual understanding of roles and responsibilities. Through this study, I gained the opportunity to conduct research that explored how teachers and counselors collaborated in formal and

informal ways in the secondary setting, and as a result, I achieved a fundamental understanding of the skills and perspectives required to implement the precollege curriculum to prepare learners to succeed in the 21st century (see Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2017; Tompkins et al., 2014; U.S. News & World Report, 2017). Through investigation and research, I determined that while teachers and counselors are collaborating in professional development communities, they often do so in very limited ways, with a limited mutual understanding of roles and responsibilities (Durksen et al., 2017; Garmston & Wellman, 2016).

Project Development and Evaluation

Teachers' and counselors' ability to address challenges of how to improve and implement the precollege curriculum through collaboration has been a strategic goal of the district for the past decade (Killion, 2015; Ronfeldt et al., 2015; Zundan-Fraser & Bain, 2016). The NVSD has worked diligently to establish a cohesive professional learning community in every school throughout the district. The district created their *2019-2020 Strategic Plan*, which promotes stakeholder involvement to promote student success through the weekly collaborative teacher team meetings based on key, critical questions. The district began their initiative through the implementation of district-wide staff professional development days to establish the vision and the mission of teacher teams. In the schools, administrators organized teacher teams to engage in weekly collaborations to make data-driven decisions to implement instruction. However, with the influx of multiple collaborative teams, changing technology, the need for buy-in from stakeholders, and an over-crowded schedule, the newly shifted paradigm of professional

learning communities produced a need to understand their new roles and responsibilities within the context of overlapping standards of the ASCANMF and the CCSS, as well as how to accomplish the district's goals and objectives in a timely manner.

Throughout the data collection, it was evident that though teachers and counselors participated in assigned collaborative teams and formal and informal meetings, their collaborations were infrequent. In addition to infrequent collaborations, they revealed a limited understanding of their roles and responsibilities around the precollege curriculum as prescribed by the ASCANMF, which created a barrier to implementing strategies to meet the needs of the whole student in the secondary classroom (Ronfeldt et al., 2015; Tam, 2015). Implementing this project will assist teachers and counselors in attaining authentic and purposeful professional development, which is necessary to refine their understanding of the ASCANMF and acquiring knowledge through collaboration and differentiated professional development while providing time for reflection and discussion (Levin, 2015; Mulholland & O'Connor, 2016).

Leadership and Change

I have expanded my abilities as an educational leader, and I have enhanced my authority and confidence as an advocate for social change and pedagogical practices. This project study increased my leadership skills by further developing my ability to articulate best collaborative and instructional practices within my own work environment, thus influencing others to see their need for more effective collaboration. In addition, this study allowed me the chance to encourage further positive social change and lead the way by designing and implementing this change through expanded, interprofessional

collaborations. Throughout the data collection and research process, I practiced articulating best collaborative, instructional practices through networking, corresponding, and listening to colleagues' ideas about collaboration and then engaging in conversations about the current state of collaboration in the educational setting and where it can be with behavioral and instructional adjustments. During the course of these conversations and exchanges, I was able to clarify the need to expand interprofessional collaborative relationships to improve the curriculum (Stone & Charles, 2018). Furthermore, to address how teachers and counselors can expand their interprofessional collaborations, I designed a professional development option focused on the needs and concerns uncovered from the findings of the study. The professional development option allows for collaborative development between teachers and counselors and for individual, collaborative, and organizational growth through the establishment of a common language of standards, collective buy-in, and best instructional practices to implement the precollege curriculum (see Braun & Okwako-Riekkola, 2018; Meyers, Tobin, Huber, Conway, & Shelvin, 2015). Through individual academic and professional growth, I was able to identify a problem that reaches far beyond my local setting, investigate reasons for and discover perspectives about the problem, and design an action plan to address the problem (see Meijer, Kuijpers, Boei, Vrieling, & Geijsel, 2017; Salmon, Gregory, Lokuge Dona, & Ross, 2015).

Analysis of Self as Scholar

As result of this study and its process, I have developed into a refined scholar. Through investigation, evaluation, research, and collaboration, I gained an in-depth

understanding of the nature of the problem and the process for addressing the problem. Because collaboration between teachers and counselors is central to equipping students with 21st century skills that enhance their ability to function as global citizens, this project study is relevant to both the local educational community and beyond (see DuFour & Reason, 2016; Meijer et al., 2017).

Analysis of Self as Practitioner

As a practitioner, my role involves understanding the importance of continuing to be a life-long learner and an influencer of social change in the educational environment and in life. This study has bestowed on me the opportunity to increase my understanding of current best collaborative practices as they relate to an ever-changing educational profession (see Babione, 2015; DuFour & Reason, 2016). The doctoral capstone experience has allowed me the chance to empower myself to continue to grow as a life-long learner and scholar who embraces challenges and leads the charge for social change in the educational setting.

Analysis of Self as Project Developers

Implementing positive, ongoing social change is vital to the growth and expansion of any educational environment; as a result, this change requires the development of an authentic, purposeful, and sustainable project. This doctoral process has taught me much about myself as an educator and a project developer (Bond, 2015; Hunzicker, 2018). I have gained significant insights and key understandings concerning my strengths and weaknesses as a project developer. I realize that I need to continue to grow in my ability to accept the comments and ideas of other educators with an open mind and a growth

mindset (Heggart, 2015; Sinha, Hanuscin, Rebello, Muslu, & Cheng, 2017). Furthermore, I acknowledge my growing ability to articulate best collaborative practices for evolving professional learning communities within the secondary setting. Collaborative relationships between teachers and counselors can design student success (DuFour & Reason, 2016; Stone-Johnson, 2016). I now have an increased passion to lead the way to positive social change within my local school setting, as well as within the district and beyond, as I encourage educators to refine and expand their collaborative practices.

The Project's Impact for Social Change

In reflection, this project could impact social change at the local school setting and beyond by contributing to the limited research on the teacher-counselor collaborative relationship. The contribution of further research could allow district leaders, business leaders, policy makers, and educators within and beyond the district to increase their understanding of supporting the teacher-counselor formal and informal collaboration to improve the precollege curriculum to bolster sustainable student achievement. Learning in the 21st century requires intensive teacher-counselor collaboration to address evolving changes in the global community that demand increased knowledge and acquisition of technological, cognitive, behavioral skillsets that teachers and counselors are most suited to address within the classroom (Siddiq, Scherer, & Tondeur, 2016; Stone-Johnson, 2016).

My goal was to provide a platform for social change in critical thinking, instructional practices, and teacher-counselor roles and responsibilities, as seen through the ASCA model. I hope that at the conclusion of this project, participants are

enlightened, encouraged, and determined to expand the frequency of their formal and informal collaborations as they work together to improve and implement the precollege curriculum to help student acquire 21st century skills (Alismail & McGuire, 2015; Siddiq et al., 2016). This study supplied the educational community with the information needed to implement dynamic, flexible collaborative relationships that bolster creative thinking and social capital and flexible collaborative modes that allow opportunities to expand professional knowledge and to reflect on that knowledge as life-long adult learners (Benson, Chehade, Lara, Sayram, & Speer, 2018; Kelly & Cherkowski, 2016).

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

As I only focused on two secondary schools within one school district, there is ample opportunity for further research. There has been limited research on how teachers and counselors collaborate in formal and informal ways to improve the precollege curriculum within the secondary setting (Yin, 2015). Future research should entail how teacher and counselor preparation programs prepare preservice teachers and counselors to lead and develop collaborative relationships as they continue to explore ways to improve and to implement the precollege curriculum as prescribed by the ASCA model and the CCSS (Durksen et al., Lopez & Mason, 2017). Research that focuses on preparation and professional development will provide additional knowledge on how to effectively implement professional learning communities that foster interdisciplinary collaborative relationships designed to meet the needs of the whole student (DuFour & Reason, 2016; Meyers et al., 2015). This specific study may provide the knowledge needed to design flexible professional development options to enhance teachers' and counselors' ability to

collaborate in formal and informal ways to improve their implementation of the precollege curriculum (Stone-Johnson, 2016).

Conclusion

I have gained and refined my professional knowledge throughout the process of conducting research, collecting data, analyzing findings, and developing the project. Specifically, this study has expanded and enhanced my understanding of how to expand and build on collaborative relationships with teachers and counselors as we seek to improve the precollege curriculum. As a result of this journey, I am now able to define, explain, and implement effective professional development with counselors in my local educational setting. As a member of the educational profession, I am better equipped to lead positive, sustainable social change in implementing effective collaborative best practices to encourage consistent implementation of the precollege curriculum within my local setting due to a deeper development of critical thinking, problem-solving, and creative skills. I have considered and recognized the strengths and limitations of this project, and I have provided information about future research to extend the current research. I have acquired significant insight about my abilities as researcher, which involves a consideration of both my strengths, as well as my weaknesses, throughout my doctoral process with Walden University. Thanks to this successful journey, I realize that I do have the ability, the courage, the knowledge, the skills, and the persistence to be an agent of change within my local setting.

References

- Acevedo-Gil, N., Santos, R. E., Alonso, L., & Solorzano, D. G. (2015). Latinas/os in community college developmental education: Increasing moments of academic and interpersonal validation. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 14*(2), 101-127. doi:10.1177/1538192715572893
- Adams, A., & Vescio, V. (2015). Tailored to fit: Structure professional learning communities to meet individual needs. *Journal of Staff Development, 36*(2), 26-28. Retrieved from <https://www.learntechlib.org/j/ISSN-0276-928X/>
- Ainscow, M. (2015). *Towards self-improving school systems: Lessons from a city challenge*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Alexander, K., & Miller, C. L. (2017). Educators and counselors: Professional allies in addressing the national teacher shortage. *Journal of Family & Consumer Sciences Education, 34*, 1-7. Retrieved from <https://connect.aafcs.org/resources/publications-products/journal-consumer-sciences>
- Alismail, H. A., & McGuire, P. (2015). 21st century standards and curriculum: Current research and practice. *Journal of Education and Practice, 6*(6), 150-154. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1083656.pdf>

American College Testing. (2011). *The condition of college and career readiness: 2011*.

Retrieved from

<https://www.ewa.org/sites/main/files/conditionofcollegeandcareerreadiness2011.pdf>

American College Testing. (2016). *The condition of college and career readiness*.

Retrieved from

https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/CCCR_National_2016.pdf

American School Counselor Association. (2012). *ASCA national model: A framework for school counseling programs*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

American School Counselor Association. (2014). *Mindsets and behaviors for student success: K-12 college- and career-readiness standards for every student*.

Alexandria, VA: Author.

American School Counselors Association. (2017). *Recognized ASCA model program (RAMP)*. Retrieved from <https://www.ascassociation.org/asca/home>

Atik, G., & Atik, Z. E. (2017). Predicting hope levels of high school students: The role of academic self-efficacy and problem solving. *Education and Science, 42*(190), 157-169. doi:10.15390/eb.2017.5348

Babione, C. (2015). *Practitioner teacher inquiry and research*. John Wiley & Sons.

- Bailey, T., Jaggars, S. S., & Scott-Clayton, J. (2013, February). *Characterizing the effectiveness of developmental education: A response to recent criticism*. New York, NY: Community College Resource Center, Columbia University. Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED542142.pdf>
- Barrow, J., & Mamlin, N. (2016). Collaboration between professional school counselors and special education teachers. *VISTAS Online, Article 42*. Retrieved from https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/vistas/article_427cfd25f16116603abcacff0000bee5e7.pdf?sfvrsn=e2eb452c_4
- Benson, P., Chehade, M. A., Lara, J., Sayram, G. A., & Speer, L. (2018). Exploratory practice and professional development in ELT: The roles of collaboration and reflection. *English Australia Journal, 33*(2), 3.
- Berger, E., Reupert, A., & Hasking, P. (2015). Pre-service and in-service teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and confidence towards self-inquiry among students. *Journal of Education for Teaching, 41*(1), 37-51.
doi:10.1080/02607476.2014.992633
- Bernhardt, V. L. (2017). *Data analysis for continuous school improvement*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Bigsby, J. B., & Firestone, W. A. (2017). Why teachers participate in professional development: Lessons from a schoolwide teacher study group. *New Educator, 13*(1), 72-93. doi:10.1080/1547688X.2015.1063743

- Birt, L., Scott, S., Cavers, D., Campbell, C., & Walter, F. (2016). Member checking: A tool to enhance trustworthiness, or merely a nod to validation? *Qualitative Health Research, 26*(13), 1802-1811. doi:10.1177/1049732316654870
- Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. K. (2007). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theories and methods*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University.
- Bond, N. (2015). Teacher leaders as professional developers. In *The power of teacher leaders: Their roles, influence, and impact* (pp. 57-81). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Braun, A. M., & Okwako-Riekkola, B. (2018). Ujamaa and universal design: Developing sustainable tactile curricular materials in rural Tanzania. *Disability, CBR & Inclusive Development, 29*(2), 128-136. doi:10.5463/dcid.v1i2.686
- Brott, P. E., Stone, V., & Davis, T. E. (2017). Growing together: A developmental model for training school counseling site supervisors (practitioner-focused research). *Professional School Counseling, 20*(1), 139-148. doi:10.5330/1096-2409-20.1.139
- Brusic, S. A., & Shearer, K. L. (2014). The ABCs of 21st century skills. *Children's Technology & Engineering, 18*(4), 6-10. Retrieved from <https://www.iteea.org/Publications/Journals/CTE/CTEMay2014.aspx>
- Bryan, J., Young, A., Griffin, D. C., & Henry, L. (2015). Preparing students for higher education: How school counselors can foster college readiness and access. In J. L. DeVitis & P. A. Sasso (Eds.), *Higher education and society* (pp. 149-172). New York, NY: Peter Lang.

- Bryant, R. T. (2015). *College preparation for African-American students: Gaps in the high school educational experience*. Retrieved from <http://www.clasp.org/>
- Calvery, S. V., & Hyun, J. H. (2013). Sustaining education through enhanced collaboration between teachers and school counselors. *Educational Research Journal*, 28(1 & 2), 125-144. Retrieved from http://hkier.fed.cuhk.edu.hk/journal/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/ERJ_v28n1-2_125-144.pdf
- Camara, W., O'Connor, R., Mattern, K., & Hanson, M. A. (2015). *Beyond academics: A holistic framework for enhancing education and workplace success* [ACT Research Report Series 2015 (4)]. Retrieved from http://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/ACT_RR2015-4.pdf
- Carpenter-Aeby, T., & Aeby, V. G. (2013). Application of andragogy to instruction in an MSW practice class. *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 40(1-4), 3-13. Retrieved from <http://connection.ebscohost.com/c/articles/97169746/application-andragogy-instruction-msw-practice-class>
- Castleman, B. L., Arnold, K., & Wartman, K. L. (2012). Stemming the tide of summer melt: An experimental study of the effects of post-high school summer intervention on low-income students' college enrollment. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*, 5(1), 1-17. doi:10.1080/19345747.2011.618214
- Castleman, B. L., & Page, L. C. (2014). A trickle or a torrent? Understanding the extent of summer "melt" among college-intending high school graduates. *Social Science Quarterly*, 95(1), 202-220. doi:10.1111/ssqu.12032

- Chandler, J. W., Burnham, J. J., Riechel, M. E. K., Dahir, C. A., Stone, C. B., Oliver, D. F., ... Bledsoe K. G. (2018). Assessing the counseling and non-counseling roles of school counselors. *Journal of School Counseling, 16*(7). Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1182095.pdf>
- Cholewa, B., Goodman-Scott, E., Thomas, A., & Cook, J. (2016). Teachers' perceptions and experiences consulting with school counselors: A qualitative study. *Professional School Counseling, 20*(1), 1096-2409. doi:10.5330/1096-2409-20.1.77
- Choy, D., Deng, F., Chai, C. S., Koh, H. L. J., & Tsai, P. S. (2016). Singapore primary and secondary students' motivated approaches for learning: A validation study. *Learning and Individual Differences, 45*, 282-290. doi:10.1016/j.lindif.2015.11.019
- Choy, W. K., & Chua, P. M. (2019). Professional development. In B. Wong, S. Hairon, & Ng, P. (Eds.), *School leadership and educational change in Singapore* (pp. 69-86). Cham, Switzerland: Springer.
- Cocklin, B. (2014). *Learning communities in education*. Chicago, IL: Routledge.
- Common Core State Standards Initiative. (2017). *About the standards. Development process*. Retrieved from <http://www.corestandards.org/about-the-standards/development-process/>
- Conley, D. T. (2011). *Reaching the foal: The applicability and importance of the common core state standards to college and career readiness*. Retrieved from <http://www.epiconline.org/reaching-the-goal-full-report/>

- Creswell, J. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method approaches*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. (2016). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Crisp, G., & Delgado, C. (2014). The impact of developmental education on community college persistence and vertical transfer. *Community College Review, 42*(2), 99-117. doi:10.1177/0091552113516488
- Darrow, A. A. (2016). The every student succeeds act (ESSA): What it means for students with disabilities and music educators. *General Music Today, 30*(1), 41-44. doi:10.1177/1048371316658327
- David, J. (2011). Research says.../High-stakes testing narrows the curriculum. *Educational Leadership, 68*(6), 78-80. Retrieved from http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/mar11/vol68/num06/High-Stakes_Testing_Narrows_the_Curriculum.aspx
- DeAngelo, L., & Franke, R. (2016). Social mobility and reproduction for whom? College readiness and first-year retention. *American Educational Research Journal, 53*(6), 1588-1625. doi:10.3102/0002831216674805
- Dougherty, A. M. (2013). *Psychological consultation and collaboration in school and community settings*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole, Cengage Learning.
- Dowling, S., & Doyle, L. (2017). Responding to self-harm in the school setting: The experience of guidance counsellors and teachers in Ireland. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 45*(5), 583-592. doi:10.1080/03069885.2016.1164297

- Downey, M. (2016, August 15). Are too many of Georgia's public colleges dropout factories? New report gives state low marks. *My AJC: The Atlantic Journal-Constitution*. Retrieved from <http://getschooled.blog.myajc.com/2016/08/15/are-too-many-of-georgias-public-colleges-dropout-factories-new-report-gives-state-low-marks/>
- DuFour, R., DuFour, R., Eaker, R., & Many, T. (2016). *Learning by doing*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.
- DuFour, R., & Reason, C. S. (2016). *Professional learning communities at work and virtual collaboration: On the tipping point of transformation*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.
- Durksen, T. L., Klassen, R. M., & Daniels, L. M. (2017). Motivation and collaboration: The keys to a developmental framework for teachers' professional learning. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 67, 53-66. doi:10.1016/j.tate.2017.05.011
- Dweck, C. S. (2015). Carol Dweck revisits the 'growth mindset'. *Education Week*, 35(5), 20-24. Retrieved from <http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2015/09/23/carol-dweck-revisits-the-growth-mindset.html>
- Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. Pub. L. 89-10, 79 Stat. 27 (1965).
- Every Student Succeeds Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1177 (2015).
- Fain, A. C., 2019. Introduction to Special Education. *Creating Compassionate Classrooms: Understanding the Continuum of Disabilities and Effective Educational Interventions*, 1.

- Fischer, C., Fishman, B., Dede, C., Eisenkraft, A., Frumin, K., Foster, B., . . . McCoy, A. (2018). Investigating relationships between school context, teacher professional development, teaching practices, and student achievement in response to a nationwide science reform. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 72*, 107-121. doi:10.1016/j.tate.2018.02.011
- Fye, H. J., Miller, L. G., & Rainey, J. S. (2018). Predicting school counselors' supports and challenges when implementing ASCA national model. *Professional School Counseling, 21*(1). doi:10.1177/2156759X18777671
- Garmston, R. J., & Wellman, B. M. (2016). *The adaptive school: A sourcebook for developing collaborative groups*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Gómez Palacio, C., Gómez Vargas, D. E., & Pulgarín Taborda, H. (2019). Coaching as a Professional Development Strategy for Adjunct Instructors in a Colombian University. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development, 21*(1), 121-135. doi:10.15446/profile.v21n1.71362
- Gonzales, S., & Lambert, L. (2014). Teacher leadership in professional development schools: Emerging conceptions, identities, and practices. *Journal of School Leadership, 11*(1), 6-24. doi:10.1177/105268460101100102
- Gonzalez, L., Borders, L. D., Hines, E., Villalba, J., & Henderson, A. (2013). Parental involvement in children's education: Considerations for school counselors working with Latino immigrant families. *Professional School Counseling, 16*(3), 185-193. doi:10.5330/psc.n.2013-16.183

- Goodyear, R. K. (2014). Supervision as pedagogy: Attending to its essential instructional and learning processes. *Clinical Supervisor, 33*(1), 82-99.
doi:10.1080/07325223.2014.918914
- Graham, S., & Harris, K. R. (2013). Common core state standards, writing, and students with LD: Recommendations. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 28*(1), 28-37. doi:10.1111/ldrp.12004
- Gray, J., Kruse, S., & Tarter, C. J. (2016). Enabling school structures, collegial trust and academic emphasis: Antecedents of professional learning communities. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 44*(6), 875-891.
doi:10.1177/1741143215574505
- Griffith, C., Greenspan, S., & Dimmitt, C. (2018). CSCORE's Annual Review of Research: Identifying Best Practices for Counseling in Schools.
- Gysbers, N. C. (2010). Embrace the past, welcome the future: A brief history of school counseling. In *ASCA national model: A framework for school counseling programs* (pp. vii-ix). Alexandria, VA: American School Counselor Association.
- Gysbers, N. C., & Henderson, P. (2014). *Developing and managing your school guidance & counseling program*. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.
- Hanson, J. M., Prusha, T., & Iverson, C. (2015). Principal, teacher, and counselor views of concurrent enrollment. *New Directions for Community Colleges, 2015*(169), 71-81. doi:10.1002/cc.20134

- Hargreaves, A., & O'Connor, M. T. (2017). Cultures of professional collaboration: Their origins and opponents. *Journal of Professional Capital and Community*, 2(2), 74-85. doi:10.1108/jpcc-02-2017-0004
- Harris, A., Jones, M., & Huffman, J. B. (2017). *Teachers leading educational reform: The power of professional learning communities*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Harron, J. R., & Hughes, J. E. (2018). Spacemakers: A leadership perspective on curriculum and the purpose of K–12 educational makerspaces. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, 50(3), 253-270. doi:10.1080/15391523.2018.1461038
- Hatch, T., Poynton, T. A., & Pérusse, R. (2015). Comparison findings of school counselor beliefs about ASCA national model school counseling program components using the SCPCS. *SAGE Open*, 5(2). doi:10.1177/2158244015579071
- Heggart, K. (2015). *Developing a growth mindset in teachers and staff*. Retrieved from <https://www.edutopia.org/discussion/developing-growth-mindset-teachers-and-staff>
- Hernandez, A. C. (2017). The professional development of pre-service teachers in an integrated science and language acquisition curriculum with third-grade students. In A. Oliveira & Winburgh (Eds.), *Science teacher preparation in content-based second language acquisition* (pp. 59-78). Cham, Switzerland: Springer.

- Hines, E. M., Moore III, J. L., Mayes, R. D., Harris, P. C., Vega, D., Robinson, D. V., ... Jackson, C. E. (2017). Making student achievement a priority: The role of school counselors in turnaround schools. *Urban Education, 55*(2), 216-237.
doi:10.1177/0042085916685761
- Hoaglund, A., Birkenfeld, K., & Box, J. (2014). Professional learning communities: Creating a foundation for collaboration skills in pre-service teachers. *Education, 134*(4), 521-528. Retrieved from
<https://www.questia.com/library/p5118/education/i3626562/vol-134-no-4-summer>
- Hochanadel, A., & Finamore, D. (2015). Fixed and growth mindset in education and how grit helps students persist in the face of adversity. *Journal of International Education Research, 11*(1), 47. doi:10.19030/jier.v11i1.9099
- Honingh, M., & Hooge, E. (2014). The effect of school-leader support and participation in decision making on teacher collaboration in Dutch primary and secondary schools. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 42*(1), 75-98.
doi:10.1177/1741143213499256
- Hotchkiss, H., Steinmetz, C., & Streib, D. (2016). *The power to effect change*. Retrieved from <https://knowlesteachers.org/kaleidoscope/power-effect-change>
- Houle, C. O. (1961). *The inquiring mind*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma.

- Hunzicker, J. (2018). Teacher leadership in professional development schools: A definition, brief history, and call for further study. In *Teacher leadership in professional development schools* (pp. 19-37). Bingley, United Kingdom: Emerald Group Publishing.
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, Pub. L. 108-446, 118 Stat. 2647 (2005).
- Jensen, B., Sonnemann, J., Roberts-Hull, K., & Hunter, A. (2016). *Beyond PD: Teacher professional learning in high-performing systems*. Washington, DC: National Center on Education and the Economy.
- Jo, I., & Milson, A. J. (2013). College readiness for geography: Perceptions of high school teachers and college faculty. *Journal of Geography*, 112(5), 193-204. doi:10.1080/00221341.2012.761718
- Johnson, J., Rochkind, J., Ott, A. N., & Dupont, S. (2010). *Can I get a little advice here? How an overstretched high school guidance system is undermining students' college aspirations* (A Public Agenda Report for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation). Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED508672.pdf>
- Jones, K. R., van Belle, L. A., Johnson, G. V., & Simmons, R. W. (2014). Beyond the common core and the politics of education reform: The role of school counselors and teachers in facilitating the college and career readiness of urban students. In E. M. Zamani-Gallaher (Ed.), *The Obama administration and educational reform* (Vol. 10, pp. 45-70). Bingley, United Kingdom: Emerald Group Publishing.

- Junco, R., Elavsky, C. M., & Heiberger, G. (2013). Putting twitter to the test: Assessing outcomes for student collaboration, engagement and success. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 44(2), 273-287. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8535.2012.01284.x
- Junior Achievement. (2011). *The role of common core standards in college and career readiness education*. Retrieved from <https://www.juniorachievement.org/documents/20009/36541/The+Roll+of+Common+Core+Standards.pdf/274c78bd-2dd4-407f-9050-78243ef836e9>
- Kelly, J., & Cherkowski, S. (2015). Collaboration, collegiality, and collective reflection: A case study of professional development for teachers. *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*, 169(2015). Retrieved from <https://journalhosting.ucalgary.ca/index.php/cjeap/article/view/42876>
- Killion, J. (2015). High-quality collaboration benefits teachers and students. Lessons from research. *Journal of Staff Development*, 36(5), 62-64. Retrieved from <https://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P3-3864690421.html>
- Kim, R., Olfman, L., Ryan, T., & Eryilmaz, E. (2014). Leveraging a personalized system to improve self-directed learning in online educational environments. *Computers & Education*, 70, 150-160. doi:10.1016/j.compedu.2013.08.006
- Kivunja, C. (2014). Do you want your students to be job-ready with 21st Century skills? Change pedagogies: A pedagogical paradigm shift from Vygotskyian social constructivism to critical thinking, problem solving and Siemens' digital connectivism. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 3(3), 81-91. doi:10.5430/ijhe.v3n3p81

- Kleinman, A. B. (2018). *Designing professional development training for secondary school counseling based on perceptions of teachers, students, parents and American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model® Framework* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 10816608)
- Knowles, M. S. (1970). What is andragogy? In *The modern practice of adult education: From pedagogy to andragogy* (pp. 40-59). Edgewood, CA: Prentice Hall.
- Knowles, M. S. (1975). *Self-directed learning: A guide for learners and teachers*. New York, NY: Association Press.
- Knowles, M. S. (1980). *The modern practice of adult education: From pedagogy to andragogy*. Wilton, CT: Association Press.
- Knowles, M. S. (1984). *The adult learner: A neglected species*. Houston, TX: Gulf.
- Knowles, M. S., Holton, E. F., III, & Swanson, R. A. (2014). *The adult learner: The definitive classic in adult education and human resource development*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Lai, C. (2015). Modeling teachers' influence on learners' self-directed use of technology for language learning outside the classroom. *Computers & Education, 82*, 74-83. doi:10.1016/j.compedu.2014.11.005
- Lapan, R. T., Poynton, T., Marcotte, A., Marland, J., & Milam, C. M. (2017). College and career readiness counseling support scales. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 95*(1), 77-86. doi:10.1002/jcad.12119

- Larson, K. E., & Bradshaw, C. P. (2017). Cultural competence and social desirability among practitioners: A systematic review of the literature. *Children and Youth Services Review, 76*, 100-111. doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2017.02.034
- Levin, H. (2015). The importance of adaptability for the 21st century. *Society, 52*(2), 136-141. doi:10.1007/s12115-015-9874-6
- Lewis, S. (2015). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches. *Health Promotion Practice, 16*(4), 473-475.
doi:10.1177/1524839915580941
- Lindeman, E. C. (1926). Andragogy: The method of teaching adults. *Workers' Education, 4*(3), 8.
- Lopez, C. J., & Mason, E. C. (2017). School counselors as curricular leaders: A content analysis of ASCA lesson plans. *Professional School Counseling, 21*(1b).
doi:10.1177/2156759X18773277
- Louws, M. L., Meirink, J. A., van Veen, K., & van Driel, J. H. (2017). Teachers' self-directed learning and teaching experience: What, how, and why teachers want to learn. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 66*, 171-183.
doi:10.1016/j.tate.2017.04.004
- Lynch, M. (2014, April 7). Why aren't minority high school grads college ready? [Web log post]. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/matthew-lynch-edd/why-arent-minority-high-s_b_5104402.html

- Martin, I., & Carey, J. (2014). Development of a logic model to guide evaluations of the ASCA national model for school counseling programs. *Professional Counselor*, 4(5), 455-466. doi:10.15241/im.4.5.455
- Masters, G. N. (2013). Towards a growth mindset in assessment. *Practically Primary*, 19(2), 4-7. Retrieved from <https://www.alea.edu.au/documents/item/896>
- Mau, W. C. J., Li, J., & Hoetmer, K. (2016). Transforming high school counseling: Counselors' roles, practices, and expectations for students' success. *Administrative Issues Journal*, 6(2), 83-95. doi:10.5929/2016.6.2.5
- McGrath, S., & Powell, L. (2016). Skills for sustainable development: Transforming vocational education and training beyond 2015. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 50, 12-19. doi:10.1016/j.ijedudev.2016.05.006
- McGuinn, P. (2016). From No Child Left Behind to the Every Student Succeeds Act: Federalism and the education legacy of the Obama administration. *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, 46(3), 392-415. doi:10.1093/publius/pjw014
- Meijer, M. J., Kuijpers, M., Boei, F., Vrieling, E., & Geijsel, F. (2017). Professional development of teacher-educators towards transformative learning. *Professional Development in Education*, 43(5), 819-840. doi:10.1080/19415257.2016.1254107
- Melzer, D. K., & Grant, R. M. (2016). Investigating differences in personality traits and academic needs among prepared and underprepared first-year college students. *Journal of College Student Development*, 57(1), 99-103. doi:10.1353/csd.2016.0004

- Merchant, Z., Goetz, E. T., Cifuentes, L., Keeney-Kennicutt, W., & Davis, T. J. (2014). Effectiveness of virtual reality-based instruction on students' learning outcomes in K-12 and higher education: A meta-analysis. *Computers & Education, 70*, 29-40. doi:10.1016/j.compedu.2013.07.033
- Merriam, S. B. (2015). Adult learning theory: A review and an update. *Culture, Biography & Lifelong Learning, 1*(1), 59-71. Retrieved from <http://www.cbll.org/index.php/cbll/article/view/19>
- Merriam, S. B., Caffarella, R. S., & Baumgartner, L. M. (2012). *Learning in adulthood: A comprehensive guide* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2015). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons.
- Meyers, A. B., Tobin, R. M., Huber, B. J., Conway, D. E., & Shelvin, K. H. (2015). Interdisciplinary collaboration supporting social-emotional learning in rural school systems. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation, 25*(2-3), 109-128. doi:10.1080/10474412.2014.929956
- Morstain, B. R., & Smart, J. C. (1974). Reasons for participation in adult education courses: A multivariate analysis of group differences. *Adult Education, 24*(2), 83-98. doi:10.1177/074171367402400201
- Muijs, D. (2015). Collaboration and networking among rural schools: Can it work and when? Evidence from England. *Peabody Journal of Education, 90*(2), 294-305. doi:10.1080/0161956x.2015.1022386

- Mulholland, M., & O'Connor, U. (2016). Collaborative classroom practice for inclusion: Perspectives of classroom teachers and learning support/resource teachers. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 20(10), 1070-1083.
doi:10.1080/13603116.2016.1145266
- National Assessment of Educational Progress. (2013). *The nation's report card: A first look: 2013 mathematics and reading*. Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pubs/main2013/2014451.aspx/>
- National Assessment of Educational Progress. (2015). *The nation's report card: 2015 mathematics and reading at Grade 12*. Retrieved from https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_g12_2015/#reading
- National Center for Educational Evaluation and Regional Assistance. (2016). *What works clearinghouse*. Retrieved from <http://whatworks.ed.gov>
- National Council of Teachers of English. (2013). *NCTE position statement: The NCTE definition of 21st century literacy*. Retrieved from <http://www.ncte.org/positions/statements/21stcentdefinition>
- National Governors Association, Council of Chief State School Officers (2010, June 2). *National Governors Association and state education chiefs launch common state academic standards* [press release]. Retrieved from http://www.ccsso.org/News_and_Events/Press_Releases/NATIONAL_GOVERNORS_ASSOCIATION_AND_STATE_EDUCATION_CHIEFS_LAUNCH_COMMON_STATE_ACADEMIC_STANDARDS_.html

- Orb, A., Eisenhauer, L., & Wynaden, D. (2001). Ethics in qualitative research. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship, 33*(1), 93-96. doi:10.1111/j.1547-5069.2001.00093.x
- Owen, S. (2014). Teacher professional learning communities: Going beyond contrived collegiality toward challenging debate and collegial learning and professional growth. *Australian Journal of Adult Learning, 54*(2), 54-76. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1033925.pdf>
- Ozuah, P. O. (2016). First, there was pedagogy and then came andragogy. *Einstein Journal of Biology and Medicine, 21*(2), 83-87. doi:10.23861/ejbm20052190
- Park, S., Robinson, P., & Bates, R. (2016). Adult learning principles and processes and their relationships with learner satisfaction: Validation of the andragogy in practice inventory (API) in the Jordanian context. *Adult Education Research Conference Proceedings, Charlotte, NC* (pp. 179-185). Manhattan, KS: New Prairie Press. Retrieved from <http://newprairiepress.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1037&context=aerc>
- Pella, S. (2015). Pedagogical reasoning and action: Affordances of practice-based teacher professional development. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 42*(3), 81-101.
- Peterson, P. E., Barrows, S., & Gift, T. (2016). After common core, states set rigorous standards. *Education Next, 16*(3). Retrieved from <http://educationnext.org/after-common-core-states-set-rigorous-standards/>

- Petrilli, M. J., & Finn, C. E. (2015, April 8). College preparedness over the years, according to NAEP [Web log post]. Retrieved from <https://edexcellence.net/articles/college-preparedness-over-the-years-according-to-naep/>
- Radford, A. W. (2011, October). Learning at a distance: Undergraduate enrollment in distance education courses and degree programs (NCES 2012-154). *U.S. Department of Education Stats in Brief*. Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2012/2012154.pdf>
- Radunzel, J., & Noble, J. (2012). *Predicting long-term college success through degree completion using ACT composite score, ACT benchmarks, and high school grade point average* (ACT Research Report Series, 2012-5). Iowa City, IA: ACT.
- Reddy, S., Searle, R. L., Shawa, L. B., & Teferra, D. (2016). A balancing act: Facilitating a university education induction programme for (early career) academics. *Studies in Higher Education, 41*(10), 1820-1834. doi:10.1080/03075079.2016.1221658
- Ronfeldt, M., Farmer, S. O., McQueen, K., & Grissom, J. A. (2015). Teacher collaboration in instructional teams and student achievement. *American Educational Research Journal, 52*(3), 475-514. doi:10.3102/0002831215585562
- Rothman, R. (2012a). A common core of readiness. *Educational Leadership, 62*(7), 10-15. Retrieved from <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/apr12/vol69/num07/A-Common-Core-of-Readiness.aspx>

- Rothman R. (2012b). *Improving college access and success* (Stand for Children Leadership Center White Paper). Retrieved from <https://standleadershipcenter.org/sites/standleadershipcenter.org/files/media/WW-SF-College%20Readiness.pdf>
- Saldana, J. (2015). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. London, United Kingdom: Sage Publications.
- Salina, C., Girtz, S., Eppinga, J., Martinez, D., Kilian, D. B., Lozano, E., ... Shines, T. (2013). All hands on deck: A comprehensive, results-driven counseling model. *Professional School Counseling, 17*(1), 63-75. doi:10.5330/psc.n.2014-17.63
- Salmon, G., Gregory, J., Lokuge Dona, K., & Ross, B. (2015). Experiential online development for educators: The example of the carpe diem MOOC. *British Journal of Educational Technology, 46*(3), 542-556. doi:10.1111/bjet.12256
- Schenke, W., van Driel, J., Geijsel, F. P., & Volman, M. L. (2017). Boundary crossing in R&D projects in schools: Learning through cross-professional collaboration. *Teachers College Record, 119*(4), 1-42. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/316255116_Boundary_crossing_in_R_D_projects_in_schools_Learning_through_cross-professional_collaboration
- Schmoker, M. (2018). *Focus: Elevating the essentials to radically improve student learning*. ASCD.
- Seemiller, C., & Priest, K. L. (2017). Leadership educator journeys: Expanding a model of leadership educator professional identity development. *Journal of Leadership Education, 16*(2), 1-22. doi:10.12806/V16/I2/R1

- Shamsuddin, S. (2016). Taken out of context: Piecing together college guidance information in urban high schools. *Urban Review*, 48(1), 101-122.
doi:10.1007/s11256-015-0347-4
- Shapiro, D., Dunder, A., Wakhungu, P. K., Yuan, X., Nathan, A., & Hwang, Y. (2015, November). *Completing college: A national view of student attainment rates – fall 2009 cohort* (Signature Report No. 10). Herndon, VA: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center.
- Siddiq, F., Scherer, R., & Tondeur, J. (2016). Teachers' emphasis on developing students' digital information and communication skills (TEDDICS): A new construct in 21st century education. *Computers & Education*, 92, 1-14.
doi:10.1016/j.compedu.2015.10.006
- Sinha, S., Hanuscin, D., Rebello, C., Muslu, N., & Cheng, Y. W. (2017). Confronting myths about teacher leadership. *European Journal of Physics Education*, 3(2), 12-21.
- Sink, C. A., & Ockerman, M. S. (2016). School counselors and a multi-tiered system of supports: Cultivating systemic change and equitable outcomes. *The Professional Counselor*, 6(3).
- Slavit, D., & McDuffie, R. A. (2013). Self-directed teacher learning in collaborative contexts. *School Science and Mathematics*, 113(2), 94-105.
doi:10.1111/ssm.12001

- Soebari, T. S., & Aldridge, J. M. (2015). Using student perceptions of the learning environment to evaluate the effectiveness of a teacher professional development programme. *Learning Environments Research*, 18(2), 163-178.
doi:10.1007/s10984-015-9175-4
- Sogunro, O. A. (2014). Motivating factors for adult learners in higher education. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 4(1), 22. doi:10.5430/ijhe.v4n1p22
- Sriram, R. (2014). Rethinking intelligence: The role of mindset in promoting success for academically high-risk students. *Journal of College Student Retention*, 15(4), 515-536. doi:10.2190/cs.15.4.c
- Stanton-Salazar, R. D. (2016, October). *Contributions of social capital theory and social network models in advancing the connection between students' school-based learning and community-based opportunities for pursuing interest-driven learning*. Paper presented at Power Brokers: Building Youth Social Capital through Connected Learning, University of California, Irvine, CA.
- Steiner-Adair, C. (2013). Got grit? The call to educate smart, savvy, and socially intelligent students. *Independent School*, 72(2). Retrieved from <https://www.nais.org/magazine/independent-school/winter-2013/got-grit/>
- Stephens, N. M., Hamedani, M. G., & Destin, M. (2014). Closing the social-class achievement gap: A difference-education intervention improves first-generation students' academic performance and all students' college transition. *Psychological Science*, 25(4), 943-953. doi:10.1177/0956797613518349

- Stone, S. I., & Charles, J. (2018). Conceptualizing the problems and possibilities of interprofessional collaboration in schools. *Children & Schools, 40*(3), 185-192. doi:10.1093/cs/cdy011
- Stone-Johnson, C. (2015). Counselors as policy actors: Challenges to systemic involvement in college and career readiness policies in secondary schools. *American Secondary Education, 43*(2), 27-43. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/journal/amersecedu?decade=2000>
- Stone-Johnson, C. (2016). Intensification and isolation: Alienated teaching and collaborative professional relationships in the accountability context. *Journal of Educational Change, 17*(1), 29-49. doi:10.1007/s10833-015-9255-3
- Studer, J. R. (2015). The ASCA national model as a supervisory guide. In *A guide to practicum and internship for school counselors-in-training* (pp. 93-111). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Tam, A. C. F. (2015). The role of a professional learning community in teacher change: A perspective from beliefs and practices. *Teachers and Teaching, 21*(1), 22-43. doi:10.1080/13540602.2014.928122
- Taylor, E. W., & Laros, A. (2014). Researching the practice of fostering transformative learning: Lessons learned from the study of andragogy. *Journal of Transformative Education, 12*(2), 134-147. doi:10.1177/1541344614548589

- Taylor, D. L., Morgan, R. L., & Callow-Heusser, C. A. (2016). A survey of vocational rehabilitation counselors and special education teachers on collaboration in transition planning. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 44*(2), 163-173. doi:10.3233/jvr-150788
- Thibodeaux, J., Deutsch, A., Kitsantas, A., & Winsler, A. (2017). First-year college students' time use: Relations with self-regulation and GPA. *Journal of Advanced Academics, 28*(1), 5-27. doi:10.1177/1932202x16676860
- Tompkins, G., Campbell, R., Green, D., & Smith, C. (2014). *Literacy for the 21st century*. Melbourne, Australia: Pearson Education.
- Tough, A. M. (1971). *Adults' learning projects: A fresh approach to theory and practice in adult education*. Ontario, Canada: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.
- Turner, J. D., & Albro, J. (2017). When I grow up: Assessing American children's perspectives on college and career readiness through drawings. *Literacy, 51*(2), 94-103. doi:10.1111/lit.12113
- U.S. News & World Report. (2017). *Freshmen retention rates: National universities*. Retrieved from <https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/rankings/national-universities/freshmen-least-most-likely-return>
- Van Velsor, P. (2009). School counselors as social-emotional learning consultants: Where do we begin? *Professional School Counseling, 13*(1), 50-58. doi:10.5330/psc.n.2010-13.50
- Venezia, A., & Jaegar, L. (2013). Transition from high school to college. *Future of Children, 23*(1), 117-136. doi:10.1353/foc.2013.0004

- Villardón-Gallego, L. (2016). Inquiry-based learning in pre-service training for secondary education counselors. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 217, 65-73.
doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2016.02.028
- Voelkel, R. H., Jr., & Chrispeels, J. H. (2017). Understanding the link between professional learning communities and teacher collective efficacy. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 28(4), 505-526.
doi:10.1080/09243453.2017.1299015
- Von Davier, A. A., Zhu, M., & Kyllonen, P. C. (Eds.). (2017). *Innovative assessment of collaboration*. New York, NY: Springer.
- Wallender, J. (2014). The common core state standards in American public education: Historical underpinnings and justifications. *Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin*, 80(4), 7-11. Retrieved from
<https://www.dkg.org/DKGMember/Publications/Journal/DKGMember/Publications/Bulletin-Journal.aspx?hkey=7fdf8372-9c18-4b96-8150-dcb6f4ae8ce1>
- Wang, C. W., & Neihart, M. (2015). Academic self-concept and academic self-efficacy: Self-beliefs enable academic achievement of twice-exceptional students. *Roeper Review*, 37(2), 63-73. doi:10.1080/02783193.2015.1008660
- Welton, A., & Williams, M. (2015). Accountability strain, college readiness drain: Sociopolitical tensions involved in maintaining a college-going culture in a high “minority”, high poverty, Texas high school. *High School Journal*, 98(2), 181-204. doi:10.1353/hsj.2015.0001

- White S. W., & Kelly, F. D. (2010). The school counselor's role in dropout prevention. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 88*, 227-235. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6678.2010.tb00014.x
- Wibrowski, C. R., Matthews, W. K., & Kitsantas, A. (2016). The role of a skills learning support program on first-generation college students' self-regulation, motivation, and academic achievement: A longitudinal study. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice*, Advance online publication. doi:10.1177/1521025116629152
- Wigfield, A., Eccles, J. S., Fredricks, J. A., Simpkins, S., Roeser, R. W., & Schiefele, U. (2015). Development of achievement motivation and engagement. In M. E. Lamb (Vol. Ed.) & R. M. Lerner, (Ed.-in-Chief.), *Handbook of child psychology and developmental science: Vol. 3. Socioemotional processes* (Chapter 16). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Williams, J. M., Greenleaf, A. T., Albert, T., & Barnes, E. F. (2014). Promoting educational resilience among African American students at risk of school failure: The role of school counselors. *Journal of School Counseling, 12*(9). Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1034726.pdf>
- Woods, C. S., & Domina, T. (2014). The school counselor caseload and the high school-to-college pipeline. *Teachers College Record, 116*(10), 1-30. Retrieved from <http://www.tcrecord.org/library/abstract.asp?contentid=17600>

- Yazan, B. (2015). Three approaches to case study methods in education: Yin, Merriam, and Stake. *Qualitative Report*, 20(2), 134-152. Retrieved from <http://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol20/iss2/12>
- Yeager, D., Romero, C., Paunesku, D., Hulleman, C. S., Schneider, B., Hinojosa, C., . . . & Trott, J. (2016). Using design thinking to improve psychological interventions: The case of the growth mindset during the transition to high school. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 108(3), 374-391. doi:10.1037/edu0000098
- Yeager, D., Walton, G., & Cohen, G. L. (2013). Addressing achievement gaps with psychological interventions. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 94(5), 62-65. doi:10.1177/003172171309400514
- Yin, R. K. (2011). *Qualitative research from start to finish*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Yin, R. K. (2015). *Qualitative research from start to finish*. New York, NY: Guilford Publications.
- Zundans-Fraser, L., & Bain, A. (2016). The role of collaboration in a comprehensive programme design process in inclusive education. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 20(2), 136-148. doi:10.1080/13603116.2015.1075610

Appendix: The Project

Professional Development/Training Curriculum and Materials

Collaboration with a Purpose

The purpose of *Frontliners* professional development is designed to inform and support teachers and counselors as they work together to identify common ways to implement the pre-college curriculum to increase student achievement through collaboration.

Goals and Outcomes

The goal of the development is to provide teachers and counselors with the following:

- a common language and
- a mutual understanding of roles and responsibilities through collaborative learning experiences created to identify specific goals needed to implement the pre-college curriculum as determined by teachers and counselors.

The collaborative relationships that promote a common language and mutual understanding of roles and responsibilities through participation in the professional development seminar will be the desired outcome and pursuit.

Components and Materials

Project Components and Materials

- Six sessions and four key topics to provide the framework for collaboration.
- Project materials for this professional development will consist of a laptop to access links that will be used for research and collaboration throughout the seminar.

Wanted: Teachers and Counselors Who Collaborate

This professional development is open to certified teachers and counselors who teach in the secondary setting. *The Frontliners Professional Development* allows teachers and counselors the opportunity to collaborate to improve the pre-college curriculum.



*Frontliners:
Professional
Development for
Teachers and
Counselors*



Timeline and Implementation: Week 1 (Face-to-Face Meeting)

This professional development will be implemented over a seven-week period with each session consisting of one hour per week for a total of seven hours over the seven-week period.

Week 1: Establishing Collaborative Goals

Time: 60 minutes

8:00-8:15 a.m.: Intro to professional development and participants; Icebreaker

8:15-8:35 a.m.: Breakout Groups: Two Mixed Teacher-Counselor groups discussing Areas of Curriculum and Instruction to develop common goals. Share out with group.

8:35-8:40: Five-minute break

8:40-8:55: Report findings of discussion/research.

8:55-9:00: Group collaboration on plan to action to implement before next meeting.

Weeks 2-6 (Online Sessions)

Week 2: Finding Common Ground

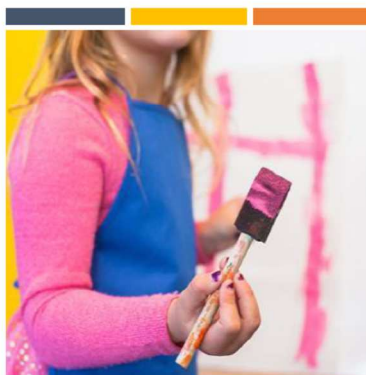
Time: 60 minutes

8:00-8:15 a.m.: Intro to professional development topic and assignment.

8:15-8:40 a.m.: Breakout Groups: Two Mixed Teacher-Counselor groups discussing Areas of Curriculum and Instruction to develop common goals. Share out with group.

8:40-8:55: Report findings of discussion/research.

8:55-9:00: Group collaboration on plan to action to implement before next meeting.



“Become a collaborative learner for life!”

Week 3: Instructional Planning

Time: 60 minutes

8:00-8:15 a.m.: Intro to professional development topic and assignment.

8:15-8:40 a.m.: Breakout Groups: Two Mixed Teacher-Counselor groups discussing Areas of Curriculum and Instruction to develop common goals. Share out with group.

8:40-8:55: Report findings of discussion/research.

8:55-9:00: Group collaboration on plan to action to implement before next meeting.

Week 4: Implementing Best Practices

Time: 60 minutes

8:00-8:15 a.m.: Intro to professional development topic and assignment.

8:15-8:40 a.m.: Breakout Groups: Two Mixed Teacher-Counselor groups discussing Areas of Curriculum and Instruction to develop common goals. Share out with group.



8:40-8:55: Report findings of discussion/research.

8:55-9:00: Group collaboration on plan to action to implement before next meeting.

Week 5: Collaborative Instruction

Time: 60 minutes

8:00-8:15 a.m.: Intro to professional development topic and assignment.

8:15-8:40 a.m.: Breakout Groups: Two Mixed Teacher-Counselor groups discussing Areas of Curriculum and Instruction to develop common goals. Share out with group.

8:40-8:55: Report findings of discussion/research.

8:55-9:00: Group collaboration on plan to action to implement before next meeting.

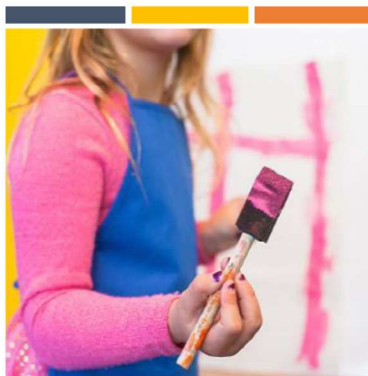
Week 6: Reflect on Collaborative Process and Growth

Time: 60 minutes

8:00-8:15 a.m.: Intro to professional development topic and assignment.

8:15-8:40 a.m.: Breakout Groups: Two Mixed Teacher-Counselor groups discussing Areas of Curriculum and Instruction to develop common goals. Share out with group.

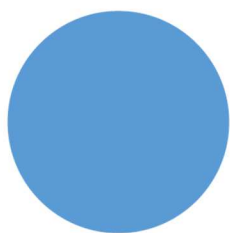
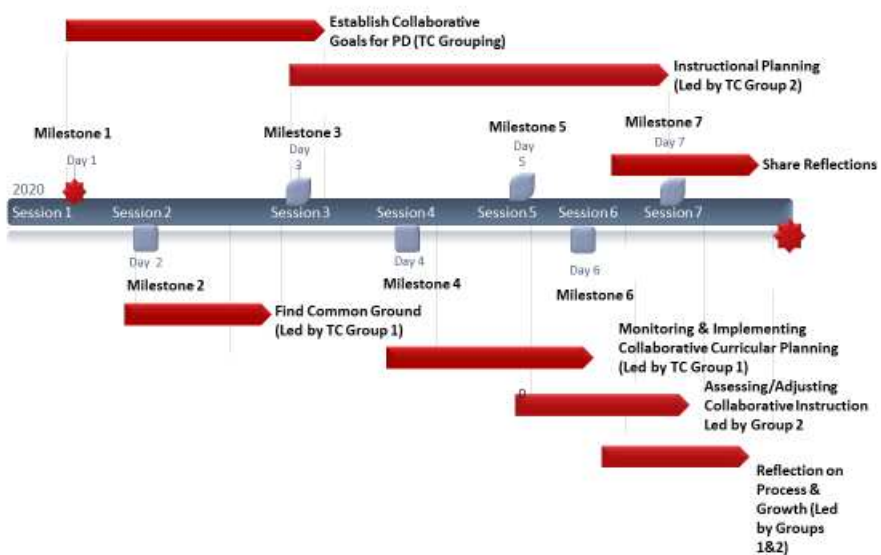
8:40-8:55: Report findings of discussion/research.



Frontliners Professional Development for Teachers and Counselors



FRONTLINERS PROJECT TIMELINE



Overview of the
Session Series

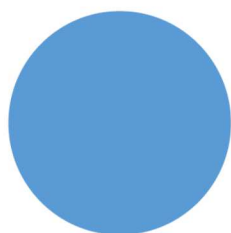
Session One: Finding Common Ground Through Establishing Goals



- GOAL #1: Teachers and counselors strive to improve collaboration to assure that the curriculum prepares students to meet the academic demands of college
- GOAL #2: Effective collaboration in the 21st century secondary setting must continue to engage teachers and counselors as adult learners who find ways to vary the learning experiences within the pre-college curriculum to increase the cognitive and behavior skillsets needed for students to succeed their first year in college (Carpenter-Abey & Aeby, 2013; Stone-Jackson, 2015).

GOALS for the Professional Development





Session Two: Finding Common Ground
through Common Language from
Counselor to Teacher AND Teacher to
Counselor within the Context of the Bridge

Introduce ASCA
Mindsets and Behaviors,
Common Core
Standards, and How
They Overlap

Assignment: Exploratory Search of the Law and Standards

- Explore the Bridge Law, and conduct an online discussion of the roles and expectations of the counselors and teachers. Then, in think-pair-share groups, explore the ASCAGAM and CCSD standards. Collaborate to discuss the common areas of overlap in the standards. Each team will then present their findings in the Google Classroom Platform.


- Establish common collaborative goals through selecting key standards from ASCAMAB and CCSS to implement within lessons.
- Create time-saving ways to collaborate

Session Three: Instructional Planning:
Common Collaborative Goals



Assignment

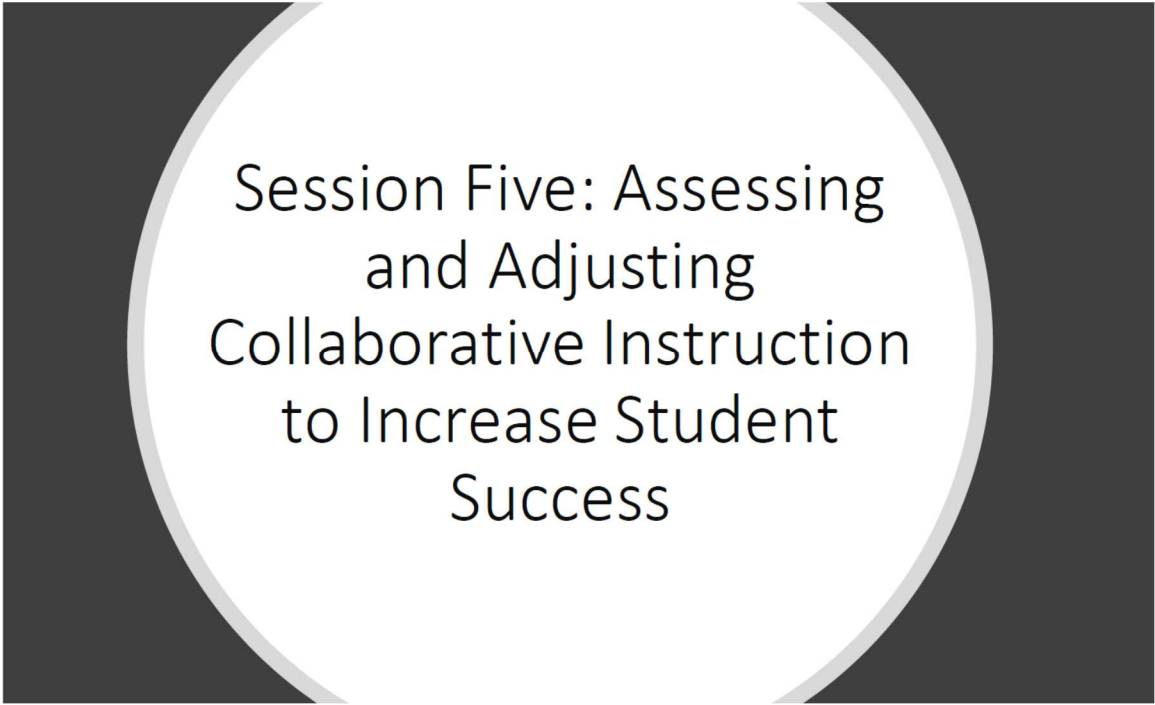
Assignment: In think-pair-share groups, review the ASCAGAM standards of the counselor & CCSD Standards of the teacher, and select a common standard from the ASCAGAM and CCSD to brainstorm a lesson to design and implement in Session Four.



Session Four: Monitoring and Implementing Success Through Collaborative Curricular Planning

Flipped Classroom Management and Assignment

- Assignment: Using an established, common ASCAGAM and CCSD standard from Session Three, devise a lesson plan that combines both standards to implement in the classroom. Select a date to implement the lesson.



Session Five: Assessing
and Adjusting
Collaborative Instruction
to Increase Student
Success

Assignment: Assessing and Adjusting Instruction

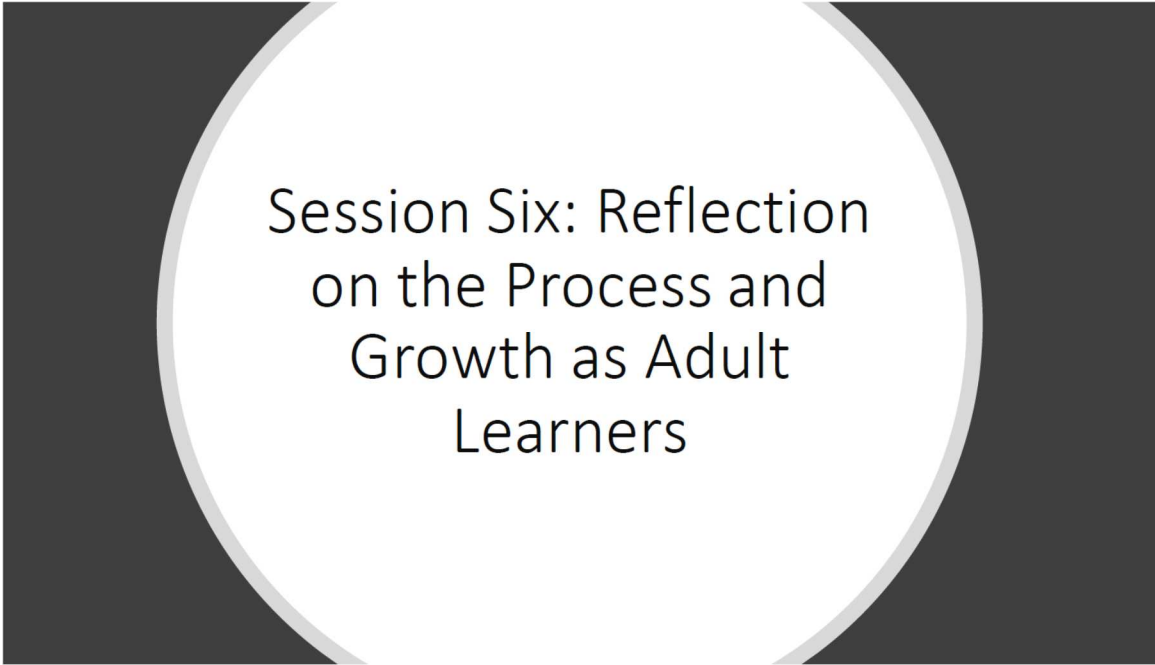
- After the lesson, assess the results of the lesson through a brief discussion of the formative data gathered from the lesson in light of the following two questions:

1. What will we do when students don't learn/master the content?

And/or

2. What will we do when student do learn/master the content?

You will develop a plan to remediate instruction as well as extend the learning for future lessons.



Session Six: Reflection
on the Process and
Growth as Adult
Learners

Assignment

- Assignment: Reflect on the collaborative process to improve the pre-college curriculum through common, collaborative instructional planning using the ASCAGAM & CCSD Standards. What were the strengths of your collaborative process? What were your challenges?
- How did you, or how can you adjust the collaborative process to adjust instructional planning, strategies, and implementation? What future assessments can you create to monitor student learning and master of the content?
- Write a two-page collaborative reflection about your experience and bring this to the closing session. Be prepared to share your experiences.

Closing Session
#7: Sharing Reflections
and Future Planning

- We will meet face to face a final time to share our collaborative experiences and plan for future, on-going, sustainable professional developments for pre-college curricular planning.

Themes and Subthemes

The table below represents the most frequent themes and subthemes for the research findings focused on collaboration between teachers and counselors as adult learners. Significant percentages by count ranged between 1.21-2.26%. The length and count represent the word frequency of all teacher and counselor participants.

Word	Length	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)
collaborations	14	67	2.26
examples	8	62	2.09
experiences	11	62	2.09
learning	8	53	1.78
teachers	8	49	1.65
adult	5	48	1.62
curriculum	10	42	1.41
college	7	41	1.38
counselors	10	41	1.38
use	3	39	1.31
explain	7	37	1.25
pre	3	36	1.21

These results represent the highest frequency of key words used by participants. The entire word count from the finding shows almost 100 themes and subthemes in NVivo, which demonstrates wide-ranging views of both teachers and counselors regarding collaboration as adult learners.