



AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

Victor Charles Zimchek for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy in Counseling  
presented on March 4, 2009.

Title: Student/School Counselor Ratios and School  
Attendance Rates: Review of Literature and a  
Correlational Study

Abstract approved:

---

Gene Eakin

School attendance is perceived as a critical issue in today's primary and secondary educational systems. This manuscript reviews literature that speaks to the complexity of issues related to truancy and then posits that many of the interventions typically recommended to address truancy are ones that school counselors already provide or might deliver. Conceptualizing the ratio of students per counselor as a proxy for the strength of a school's counseling program, the author hypothesizes that schools with lower student to counselor ratios might have an impact on attendance rates. A correlational study of attendance rates and student-counselor ratios is

presented for Oregon public high schools (grades 9 - 12) with one or more counselors for the 2004-2005 school year. The study found no significant relationship. Possible meanings and suggestions for further study are discussed.

©Copyright by Victor Charles Zimchek

March 4, 2009

All Rights Reserved

Student/School Counselor Ratios and School Attendance  
Rates: Review of Literature and a Correlational Study

by  
Victor Charles Zimchek

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to

Oregon State University

in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the  
degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Presented March 4, 2009  
Commencement June 2009

Doctor of Philosophy dissertation of Victor Charles  
Zimchek presented on March 4, 2009

APPROVED:

---

Major Professor, representing Counseling

---

Dean of the College of Education

---

Dean of the Graduate School

I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my dissertation to any reader upon request.

---

Victor Charles Zimchek, Author

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express appreciation to several people who have made editorial contributions to the writing of this manuscript. They include Dr. Gene Eakin, my major professor at Oregon State University; Jamie Zimchek, Don McDonald, Dr. Michael Ingram, and Dr. Deborah Rubel. Dr. Tim Bergquist shared his expertise in providing guidance with the statistical portion of Chapter Three.

Many more people have indirectly contributed to this manuscript and what it represents: The completion of a doctoral program. Most members of my Graduate Committee have also served as teachers and mentors. They include Dr. Gene Eakin, my committee chairperson, Dr. Michael Ingram, Dr. Cass Dykeman who served as committee chair for a major portion of my doctoral program, Dr. Deborah Rubel, and Dr. Carol Mallory-Smith, my Graduate Representative. Drs. Dale Pehrsson and Beth Wasylow, former committee members, must also be included.

I wish to express profound appreciation to the two high school administrators, David Phelps and Joe Novello, who provided time and encouragement to engage in a doctoral program. My fellow students have also encouraged, assisted, and provided a deep sense of community and belonging.

Finally, my family has also contributed much to making this experience a reality. Parents and children have patiently tolerated my affinity for studying, asking questions, and being preoccupied. Most of all, I appreciate my wife, Julie, who has spent much of the past five years as a doctoral-student widow. Despite times of neglect and aloneness, she has continually encouraged me to persevere. To her I owe my deepest gratitude and thanks.

## CONTRIBUTION OF AUTHORS

Dr. Gene Eakin, Instructor and Dr. Michael Anthony Ingram, Associate Professor, both of Counselor Education and Supervision at Oregon State University, contributed to the writing of this document in a number of ways that include providing suggestions for wording, resources, and guidance in format and manuscript organization.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Chapter 1: General Introduction . . . . .	1
Rationale for the study . . . . .	3
Manuscript format . . . . .	5
Chapter 2: Literature Review . . . . .	8
The impact of absenteeism . . . . .	9
Factors related to attendance . . . . .	11
School-related factors . . . . .	12
Family-related factors . . . . .	14
Student-related factors . . . . .	14
Linking school attendance and school counselors . . . . .	19
Role of counselor related to school attendance . . . . .	21
Counselor role and school-related factors . . . . .	22
Counselor role and family-related factors . . . . .	24
Counselor role and student-related factors . . . . .	25
Conclusion . . . . .	27
References for Chapter 2 . . . . .	30
Chapter 3: School Attendance: An Indicator of School Counseling Effectiveness . . . . .	44
Focus on school attendance . . . . .	44
Attendance as indicator of counseling success . . . . .	47
Method . . . . .	51

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

	<u>Page</u>
Results . . . . .	54
Discussion . . . . .	57
References for Chapter 3 . . . . .	64
Chapter 4: General Conclusion . . . . .	74
Bibliography . . . . .	79
Appendices . . . . .	99

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Attendance distribution . . . . .	54
2. Student-counselor ratio distribution . . . . .	54
3. Scattergram: Student-School Counselor Ratios	
X Attendance Rates . . . . .	55

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Terms Used for Filtering Out Non-traditional Public High Schools . . . . .	53
2. Correlations for attendance ratios, student- counselor ratios, population of communities, free/reduced lunch rates, student-administrator ratios, and student-teacher ratios . . . . .	56

Student/School Counselor Ratios and School Attendance Rates: Review of Literature and a Correlational Study

Chapter 1: General Introduction

Absenteeism has been viewed as one of the most pressing issues that need to be addressed by public schools in the United States (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002; Mueller, Giacomazzi, & Stoddard, 2006). Baker, Sigmon, & Nugent (2001) stated that across the United States, hundreds of thousands of students were absent from school on any given day. Approximately 2.8 million students across the United States skipped school at least once each month (Henry, 2007). Furthermore, some students accumulated over a year's worth of absences before they'd finished the eighth grade and truants emerged as early as the second grade (Capps, 2003). Even gifted students had been affected, with over 45% of those who dropped out of high school in one state identified as having had problems with attendance which ultimately contributed to their untimely departure from the educational system (Matthews, 2006).

Research revealed that school absenteeism by students was not a new phenomenon. In fact, a review of the literature revealed that attitudes and feelings toward school attendance were not only reflected in

school settings, but also in the art pieces of 19<sup>th</sup>-century artists. Thomas Webster's *Late at School*, William Mulready's *The Last In*, and sculptor Randolph Roger's *The Truant* were prime examples of art that depicted school absenteeism. In addition, to art, early books of fiction also dealt with the subject matter. To illustrate, humorist and writer Mark Twain used his pen to depict the fictional character, Tom Sawyer, and his struggles with school attendance (Twain, 1920).

Other countries during the 19<sup>th</sup> century also addressed concerns about school attendance in creative ways. For example, The School Board of London, England developed the Queen Victoria medal to encourage being in school and attending on time (London Metropolitan Archives, 1997). This medal was designed to combat what has been referred to as "'skipping off', 'mitching', 'dodging', 'skiving', 'bunking off', and 'going missing'" (Reid, 2000, p. 1)

Therefore, the issue of school absenteeism has been a worldwide concern for over 100 years. Globally, countries recognized that the education of their youth was vital to their future sustainability and as a result, student attendance was critical to the process of achieving educational goals (De Clercq, Sacko, Behnke,

Gilbert, & Vercruyssen, 1998; Griffiths & Parker-Jenkins, 1994; Education Policy and Data Center, 2007; Reid, 2005a).

#### *Rationale for the study*

The rationale for the study was based on this researcher's contention that there was an increased need to examine the relationship that might exist between the variables of school attendance and counseling program effectiveness. The first variable, school attendance, was established by the review of literature previously outlined and reflected by the presence of state and national education laws (National Center for Mental Health Prevention and Youth Violence Prevention, 2007; National Center for School Engagement, 2005; No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 2002; Zinth, 2005). However, the issue of school attendance is very broad in its scope (Kearney, 2001) and too expansive for a study such as this. Thus, a reduction of the subject matter was accomplished by the introduction of a second area of concern that overlapped attendance.

The second variable of importance was the issue of counseling program effectiveness. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (2002) stated that educational systems, schools, and entities within schools were

expected to justify their existence and demonstrate their effectiveness by furthering educational goals in the name of accountability. School counseling programs were not exempt from this responsibility. They were also expected to show that the roles that counselors performed in their positions contributed to the realization of educational objectives (D. Brown & Trusty, 2005a; Gysbers, 2004; Lapan, 2001). It was often difficult to quantify the strength and effectiveness of a school counseling program due to the number of factors involved. One such variable was the number of students served by each school counselor, or referred to as counselor density. Gybers & Henderson (2006) noted that counseling program effectiveness was impacted by counselor density. This was also reflected in recommendations for the number of students served by each counselor (Gilbert Wrenn, 1962; Northwest Association of Accredited Schools, 2008; American School Counseling Association, n.d.). In this study, counselor density served to represent school counseling program strength as a potential way to demonstrate program effectiveness.

Studies suggested that counseling programs interfaced with school attendance and absenteeism in at least three different spheres. First, many factors that

influenced a student's attendance were often within the school counselor's domain (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006). Second, counseling, itself, was a common intervention for students with excessive absences (Bazemore, Stinchcomb, & Leip, 2004; Gysbers & Henderson, 2006; Kearney, 2001). Finally, effective counseling programs often showed improvement in attendance rates (Gysbers, 2004).

The study was designed to ascertain whether there was a significant correlation between school counseling program strength, as represented by counselor density, and school attendance, as represented by school attendance rates. The working hypothesis was that attendance rates would co-vary with counselor density.

#### *Manuscript format*

This document was written to fulfill requirements for a doctoral program at Oregon State University and was designed to demonstrate a candidate's ability and motivation to conduct scholarly work. The Manuscript Document Format option, outlined in Oregon State University's Thesis Guide 2007-08, was chosen to present the findings. This particular option comprised four chapters which shared a common theme with the middle two chapters written in a way appropriate to be published. Chapter 2 was a review of relevant literature. Chapter 3

summarized the literature presented in chapter 2 as well as the researcher's findings as an extension of the topic. The first and last chapters summarized the theme and demonstrated how the presented information connected. The first chapter introduced the theme, outlined the presentation, and presented the rationale for the topic. The final chapter also summarized the topic, but included additional information pertinent to the findings of the research.

This manuscript was written to address the specific concerns of the following stakeholders: School counseling practitioners, school counseling educators, and educators. The format and style chosen was appropriate for publication in a journal such as *Professional School Counseling*. Readers of this manuscript should note that, while the researcher attempted to fairly survey the available research on the topics covered, the subject matter related to some areas were scant in its dissemination. For example, on the topic of school counseling outcome alone, there was a paucity of relevant research (Center for School Counseling Outcome Research, n.d.; Sabella, 2006; Sink, 2005) and even less research on the impact of student-school counselor ratios (Carrell

& Carrell, 2006). This underscores the importance of conducting research in this underrepresented area.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

Leaders in education, commerce, and government determined that an educated populace was critical to national interests and consequently demanded higher standards for academic achievement (No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 2002; The Education Trust, 2005; U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 2006). Without students present in classes, required achievement levels were, according to studies, unlikely to be reached (Eamon, 2005; Lehr, Sinclair, & Christenson, 2004; Nichols, 2003; Roby, 2004). Due to national mandates, each state had established compulsory education laws to answer the following questions: At what age must a child begin to attend school? At what age does the obligation cease? Which absences are excused and which are considered truancy? (National Center for Mental Health Prevention and Youth Violence Prevention, 2007; National Center for School Engagement, 2005; Zinth, 2005).

The review of the literature revealed that school counselors were often viewed by fellow school staff as being the individuals within a school who had received education and supervised experience in making connections with students. These individuals also recognized

educational barriers, and implemented interventions that were designed to increase the likelihood of educational success (American School Counseling Association, 2005; Dimmitt, 2003; Martin, 2002). School counselors were in a key position to identify marginalized students who had chosen to not be in class, and to influence changes that would reengage them in pursuing their education.

This review of literature first surveyed absenteeism, its impact and causes. It then explored the connections that might exist between the roles that school counselors performed and students who were disengaged from the educational process and absent from class.

#### *The Impact of Absenteeism*

Whether referred to as *absenteeism*, *truancy*, or *attendance*, all of the above were concerned with whether or not students were appropriately in school. Poor school attendance and not being present in class have been linked to a lack of school success, including low academic achievement and dropping out of school (Jimerson, Egeland, Sroufe, & Carlson, 2000; Lehr, Sinclair, & Christenson, 2004; Roby, 2004; Suh, Suh, & Houston, 2007). A lack of education resulted in limited career options, increased rates of unemployment, and

reduced income for the individual student (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007; U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008; Veale, 2002). Past studies found that truancy might be correlated with increased problems in adult life including the need for psychiatric help, elevated crime rates, and a higher rate of early mortality (Baker, Sigmon, & Nugent, 2001; Berg & Jackson, 1985; Flakierska-Praquin, Lindstrom, & Gillberg, 1997).

Society also paid for this lack of attendance that often led to an inferior education. Businesses lost profits due to increased employee training costs and crime associated with populations that lacked adequate education and tax payers spent more because of increased welfare and law enforcement costs (Baker, Sigmon, & Nugent, 2001; McCray, 2006; Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention & Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, n.d.). An undereducated populace was also a concern for the nation in terms of national defense. Even in World War I, Ensign (1921) observed that

a dangerously large proportion of our young men had arrived at maturity with so little learning as to make it necessary to classify them, for army purposes, as illiterate

as compared to the educated who were much more flexible and when

in factory and laboratory, in camp and on the battlefield, he demonstrated his superiority over those whose opportunity for systematic training had been narrowly restricted or altogether lacking (p. 1).

Education was still viewed as being critical for a modern military force capable of defending the nation and its interests throughout the world (Carafano, 2008; Segal, Segal, & Wechsler, 2004; Shelton & Dalton, 2009).

The consequences for missing school reached in multiple directions. The impact of educational deficiency extended into an individual's life, well beyond the age when compulsory school attendance was no longer required by law. Society paid for increased expenses as well as suffering losses due to failed potential. With missing school and the resulting outcomes of such significance, it would be expected that absenteeism and related causes would be a focus of much study. Such has been the case.

#### *Factors Related to Attendance*

The cause of students missing school was a complex issue. It resulted from an interaction between multiple factors and opinions differed as to which ones were really significant (Clement, Gwynne, & Younkin, 2001; Kearney, 2001; Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency

Prevention & Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, n.d.). As many as 90 possible absenteeism-related factors were identified by Bimler and Kirkland (2001). Different systems have been used to organize and reduce the complexity of research findings (Baker et al., 2001; Bell, Rosen, & Dynlacht, 1994; Wagstaff, Combs, & Jarvis, 2000). For the sake of function and simplicity, this paper used the categories of *school*, *family*, and *student* proposed by Bell et al. to group factors that were shown to contribute to absenteeism.

*School-related factors.*

Schools, themselves, have been shown to contribute to the lack of attendance in a variety of ways. Lower attendance rates were experienced by schools with larger enrollments and more mobile student populations (Branham, 2004; Henry, 2007; Wagstaff et al., 2000). Higher absenteeism was also experienced in schools that were in poor repair, had inadequate custodial care, used temporary buildings (Branham), portable classrooms, or used classrooms with increased levels of carbon dioxide (Shendell et al., 2004).

School environment was not limited to attributes of the physical plant. The social environment also impacted attendance behavior. Students tended to avoid school when

they did not feel safe, whether they had been victimized themselves or only witnessed other students being bullied or victimized (Benbenishty, Astor, Zeira, & Vinokur, 2002; Eaton et al., 2006; Henry, 2007). In the classroom itself, Wagstaff, Combs, and Jarvis (2000) found that students were more likely to attend classes they enjoyed and found interesting, relaxed, and interactive, although teachers tended to be unaware that such classroom characteristics might influence attendance. Even though teachers of classes with higher attendance rates had high expectations for their students and worked them hard, they were perceived as caring and patient, were likely to explain things well and relate content to real life, and allowed creativity and open expression.

This information was consistent with a description of schools where absenteeism was less of an issue provided by Bryk and Thum (1989) twenty years ago. In such schools they found the environment safe, orderly, structured and focused on learning; staff members were truly interested in the students and engaged with them; students were at similar levels in their academic coursework (and yet accommodations were made where differences existed); and adult authority was seen by students as fair and effective.

*Family-related factors.*

General characteristics of homes and parents have been explored to look for patterns linked to absenteeism. These studies found that attendance seemed to reflect the extent to which parents were committed to, and involved in, their child's education and the value parents placed on the educational process. After school supervision, not keeping students out of school to work, to care for a family member, or to go on a vacation would be examples of behavior exhibited by parents invested in the education of their children (Constantino, 2007; Dimmitt, 2003; Henry, 2007; Kearney, 2001; Lehr et al., 2004; Reid, 2005b). Family relationship patterns and how parents and their children interacted have also been recognized as factors related to attendance problems (Ham, 2004; Joronen, & Åstedt-Kurki, 2005; Kearney, 2001; Riding & Baker, 2003). And finally, children from lower socioeconomic families were found to have increased rates of truancy (Shendell et al., 2004; St-Hilaire, 2002; Wagstaff et al., 2000).

*Student-related factors.*

Students were found to be unique. Each came to school with a different package of skills, abilities, experiences, interests, and expectations. As with schools

and families, contributing factors were varied and interactive, creating a tangle of issues difficult to unravel or study in isolation. The following clusters of student-related factors were considered: age; health; ethnicity and race; academic factors; and employment.

Attendance problems appeared to be unevenly distributed across student age and grade level. Wagstaff et al. (2000) found that students from lower socioeconomic families and Hispanic students had the greatest decline in attendance with lowest attendance rates occurring in the ninth grade. Garrison (2006) found that truancy rates increased progressively until the tenth grade. Greatest increases occurred at points of transition, from fifth to sixth (95%) and from eighth to ninth (76%) with the majority of truancy occurring in the sixth to ninth grade range. Over half of truants reported they were not in school because they either missed the bus or didn't feel like going to school. The latter reason was used progressively more often with an increase in student age.

Many studies have concluded that health is potentially the greatest individual factor related to school absenteeism (Campbell & Wright, 2005; Fein et al., 1999; Kearney & Bensaheb, 2006). This held true,

especially for students with more chronic or long term conditions such as anxiety disorders (Hansen, Sanders, Massaro, & Last, 1998), Asperger's Disorder (Luiselli, 2000), asthma (Taras & Potts-Datema, 2005), cancer (Vance & Eiser, 2002), and with issues related to drug use (Henry, 2007). However, more than twenty years ago, Weitzman et al. (1986) found that providing increased health care to middle school students with higher rates of absenteeism did not significantly reduce the number of days missed. The authors concluded that health problems were really only a minor issue compared to other contributing factors such as "educational failure, negative peer pressure, and schools burdened with a student population weighted with social and economic adversity" (p. 320).

Ethnicity and race were additional variables that have been examined to determine their correlation with attendance. Attendance data have not generally been collected in a way that provides convenient access by race and ethnicity (Lyon & Cotler, 2007). In general, though, students from minority groups were more likely to have issues with truancy. Variables of race, as well as living situation, had a greater correlation with truancy for tenth-grade students than for eighth, while the other

variables analyzed were basically the same between these two grade levels (Henry, 2007). Different factors might have contributed to this difference. St-Hilaire (2002) observed in surveys of eighth and ninth grade students of Mexican origin that most viewed education as highly desirable and the way to success in the United States. However, except for those who perceived themselves as fluently bilingual and those from a high socioeconomic family, the students who had lived here longer and become more acculturated tended to form lower educational expectations for themselves. The author suggested that the resulting high attrition rates for these students during the high school years might have occurred because of an increase in experiences related to discrimination, academic tracking, pressures to conform, and identity formation, as well as an increased awareness of these experiences. Perhaps, as found in one study of minority college students (Walton & Cohen, 2007), minority high school students might be more likely to generalize these experiences to uncertainty about belonging in an academic environment and to perceiving events in ways that support their uncertainty.

Studies found that students were more likely to attend school when they had greater abilities in skills

necessary for school success, such as reading and mathematics performance (Lamdin, 1996), and had good habits that contributed to school success, such as consistency in assignment completion, and classroom participation (Lehr et al., 2004). Other education-focused correlates related to a lower likelihood of truancy included participation in a college preparatory track, strong academic achievement, and having plans to graduate from high school and attend college (Henry, 2007).

Student employment and resulting school-work conflicts have been another target of research, resulting in a variety of information (Zierold, Garman, & Anderson, 2005). A correlate of good attendance was working only a few hours or not having a job at all (Henry, 2007), but when students worked 30 or more hours, they tended to have more absences (Wagstaff et al., 2000). It was important to balance this information by noting that students with jobs appeared to gain in economic self-efficacy: a sense of control over their economic potential for the future. If present in the eleventh grade, economic self-efficacy seemed to have a major effect on students in their senior year in terms of educational ambitions and increased the likelihood that

they would take steps to achieve them (Grabowski, Call, & Mortimer, 2001).

With such a profusion of contributing factors, it may be seen why designing interventions to impact truancy is so difficult and challenging. If attendance was perceived too narrowly and conceptualized from too limited a point of view it was unlikely to lead to the creation or selection of interventions that bring about academic success. A more productive approach might be to view attendance as the symptom of a larger and deeper issue, rather than the issue itself (Kearney, 2001; Lehr et al., 2004; Wagstaff et al., 2000). Appropriate strategies would be more likely selected when truancy was viewed as an indicator of a process of disengagement from school; a process which, if taken to its conclusion, would end with the student dropping out. Conceptualized as such, school attendance seemed very closely tied to the focus of school counseling.

#### *Linking School Attendance and School Counseling*

School counseling and guidance began in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century out of a desire to provide a more effective and systematic way of connecting young people with appropriate occupations (American School Counselor Association, 2005; Davis, 1969; Gladding, 2004; Gysbers &

Henderson, 2006). Over the next several decades, the focus of counseling and guidance widened to include educational success, personal development, therapy, and crisis response, as well as a variety of administrative assignments (Carrell & Carrell, 2006; Gysbers & Henderson, 2006). As early as the late 1960s, concern was being expressed over the need to identify what a school guidance counselor was and to clarify what it was that she or he did (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006). During the 1970s, work began on development of a *comprehensive* model for school counseling that would avoid the pitfall of becoming a non-descript, piecemeal, and locally defined assignment (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006; Gysbers, 2004). According to Gysbers and Henderson (2001), guidance and counseling evolved from a position, to a service, and finally to a program.

Through this process of change, improvement in attendance was mentioned as one of the outcomes of counseling and guidance appropriately delivered within a school (Gysbers, 2004). Wrenn (1962) provided background about the connection between school counseling and school attendance. Prior to 1960 responsibility for school attendance was typically seen as belonging in the domain of the guidance program. In 1960 it was (as were the

areas of school health, school psychological work, and school social work) officially declared a separate student personnel service from that of guidance by the Council of Chief State School Officers. To further distance themselves from any confusion as to responsibility, the Commission on Guidance in American Schools proposed that the word "guidance" be dropped from the position title of guidance counselor. Perhaps for a similar reason, attendance, since then, was rarely used as an indicator of successful counseling programs. And yet, the many connections with attendance-related issues pointed to school counseling as a potential way to impact students who are choosing to avoid school.

#### *Role of Counselor Related to School Attendance*

According to the American School Counselors Association (2005), school counselors were to be leaders in bringing about change within schools, "advocating for the academic success of every student" (p. 24). Counselors may be tempted, however, to make academic achievement too narrowly their target (D. Brown & Trusty, 2005b). Other aspects of school, such as attendance, may also provide a significant indication of needing additional help. Some have viewed poor attendance as one of the most apparent signs that a student is disengaging

from the educational process (Fashola & Slavin, 1998; Lehr et al., 2004). While Gysbers and Henderson (2006) considered responsibility for monitoring or entering attendance records an inappropriate counselor task, meeting with students who had attendance issues would be appropriate.

According to Bazemore, Stinchcomb, and Leip (2004), counseling was one of the three most common interventions used for truancy. Although this was one obvious way that counselors attend to truancy, it was only one of many ways they connected with non-attending students. This paper revisited the categories suggested by Bell, Rosen, and Dynlacht (1994), this time looking for connections between attendance-related factors and the role of the school counselor.

*Counselor role and school-related factors.*

The role played by the counselor within a school was perceived as unique and may have made a significant contribution to the health and wellbeing of schools. Dollarhide, Smith, and Lemberger (2007) stated that "counselors look at the causes and issues that lead to negative behavior; principals look at the effects" (p. 360). It is understandable, then, why students attending schools with a more fully developed guidance program were

more likely to feel good about the education they received, to perceive the school as having a safer and more positive environment with better relationships between teachers and students resulting in higher levels of achievement (Lapan, Gysbers, & Sun, 1997; Lapan, Gysbers, & Petroski, 2003), all factors related to students coming to school and going to classes. Because of this relationship with attendance-related factors, Gysbers and Henderson (2006) viewed attendance information as a useful measurement in planning and evaluating a guidance and counseling program.

Counselors provided data and analyzed data to aid in guiding schools to become more attractive for students and effective at meeting student needs (Walz & Bleuer, 2002). They consulted with teachers to meet individual student needs. They provided training in the use of strategies that increased the likelihood that students felt comfortable in the classroom environment (American School Counselor Association, 2005). Most importantly, they led the staff in building positive relationships with the students, a characteristic emphasized in the programs that were most successful at reaching at-risk students (Fashola & Slavin, 1998).

*Counselor role and family-related factors.*

Because of the vital role that families played in student attendance and achievement, reaching out to parents was an important part of helping students experience success. Engaging parents by strengthening connections between the school and home has been identified as critical to changing unacceptable levels of truancy (T. L. Brown, Henggeler, Schoenwald, Brondino, & Pickrel, 1999; Henry, 2007) especially when done early, at the elementary school level (McCluskey, Bynum, & Patchin, 2004). Campbell and Wright (2005) stated that connecting with parents involved more than a quick, impersonal phone call. It required high enough prioritization to fund adequate staffing with time to interact and build a relationship with the parents. While family counseling has not typically been a responsibility of school counselors, the impact of parenting on student success has been suggested as a justification to expand school-based counseling in that direction (Evans & Carter, 1997). Counselors were the ones with training and skills needed to make connections with parents and provided support for parents to learn and use more effective parenting skills.

*Counselor role and student-related factors.*

Counselors have sought to impact issues that affect student behavior correlated with school success. Gilbert Wren (1962) suggested that

the primary emphasis in counseling students be placed on the developmental needs and decision points in the lives of the total range of students . . . with the major goal of counseling being that of increased self-responsibility and on increased maturity in decision-making upon the part of the student (p. 109).

This counsel was reflected in the American School Counseling Association (2004) national standards for students. While not specifically stated as such, attendance was closely connected to several of the standards. For example, standards that dealt with helping students learn and practice responsibility (A:A3.1), dependability (A:A3.4), motivation, and self-directedness (A:B1.1, A.B1.7), and helping them understand links between performance and success (A:B2.6) addressed characteristics that made a vital contribution to a student's commitment to be in class. The importance of early intervention (Lehr et al., 2004) and an awareness of patterns and trigger points (Campbell & Wright, 2005) as well as possible causes of chronic absences, such as

health issues related to anxiety about school (Hansen et al., 1998), would also be within a counselor's role.

Other approaches represented in programs that had been successful at connecting at-risk students with schools included setting reasonable and possible goals for their future, as well as facilitating connections with internships, colleges, and positive job experiences (Fashola & Slavin, 1998; Grabowski et al., 2001). Related to attendance, one study found that "an optimistic view about the future was found to be the most critical factor in decreasing the school dropout rate" for students who had not experienced much academic success, and concluded that "this result may imply that career-based classroom guidance before the eighth grade geared toward developing an optimistic career plan for the future is critical for school counselors" (Suh et al., 2007, p. 202). The authors suggested that counselors be aware of students' future goals, and seek to improve students' beliefs about their potential for the future when self-expectations were low. As a less extreme and earlier form of disengagement (Fashola & Slavin, 1998; Lehr et al., 2004), skipping classes and missing school might be diminished by counselor attention to truants' goals and beliefs about their future.

Finally, a survey of adolescents found that what they most desired in an adult helper was to feel respected as individuals. This conveyed the message that they were valued and their opinions and perspectives important. Also valued was sensing that the adult had time to listen and demonstrated openness (Martin, Romas, Medford, Leffert, & Hatcher, 2006). Efforts that were personalized and sought to meet the unique needs of the individual student were the most successful at impacting truancy (McCray, 2006). Research has consistently found the working relationship or therapeutic alliance to be the best predictor of successful outcomes in any helping relationship (Okun, 2002; Prochaska & Norcross, 2003; Safran, 2000). School counselors were the staff members in schools with the training and experience, the time and commitment to provide the conditions needed to establish such an alliance and thus, be in a position to influence students to seriously consider how missing school was adversely impacting their lives.

### *Conclusion*

School attendance is recognized as critical to a student's academic success and high school completion. High School graduation and being prepared academically are decisive factors in determining the options a student

will have from which to choose future plans and goals. An inadequate education costs the individual and is a loss to the community and nation.

As leaders, counselors are in a unique position to identify general school deficiencies and needs that influence attendance and advocate for solutions to these issues. They might play a key role in strengthening connections between parents and the educational process of their children. School counselors may be a vital resource in reaching individual students by developing relationships and helping students to perceive class attendance as in their best interest.

School attendance is vital to individuals and society. School counselors are in a position with potential to influence whether or not students are in school. It seems incongruous that there is such a paucity of research directly related to the efficacy of counselor interventions that impact student engagement in learning (Carrell & Carrell, 2006; Center for School Counseling Outcome Research, n.d.; Sabella, 2006; Sink, 2005) and even less research on the impact of student-school counselor ratios (). With the current focus on accountability in education, and the demand for data that demonstrates effectiveness, it appears that this topic,

the connection between what school counselors do and how students respond related to engaging in their education, is one ripe for investigation. Such research will not only make a difference for the student, but will also justify the investment in adequate staffing of school counselors.

*References for Chapter 2*

- American School Counseling Association. (2004). *ASCA national standards for students*. Retrieved from [http://www.uschamber.com/publications/reports/education\\_reform.htm](http://www.uschamber.com/publications/reports/education_reform.htm)
- American School Counselor Association. (2005). *The ASCA national model: A framework for school counseling programs* (2nd ed.). Alexandria, VA: Author.
- Baker, M. L., Sigmon, J. N., & Nugent, M. E. (2001). *Truancy reduction: Keeping students in school*. Juvenile Justice Bulletin. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Retrieved April 15, 2007, from <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/188947.pdf>
- Bazemore, G., Stinchcomb, J. B., & Leip, L. A. (2004). Scared smart or bored straight? Testing deterrence logic in an evaluation of police-led truancy intervention. *JQ: Justice Quarterly*, 21, 269-299.
- Bell, A. J., Rosen, L. A., & Dynlacht, D. (1994). Truancy intervention. *The Journal of Research and Development in Education*, 27, 203-211.

- Benbenishty, R., Astor, R. A., Zeira, A., & Vinokur, A. D. (2002). Perceptions of violence and fear of school attendance among junior high school students in Israel. *Social Work Research, 26*, 71-87.
- Berg, I., & Jackson, A. (1985). Teenage school refusers grow up: A follow-up study of 168 subjects, ten years on average after in-patient treatment. *British Journal of Psychiatry, 147*, 366-370.
- Bimler, D., & Kirkland, J. (2001). School truants and truancy motivation sorted out with multidimensional scaling. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 16*, 75-102.
- Branham, D. (2004). The wise man builds his house upon the rock: The effects of inadequate school building infrastructure on student attendance. *Social Science Quarterly, 85*, 1112-1128.
- Brown, D., & Trusty, J. (2005b). School counselors, comprehensive school counseling programs, and academic achievement: Are school counselors promising more than they can deliver? *Professional School Counseling, 9*, 1-8.
- Brown, T. L., Henggeler, S. W., Schoenwald, S. K., Brondino, M. J., & Pickrel, S. G. (1999). Multisystemic treatment of substance abusing and dependent juvenile delinquents: Effects on school

attendance at posttreatment and 6-month follow-up. *Children's Services: Social Policy, Research and Practice*, 2, 81-93.

Bryk, A. S., & Thum, Y. M. (1989). *The effects of high school organization on dropping out: An exploratory investigation* (No. CPRE-RR-012). Washington, DC: Center for Policy Research in Education.

Campbell, D., & Wright, J. (2005). Rethinking welfare school-attendance policies. *Social Service Review*, 79, 2-28.

Carafano, J. J. (2008). On teaching war: The future of professional military education. Retrieved March 15, 2009 from <http://www.heritage.org/press/commentary/ed080108d.cfm>

Carrell, S. E., & Carrell, S. A. (2006). Do lower student to counselor ratios reduce school disciplinary problems? *Contributions to Economic Analysis & Policy*, 5(1), Article 11. Available at <http://www.bepress.com/bejeap/contributions/vol5/iss1/art11>

Center for School Counseling Outcome Research (n. d.). Retrieved March 16, 2009, from <http://www.umass.edu/schoolcounseling/mission.htm>

Clement, R., Gwynne, T., & Younkin, W. (2001). Attendance waivers evaluation report. Retrieved March 23, 2008,

from [http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/research\\_evaluation/Evaluations/Attendwaiveeval.pdf](http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/research_evaluation/Evaluations/Attendwaiveeval.pdf)

- Constantino, S. M. (2007). Keeping parents involved through high school. *Education Digest*, 73, 57-61.
- Davis, H. V. (1969). *Frank Parsons: Prophet, innovator, counselor*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University.
- Dimmitt, C. (2003). Transforming school counseling practice through collaboration and the use of data: A study of academic failure in high school. *Professional School Counseling*, 6, 340.
- Dollarhide, C. T., Smith, A. T., & Lemberger, M. E. (2007). Critical incidents in the development of supportive principals: Facilitating school counselor-principal relationships. *Professional School Counseling*, 10, 360-369.
- Eamon, M. K. (2005). Social-demographic, school, neighborhood, and parenting influences on the academic achievement of Latino young adolescents. *Journal of Youth & Adolescence*, 34, 163-174.
- Eaton, D. K., Kann, L., Kinchen, S., Ross, J., Hawkins, J., Harris, W. A., et al. (2006). Youth risk behavior surveillance - United States, 2005. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 55(SS-5).

- Ensign, F. C. (1921). *Compulsory school attendance and child labor*. Retrieved February 16, 2008, from [http://books.google.com/books?id=KN9JAAAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=ensign&ei=pOLqR8j\\_NoIStAPhj9zKAw](http://books.google.com/books?id=KN9JAAAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=ensign&ei=pOLqR8j_NoIStAPhj9zKAw)
- Evans, W. P., & Carter, M. J. (1997). Urban School-Based Counseling: Role Definition, Practice Applications, and Training Implications. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 75*, 366-374
- Fashola, O. S., & Slavin, R. E. (1998). Effective dropout prevention and college attendance programs for students placed at risk. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 3*, 159-183.
- Fein, D. J., Lee, W. S., & Schofield, E. C. (1999). The abc evaluation: Do welfare recipients' children have a school attendance problem? Retrieved February 10, 2008, from <http://www.abtassoc.com/reports/sch5.pdf>
- Flakierska-Praquin, N., Lindstrom, M., & Gillberg, C. (1997). School phobia with separation anxiety disorder: A comparative 20- to 29-year follow-up study of 35 school refusers. *Comprehensive Psychiatry, 38*, 17-22.
- Garrison, A. H. (2006). "I missed the bus": School grade transition, the Wilmington Truancy Center, and

reasons youth don't go to school. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, 4, 204-212.

Gladding, S. T. (2004). *Counseling: A comprehensive profession* (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

Grabowski, L. J. S., Call, K. T., & Mortimer, J. T. (2001). Global and economic self-efficacy in the educational attainment process. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 64, 164-179.

Gysbers, N. C., & Henderson, P. (2001). Comprehensive guidance and counseling programs: A rich history and a bright future. *Professional School Counseling*, 4, 246-256.

Gysbers, N. C. (2004). Comprehensive guidance and counseling programs: The evolution of accountability. *Professional School Counseling*, 8, 1-14.

Gysbers, N. C., & Henderson, P. (2006). *Developing and managing your school guidance and counseling program* (4th ed.). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Ham, B. D. (2004). The effects of divorce and remarriage on the academic achievement of high school seniors. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 42, 159-178.

- Hansen, C., Sanders, S. L., Massaro, S., & Last, C. G. (1998). Predictors of severity of absenteeism in children with anxiety-based school refusal. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, 27*, 246-254.
- Henry, K. L. (2007). Who's skipping school: Characteristics of truants in 8th and 10th grade. *Journal of School Health, 77*, 29-35.
- Jimerson, S., Egeland, B., Sroufe, L. A., & Carlson, B. (2000). A prospective longitudinal study of high school dropouts: Examining multiple predictors across development. *Journal of School Psychology, 38*, 525-548.
- Joronen, K., & Åstedt-Kurki, P. (2005). Adolescents' experiences of familial involvement in their peer relations and school attendance. *Primary Health Care Research & Development, 6*, 190-198.
- Kearney, C. A. (2001). *School refusal behavior in youth: A functional approach to assessment and treatment*. Washington, DC, US: American Psychological Association.
- Kearney, C. A., & Bensaheb, A. (2006). School absenteeism and school refusal behavior: A review and suggestions for school-based health professionals. *Journal of School Health, 76*, 3-7.

- Lamdin, D. J. (1996). Evidence of student attendance as an independent variable in education production functions. *Journal of Educational Research, 89*, 155-162.
- Lapan, R. T., Gysbers, N. C., & Petroski, G. F. (2003). Helping seventh graders be safe and successful: A statewide study of the impact of comprehensive guidance and counseling programs. *Professional School Counseling, 6*(3), 186.
- Lapan, R. T., Gysbers, N. C., & Sun, Y. (1997). The impact of more fully implemented guidance programs on the school experiences of high school students: A statewide evaluation study. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 75*, 292-302.
- Lehr, C. A., Sinclair, M. F., & Christenson, S. L. (2004). Addressing student engagement and truancy prevention during the elementary school years: A replication study of the check & connect model. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 9*, 279-301.
- Luiselli, J. K. (2000). Case demonstration of a fading procedure to promote school attendance of a child. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 2*, 47-52.

- Lyon, A. R., & Cotler, S. (2007). Toward reduced bias and increased utility in the assessment of school refusal behavior: The case for diverse samples and evaluations of context. *Psychology in the Schools, 44*, 551-565.
- Martin, P. J. (2002). Transforming school counseling: A national perspective. *Theory Into Practice, 41*, 148.
- Martin, J., Romas, M., Medford, M., Leffert, N., & Hatcher, S. L. (2006). Adult helping qualities preferred by adolescents. *Adolescence, 41*, 127-140.
- McCluskey, C. P., Bynum, T. S., & Patchin, J. W. (2004). Reducing chronic absenteeism: An assessment of an early truancy initiative. *Crime Delinquency, 50*, 214-234.
- McCray, E. D. (2006). It's 10 A.M.: Do you know where your children are? *Intervention in School & Clinic, 42*, 30-33.
- National Center for Mental Health Prevention and Youth Violence Prevention. (2007). *Reducing truancy*. Retrieved December 30, 2007, from [http://www.promoteprevent.org/Publications/center-briefs/Truancy\\_Prevention\\_Brief.pdf](http://www.promoteprevent.org/Publications/center-briefs/Truancy_Prevention_Brief.pdf)

- National Center for School Engagement. (2005). *Facts on truancy*. Retrieved April 15, 2007, from <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/truancy/pdf/FactsonTruancy.pdf>
- Nichols, J. D. (2003). Prediction indicators for students failing the state of indiana high school graduation exam. *Preventing School Failure, 47*, 112-120.
- No child left behind act of 2001, Pub. L. No. 107-110, 115 Stat. 1425 (2002).
- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, & Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools. (n.d.). *Truancy prevention: Empowering students, schools, and communities to succeed*. Retrieved April 15, 2007, from <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/truancy/>
- Okun, B. F. (2002). *Effective helping: Interviewing and counseling techniques* (6th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Prochaska, J. O., Norcross, John C. (2003). *Systems of psychotherapy: A transtheoretical analysis* (5th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Reid, K. (2005b). A comparison between inspection reports on the management of school attendance throughout the education service. *Pastoral Care, (December 2005)*, 31-41.

- Riding, R. J., & Baker, G. (2003). Cognitive style and school attendance, conduct behaviour and attainment. *Research in Education, (May 2003)*, 99-103.
- Roby, D. E. (2004). Research on school attendance and student achievement: A study of Ohio schools. *Educational Research Quarterly, 28*, 3-14.
- Sabella, R. A. (2006). The ASCA National School Counseling Research Center: A brief history and agenda. *Professional School Counseling, 9*, 412-415.
- Safran, J. D., Muran, J. C. (2000). *Negotiating the therapeutic alliance: A relational treatment guide*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Segal, D. R., & Segal, M. W. (2004). America's military population. *Population Bulletin, (December, 2004)*. Retrieved March 15, 2009 from [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_qa3761/is\\_200412/ai\\_n9468428/pg\\_3?tag=content;coll](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3761/is_200412/ai_n9468428/pg_3?tag=content;coll)
- Shelton, H., & Dalton, J. H. (2009). Strong military needs early education focus. Retrieved March 15, 2009 from <http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0109/17180.html>
- Shendell, D. G., Prill, R., Fisk, W. J., Apte, M. G., Blake, D., & Faulkner, D. (2004). Associations between classroom CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations and student

- attendance in Washington and Idaho. *Indoor Air*, 14, 333-341.
- Sink, C. A. (2005). Comprehensive school counseling programs and academic achievement--a rejoinder to brown and trusty. *Professional School Counseling*, 9, 9-11.
- St-Hilaire, A. (2002). The social adaptation of children of Mexican immigrants: Educational aspirations beyond junior high school. *Social Science Quarterly*, 83, 1026-1043.
- Suh, S., Suh, J., & Houston, I. (2007). Predictors of categorical at-risk high school dropouts. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 85, 196-203.
- Taras, H., & Potts-Datema, W. (2005). Childhood asthma and student performance at school. *Journal of School Health*, 75, 296-312.
- The Education Trust, (2005). Stalled in secondary: A look at student achievement since the No Child Left Behind Act. Retrieved November 23, 2008 from <http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/77670E50-188F-4AA8-8729-555115389E18/0/StalledInSecondary.pdf>
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2007). Current population survey: Annual social and economic supplement. Retrieved

March 24, 2008, from [http://pubdb3.census.gov/macro/032007/perinc/new03\\_001.htm](http://pubdb3.census.gov/macro/032007/perinc/new03_001.htm)

U.S. Chamber of Commerce (2006). Education reform: Insight into business community's views about the U.S. education system. Available from [http://www.uschamber.com/publications/reports/education\\_reform.htm](http://www.uschamber.com/publications/reports/education_reform.htm)

U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2008). Household data annual averages: 7. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 25 years and over by educational attainment, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity. Retrieved March 24, 2008 from <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat7.pdf>

Vance, Y. H., & Eiser, C. (2002). The school experience of the child with cancer. *Child: Care, Health & Development, 28*, 5-19.

Veale, J. R. (2002). The cost of dropping out of school in Iowa [Electronic Version]. Retrieved March 24, 2008, from [http://www.learningalternatives.net/Costs\\_of\\_Dropping\\_Out.pdf](http://www.learningalternatives.net/Costs_of_Dropping_Out.pdf)

Wagstaff, M., Combs, L., & Jarvis, B. (2000). Solving high school attendance problems: A case study. *Journal of At-Risk Issues, 7*, 21-30.

- Walton, G. M., & Cohen, G. L. (2007). A question of belonging: Race, social fit, and achievement. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 92*, 82-96.
- Walz, G. R., & Bleuer, J. C. (2002). *Scientifically based research: What does it mean for counselors?* ERIC Digest. Greensboro, NC: ERIC Clearinghouse on Counseling and Student Services. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED470604)
- Weitzman, M., Alpert, J. J., Klerman, L. V., Kayne, H., Lamb, G. A., Geromini, K. R., et al. (1986). High-risk youth and health: The case of excessive school absence. *Pediatrics, 78*, 313-322.
- Wrenn, C. G. (1962). *The counselor in a changing world*. Washington, D.C.: American Personnel and Guidance Association.
- Zierold, K. M., Garman, S., & Anderson, H. A. (2005). A comparison of school performance and behaviors among working and nonworking high school students. *Family and Community Health, 28*, 212-224.
- Zinth, K. (2005). Truancy and habitual truancy: Examples of state definitions [Electronic Version]. *State Notes*. Retrieved April 15, 2007, from <http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/61/16/6116.doc>

### Chapter 3: School Attendance as an Indicator of School Counseling Effectiveness

Public Law 110-88, the "No Child Left Behind Act of 2001", was an effort on the part of the U.S. government to improve public education and increase student success. It sought "To close the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility, and choice, so that no child is left behind" (No child left behind act of 2001, 2002, p. 1). The bill placed accountability on states by requiring them to demonstrate that improvement was actually happening among schools in a way that reached down to academic achievement for individual students. Included in the list of academic achievement indicators from which states might select as a way to demonstrate compliance, was rate of attendance.

#### *Focus on School Attendance*

Attending school has been viewed as critical to achieving the educational goals of learning and academic achievement (Lehr, Sinclair, & Christenson, 2004; Roby, 2004). Poor attendance has been viewed as an indicator that students were disengaged from school (Fashola & Slavin, 1998; Lehr et al., 2004) and was a significant predictor that the student might eventually quit school

(Jimerson, Egeland, Sroufe, & Carlson, 2000; Suh, Suh, & Houston, 2007). Evidence suggested that the lack of a high school diploma was linked to higher unemployment (U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008) and lower income (Veale, 2002) eventually costing the government and tax payers in a variety of ways (McCray, 2006). School attendance was therefore perceived as a critical factor for national economics, community interests, as well as individual success.

According to Bimler and Kirkland (2001), there were at least 90 possible factors identified as contributing to truancy. These factors may each be placed in one of the three categories suggested by Bell, Rosen, and Dynlacht (1994): school-related, family-related, and student-related. School counselors may provide services that address each of these categories.

In the first category, schools, counselors may seek to influence issues related to school safety (Benbenishty, Astor, Zeira, & Vinokur, 2002; Eaton et al., 2006; Henry, 2007; Lapan, Gysbers, & Petroski, 2001) and increase connections between students and staff (Bryk & Thum, 1989; Wagstaff, Combs, & Jarvis, 2000). In the second category of family-related factors, school counselors may seek to educate parents regarding the

vital role they play in shaping the future of their children through decisions they make (Henry; Kearney, 2001; Lehr et al., 2004; Reid, 2005b) and the ways they interact with them (Kearney & Silverman, 1995). They may work, through interaction with political and community resources, to improve the socioeconomic conditions that adversely impact student success (Fein, Lee, & Schofield, 1999; Lamdin, 1996; St-Hilaire, 2002). And finally, in the third category of individual student-related factors, counselors may develop programs to bridge transition points, a critical time for attendance issues (Wagstaff et al., 2000), and be familiar with and watchful for signs of disengagement (Campbell & Wright, 2005; Fein et al.; Garrison, 2006; Henry) and conditions that cause it (Hansen, Sanders, Massaro, & Last, 1998; Henry; Lamdin; Lehr et al., 2004; Luiselli, 2000; Taras & Potts-Datema, 2005; Vance & Eiser, 2002; Wagstaff et al.). Counselors may adopt effective programs that meet the identified needs of students (Harris & Franklin, 2003; Henry; Kearney; McCray, 2006; Suh et al., 2007; Walton & Cohen, 2007), thus increasing the likelihood that they would succeed in school and be in school.

Counseling, itself is recognized as a critical intervention in reconnecting truant students with the

educational process (Bazemore, Stinchcomb, & Leip, 2004; Gysbers & Henderson, 2006; Kearney, 2001). Counselors are in a position to provide the respect and openness teens say they desire from helping adults (Martin, Romas, Medford, Leffert, & Hatcher, 2006) and have been taught how to establish the therapeutic relationships that best predicts therapeutic success (Okun, 2002; Prochaska & Norcross, 2003; Safran, 2000). With all these connections, attendance rates may be a way to measure a counseling program's effectiveness.

#### *Attendance as Indicator of Counseling Success*

Providing evidence of effectiveness has been a factor in shaping school counseling (Gysbers, 2004; Lapan, 2001) and is even more important now with an increased demand for accountability (D. Brown & Trusty, 2005a). School counselors need to not only explain what they do, but also to answer the question "How are students different as a result of what we do?" (American School Counselor Association, 2005, p. 9). Some measurements, such as school climate and student success, tend to be subjective and difficult to standardize. Other measurements, such as rates for dropping out, require long periods of time before outcomes are realized (D. Brown & Trusty, 2005b). On the other hand, attendance is

concrete and somewhat immediate with readily obtainable data.

Finding a way to quantify counseling in order to determine if it is related to attendance is a challenging task. Although every school has some form of guidance program (Gysbers, 2004), and not all counselors do the same thing (Amatea & Clark, 2005), counselor density, the number of students served by each school counselor, definitely impacts what may be accomplished within a guidance program. According to Gysbers and Henderson (2006)

An essential piece of quantitative data is the current school counselor-student ratio. During the discussions of the model program, everyone involved may be starry-eyed about the possibilities, but the realities of caseload must be ever present (p. 95).

Gilbert Wrenn (1962) suggested a maximum ratio of 300 students per counselor. The Northwest Association of Accredited Schools (2008) states that "The ratio of students to those who provide guidance and counseling services does not exceed 400 students to those respective individuals" (p.28) in schools seeking accreditation. A study of school districts in California who had some form of counseling program in the 2001-2002 school year determined that an adequate ratio of students per high

school counselor would be 364-to-1 (California Department of Education, 2003). According to the American School Counseling Association (n.d.), the recommended number of students for each counselor is 250, kindergarten through twelfth grade. They report that in the 2005-2006 school year the average K-12 ratio by state was 472:1 with a range from 920:1 for California to 60:1 for Rhode Island. The k-8 ratios ranged from 4,099:1 (Minnesota) to 79:1 (Rhode Island) and for 9-12 the range was from 488:1 (Arizona) to 40:1 (Rhode Island).

The wide variability in school counselor ratios among states would seem to provide an inviting opportunity to investigate patterns of correlation between student-to-counselor ratios and attendance rates by comparing states. However, each state has different goals and methods for measuring attendance and defining truancy (Viadero, 2004). Making comparisons using mixed grade levels also introduces problems because of differences in contributing factors and student-to-counselor ratios. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, data for only one state, the state of Oregon, was used for a by-school comparison between attendance rates and ratio of students per school counselor at the high school (9-12) level.

Attendance was conceptualized as a proxy for school-avoidance behavior representing a variety of student factors including factors known to be impacted by counselor functions. The student-to-counselor ratio represented an expectation that, in general, the fewer the students served by each counselor, the greater the likelihood that individual students might be impacted by counselors performing their tasks. Factors known to correlate with attendance rates, as well as other potential correlates, were included in the study in order to partial out their impact, should a relationship be found between attendance and student-to-counselor ratio. These included the percentage of students on free and reduced lunch, which reflects the average socioeconomic status (SES) of the students in the school; the overall teaching and administrative staffing ratios; the average daily enrollment; and the population of the community served by the school.

Considering the multiple ways that school counseling might connect with school attendance, and the indications that staffing of guidance and counseling programs influences program effectiveness, this study sought to determine if the ratio of students to school counselor correlated to attendance rates for high schools in the

state of Oregon for the 2004-2005 school year. The null hypothesis stated that there would be no significant correlation between the two.

#### *Method*

Building data for the 2004-2005 school year, as reported by the individual schools to the Oregon Department of Education (ODE), was retrieved from the ODE website on June 1, 2008 from several databases (*StudentsEligiblefor FreeReducedLunch, Rep Card data 0405, InstructionalSchool StaffDetail, and Non-InstructionalSchoolStaffDetail*). The *InstructionalSchoolStaffDetail* database listed a total of 1,834 public and private schools for that year. Data were extracted for the 2004-2005 school year and combined by matching school institutional identification numbers. A spreadsheet was created that included attendance rates; average daily membership; free and reduced lunch rates; and counts for counselors, teachers, and administrators. Ratios for students to counselors, teachers, and administrators were calculated from data in this spreadsheet. The best available approximation for population data was for July 1 of 2007 and was retrieved from <http://www.pdx.edu/prc/annualorpopulation.html> on August 5, 2008 and added to the spreadsheet. Populations

from individual community websites were used for the few communities not given in this source.

Effort was made to create as uniform a sample as possible to reduce potential impact from confounding variables. This was accomplished by focusing only on traditional public high schools. Schools having names with terms that indicated being other than this (See Table 3.1) were filtered out. This left a total of 189 schools. An individual search through the remaining schools revealed an additional 15 that did not meet the criteria (Seven Youth Corrections Education Program schools, three private high schools, and five alternative schools). Twenty-seven schools with less than one full-time counselor were also removed, since including schools with no counselor would involve a zero denominator and having only a portion of a counselor would create ratios larger than the actual student body of the school. Finally, three schools were removed because of missing data. The remaining 139 Oregon public high schools provided the data used in the study (See Table 1).

The study used a correlational design to measure the potential relationship between counselor-student ratios to average attendance rates. The data met parametric requirements for normal distribution with skewness for

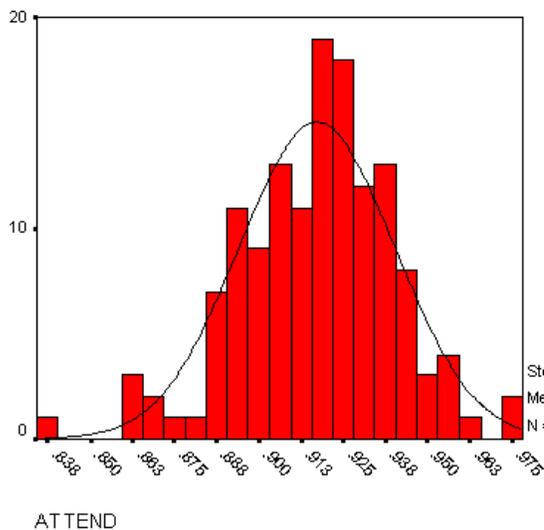
attendance rates at  $-.326$  and  $.577$  for student-school counselor ratios; both below 1.0 (See Figures 1 and 2). Homogeneity and extreme scores were not considered threats since  $n$  was above 100 and sample sizes were equal. The Pearson product moment correlation coefficient

Table 1. Terms Used for Filtering Out Non-traditional Public High Schools

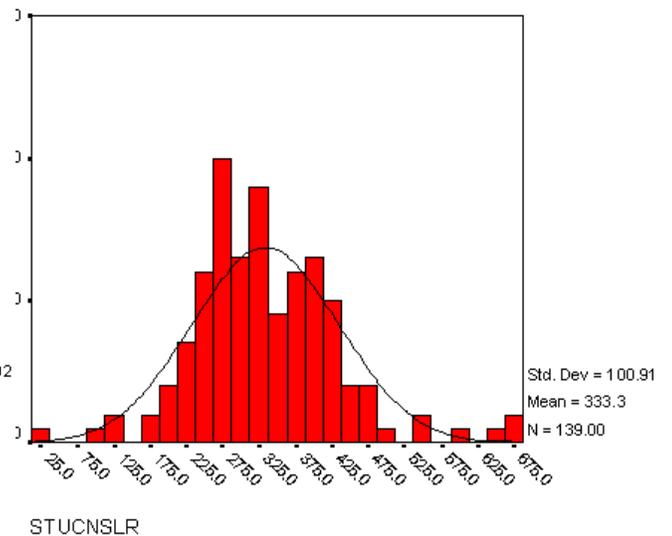
	Title Did Not Included	Title Include
Grade Level	high	elementary middle, junior, jr
Type		charter alternative, night, evening, opportunity e-school, program, STEP, urban urban, district, special tech, communication, academy, campus adult, transition, overlap

for bivariate analysis was the statistical technique utilized. Should a significant correlation be found, regression analysis would be performed to determine how much change in attendance rate would occur with a change in student-school counseling ratio. Collecting data for other possible influences (free and reduced lunch rates for SES, administrative ratios, teaching staff ratios,

*Figure 1.* Attendance distribution.



*Figure 2.* Student-counselor ratio distribution.



school size, and population of community served) provided the potential to partial out contributions should a correlation be found between average attendance rates and student-counselor ratios.

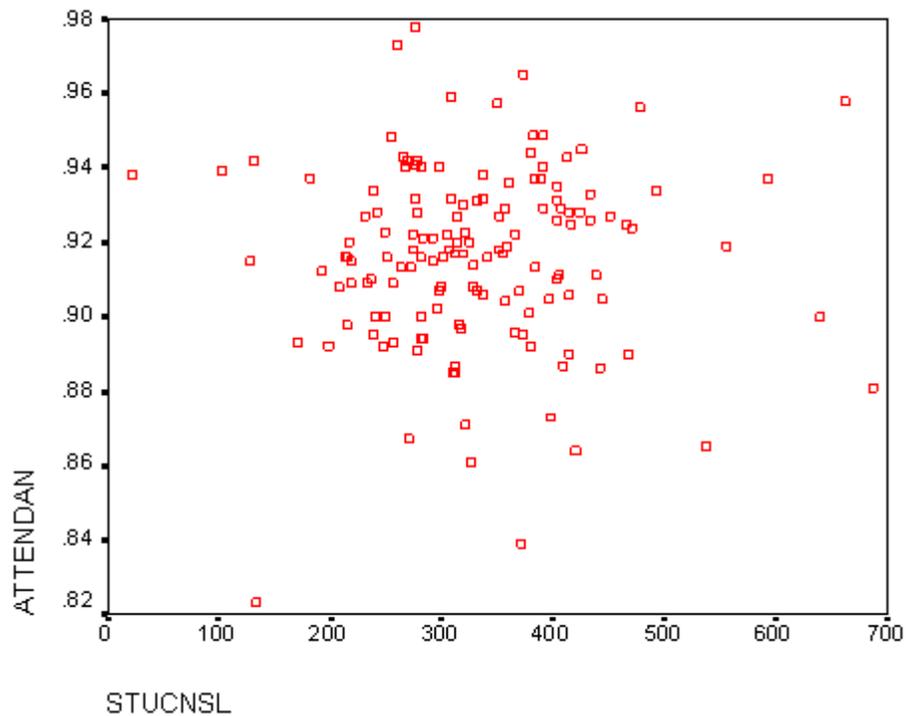
### *Results*

Descriptive statistics for the 139 Oregon public high schools in the study showed the following. The

number of students for each counselor ranged from 21 to 687. The mean was 333 with a standard deviation of 101. Attendance rates ranged from .839 to .978 and had a mean of .917 with a standard deviation of .023.

An inspection of the scattergram (See Figure 3) did not reveal any indication of a relationship between attendance rates and student-counselor ratios. The result

*Figure 3.* Scattergram: Student-School Counselor Ratios X Attendance Rates



of the statistical analysis, shown in the table below indicates, with a Pearson coefficient of  $-.043$ , that no significant correlation was demonstrated between

attendance rates and student-counselor ratios. Thus rejecting the null hypothesis would not be supported. With no significant correlation, there was no need for

Table 2. Correlations for attendance ratios, student-counselor ratios, population of communities, free/reduced lunch rates, student-administrator ratios, and student-teacher ratios.

	ST:CN S	POPLN	F LNCH	ST:AD M	ST:TC H	MEMBR
ATTENDANCE r	-.043	.104	-.372	.227	-.088	.089
Sig. (2-tailed)	.612	.221	<.001	.007	.304	.295
STUDENT:COUNSELOR r		-.158	-.065	.153	.422	.246
Sig. (2-tailed)		.063	.450	.071	<.001	.003
POPULATION r			-.150	.289	.037	.392
Sig. (2-tailed)			.078	.001	.667	<.001
FREE/REDUCED LUNCH r				-.264	-.176	-.214
Sig. (2-tailed)				.002	.038	.012
STUDENT:ADMINISTRAT OR r					.384	.688
Sig. (2-tailed)					<.001	<.001
STUDENT:TEACHER r						.362
Sig. (2-tailed)						<.001

partialling or the use of regression analysis. No other variable showed more than a weak relationship with attendance. The correlation between attendance and free/reduced lunch was the highest with a Pearson coefficient of  $-.369$ .

### *Discussion*

Results of this study agree with findings from a study of California school districts that found no significant correlation between pupil personnel ratios and attendance (California Department of Education, 2003). Although the results do not support rejecting the null hypothesis, it begs the question, "Why not?" Research seems to clearly indicate that attendance is a significant indicator of student engagement in school and school counselors most certainly seek to strengthen the connection between students and their education. Possible explanations for the lack of evidence would fall into at least three different categories.

The first category would include any explanations based on the assumption that regardless what research seems to indicate, what duties school counselors perform does not impact student attendance. Whether students are in or not in class is unrelated to the domain of school counseling. This is a possible explanation for the

results, but just does not seem likely to the author, given the variety of ways that school counselors might address attendance related factors, as reviewed earlier in this paper.

The second category would include explanations based on the assumption that counselors might and do impact attendance, but not in a way detectable in this study as performed. The relationship, if it exists, may not be evident for any or all of the following reasons.

- It is possible that counselor density is not an adequate representation for program effectiveness; that there is such wide variation in program focus and use of counselor time that the number of students per counselor does not truly represent the specific services individual students are receiving.
- It is possible that some schools may use administrators, contract counselors, advisors or other staff to cover counselor functions and thus counselor density would not reflect provision of counseling services in these schools.
- It is possible that the bulk of absenteeism is for legitimate reasons (Stickney &

Miltenberger, 1998), such as student health, that would be unaffected by counselor interventions, thus confounding the relationship between counselor density and absenteeism related to student disengagement.

- It is possible that the influence of school variables, other than those impacted by school counseling, such as size and facilities, are strong and mask the impact of counselor density.
- It is possible that any correlation between the attendance rates and counselor density would not be found due to a lack of uniform attendance data collection. With so much resting on attendance rates (i.e. funding and school rating), a variety of strategies are being used that improve numbers without necessarily increasing student time in school. Schools are experimenting with ways to reduce human error such as stressing teacher accuracy in taking attendance and using computer-based attendance collection systems instead of the traditional paper based process. More personnel may be added to improve the collection and

processing of excuses in order to reduce the number of state reported absences. Some creative efforts may be enlisted, such as changing when attendance is taken to the end of the class period, rather than the beginning as has been done traditionally. They may move students with attendance issues to off campus options or drop them from school enrollment altogether. And finally, pressure to perform may influence schools to falsify information in order to skew records (Reid, 2005b; Viadero, 2004). In other words, attendance rates may, to some extent, reflect strategy and savvy as well as actual student attendance.

A third category of explanations would be based on the assumption that counselors might influence attendance, but don't. These potential explanations include:

- Counselors may find dealing with students who choose to not attend difficult, distasteful, and/or uninteresting and simply choose to focus on other areas within the school counseling domain.

- Counselors' potential to impact may be so diluted by the allotment of time and assignment of duties, such as quasi-administrative responsibilities, lunch and bus supervision, and substituting for classroom teachers, that little impact on students with attendance problems would be observable. How school counselors spend their time has been a concern (American School Counselor Association, 2005; Carrell & Carrell, 2006; Partin, 1993). Primary responsibilities for targeting academic achievement, providing career and college information, managing programs, collecting data, and scheduling students compete for counselor time and attention. These duties may serve students occupied in acquiring an education without engaging students who find school undesirable, especially when such students are difficult to access because they are not present in class.
- Finally, the possibility exists that counselors might be effective, but lack the training needed for the potential to be realized. Sears (1999) pointed out that school counselors

receive little training in dealing with poor student achievement, a common correlate with skipping school. Bleuer (1987) viewed bringing about change with underachieving students a very difficult task, and very little promising literature exists from which school counselors may draw (Bleuer & Walz, 2002).

As a result of this study, the following suggestions may be made for future research regarding possible relationships between student-school counselor ratios and school attendance. First, rather than using entire counseling programs as treatment with all its varied and multiple activities (D. Brown & Trusty, 2005b), investigation is needed to identify specific counseling interventions effective in impacting truancy. Looking at counselors' roles in schools with high rates of attendance (Fitch & Marshall, 2004) may be a helpful way to begin. Promising interventions to investigate might include motivational interviewing, which has shown promise for influencing change in underachievers (G. Eakin, personal communication, November 16, 2008), and career related interventions, such as exploration and goal setting (Hughes, Wood, Konrad, & Test, 2006). Second, future investigations should narrow the

population of study to include only students with attendance issues, rather than using all enrolled students. Third, future studies should collect data on student characteristics such as race and ethnicity, self-efficacy, academic skill levels, SES, and grade levels (Ford & Sutphen, 1996; Lehr et. al., 2004).

This data would provide future research the potential to identify if, and under what circumstances, counselor density co-varied with student attendance. Such studies might also provide valuable guidance for counselors by identifying which interventions were most effective with which truant characteristics.

Attendance has been, and is likely to remain, a major issue in education. Demonstrating that counselor density might play a critical role in keeping students engaged in the learning process would increase the perceived value placed on maintaining an adequate counseling staff to meet the needs of all children.

*References for Chapter 3*

- Amatea, E. S., & Clark, M. A. (2005). Changing schools, changing counselors: A qualitative study of school administrators' conceptions of the school counselor role. *Professional School Counseling, 9*, 16-27.
- American School Counseling Association. (n.d.). Student-to-counselor ratios. Available from <http://www.schoolcounselor.org/>
- American School Counselor Association. (2005). *The ASCA national model: A framework for school counseling programs* (2nd ed.). Alexandria, VA: Author.
- Bazemore, G., Stinchcomb, J. B., & Leip, L. A. (2004). Scared smart or bored straight? Testing deterrence logic in an evaluation of police-led truancy intervention. *JQ: Justice Quarterly, 21*, 269-299.
- Bell, A. J., Rosen, L. A., & Dynlacht, D. (1994). Truancy intervention. *The Journal of Research and Development in Education, 27*, 203-211.
- Benbenishty, R., Astor, R. A., Zeira, A., & Vinokur, A. D. (2002). Perceptions of violence and fear of school attendance among junior high school students in Israel. *Social Work Research, 26*, 71-87.

- Bimler, D., & Kirkland, J. (2001). School truants and truancy motivation sorted out with multidimensional scaling. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 16*, 75-102.
- Bleuer, J. (1987). Counseling underachievers: A counselor's guide to helping students improve their academic performance. Ann Arbor, MI: ERIC Clearinghouse on Counseling and Personnel Services. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED286112)
- Bleuer, J. & Walz, G. (2002). New perspectives on counseling underachievers. ERIC Digest. Greensboro, NC: ERIC Clearinghouse on Counseling and Student Services. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED470602)
- Brown, D., & Trusty, J. (2005a). The ASCA national model, accountability, and establishing causal links between school counselors' activities and student outcomes: A reply to Sink. *Professional School Counseling, 9*, 13-15.
- Brown, D., & Trusty, J. (2005b). School counselors, comprehensive school counseling programs, and academic achievement: Are school counselors promising more than they can deliver? *Professional School Counseling, 9*, 1-8.

- Bryk, A. S., & Thum, Y. M. (1989). *The effects of high school organization on dropping out: An exploratory investigation* (No. CPRE-RR-012). Washington, DC: Center for Policy Research in Education.
- California Department of Education (2003). *Assembly Bill 722, Study of Pupil Personnel Ratios, Services, and Programs in California: Counseling and Student Support Office*, California Department of Education. Retrieved December 13, 2008, from <http://www.umass.edu/schoolcounseling/PDFs/ResearchMonograph3.pdf>
- Campbell, D., & Wright, J. (2005). Rethinking welfare school-attendance policies. *Social Service Review*, 79, 2-28.
- Carrell, S. E., & Carrell, S. A. (2006). Do lower student to counselor ratios reduce school disciplinary problems? *Contributions to Economic Analysis & Policy*, 5(1), Article 11. Available at <http://www.bepress.com/bejeap/contributions/vol5/iss1/art11>
- Eaton, D. K., Kann, L., Kinchen, S., Ross, J., Hawkins, J., Harris, W. A., et al. (2006). Youth risk behavior surveillance - United States, 2005. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 55(SS-5).
- Fashola, O. S., & Slavin, R. E. (1998). Effective dropout prevention and college attendance programs for

students placed at risk. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 3, 159-183.

Fein, D. J., Lee, W. S., & Schofield, E. C. (1999). The abc evaluation: Do welfare recipients' children have a school attendance problem? Retrieved February 10, 2008, from <http://www.abtassoc.com/reports/sch5.pdf>

Fitch, T. J., & Marshall, J. L. (2004). What counselors do in high-achieving schools: A study on the role of the school counselor. *Professional School Counseling*, 7, 172-177.

Ford, J., & Sutphen, R. D. (1996). Early intervention to improve attendance in elementary school for at-risk children: A pilot program. *Social Work in Education*, 18, 95-102.

Garrison, A. H. (2006). "I missed the bus": School grade transition, the Wilmington Truancy Center, and reasons youth don't go to school. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, 4, 204-212.

Gysbers, N. C. (2004). Comprehensive guidance and counseling programs: The evolution of accountability. *Professional School Counseling*, 8, 1-14.

Gysbers, N. C., & Henderson, P. (2006). *Developing and managing your school guidance and counseling program*

(4th ed.). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Hansen, C., Sanders, S. L., Massaro, S., & Last, C. G.

(1998). Predictors of severity of absenteeism in children with anxiety-based school refusal. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, 27*, 246-254.

Harris, M. B., & Franklin, C. G. (2003). Effects of a

cognitive-behavioral, school-based, group intervention with Mexican American pregnant and parenting adolescents. *Social Work Research, 27*, 71-83.

Henry, K. L. (2007). Who's skipping school:

Characteristics of truants in 8th and 10th grade. *Journal of School Health, 77*, 29-35.

Hughes, W., Wood, W. M., Konrad, M., & Test, D. W.

(2006). Get a Life: Students Practice Being Self-Determined. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 38*, 57-63.

Jimerson, S., Egeland, B., Sroufe, L. A., & Carlson, B.

(2000). A prospective longitudinal study of high school dropouts: Examining multiple predictors across development. *Journal of School Psychology, 38*, 525-548.

- Kearney, C. A. (2001). *School refusal behavior in youth: A functional approach to assessment and treatment*. Washington, DC, US: American Psychological Association.
- Kearney, C. A., & Silverman, W. K. (1995). Family environment of youngsters with school refusal behavior: A synopsis with implications for assessment and treatment. *American Journal of Family Therapy, 23*, 59-72.
- Lamdin, D. J. (1996). Evidence of student attendance as an independent variable in education production functions. *Journal of Educational Research, 89*, 155-162.
- Lapan, R. T. (2001). Results-based comprehensive guidance and counseling programs: A framework for planning and evaluation. *Professional School Counseling, 4*, 289-299.
- Lehr, C. A., Sinclair, M. F., & Christenson, S. L. (2004). Addressing student engagement and truancy prevention during the elementary school years: A replication study of the check & connect model. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 9*, 279-301.

- Luiselli, J. K. (2000). Case demonstration of a fading procedure to promote school attendance of a child. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 2*, 47-52.
- Martin, J., Romas, M., Medford, M., Leffert, N., & Hatcher, S. L. (2006). Adult helping qualities preferred by adolescents. *Adolescence, 41*, 127-140.
- McCray, E. D. (2006). It's 10 A.M.: Do you know where your children are? *Intervention in School & Clinic, 42*, 30-33.
- No child left behind act of 2001, Pub. L. No. 107-110, 115 Stat. 1425 (2002).
- Northwest Association of Accredited Schools. (2008). *Northwest Association of Accredited Schools high school consensus self study manual*. Retrieved June 10, 2008, from <http://www.northwestaccreditation.org/publications/selfstudy.html>
- Okun, B. F. (2002). *Effective helping: Interviewing and counseling techniques* (6th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Oregon Department of Education. (n.d.). Retrieved June 1, 2008, from <http://www.ode.state.or.us/data/reports/toc.aspx#schools>

- Partin, R. L. (1993). School counselors' time: Where does it go? *School Counselor*, 40, 274-281.
- Population Research Center (2006). Table 4. Population estimates for Oregon and its counties and incorporated cities: April 1, 1990 to July 1, 2005. Retrieved August 5, 2008 from [http://www.pdx.edu/sites/www.pdx.edu/prc/files/media\\_assets/prc\\_2005completed.pdf](http://www.pdx.edu/sites/www.pdx.edu/prc/files/media_assets/prc_2005completed.pdf)
- Prochaska, J. O., Norcross, John C. (2003). *Systems of psychotherapy: A transtheoretical analysis* (5th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Reid, K. (2005b). A comparison between inspection reports on the management of school attendance throughout the education service. *Pastoral Care*, (December 2005), 31-41.
- Roby, D. E. (2004). Research on school attendance and student achievement: A study of Ohio schools. *Educational Research Quarterly*, 28, 3-14.
- Sears, S. (1999). Transforming school counseling: Making a difference for students. *NASSP Bulletin*, 83, 47-53.
- St-Hilaire, A. (2002). The social adaptation of children of Mexican immigrants: Educational aspirations

beyond junior high school. *Social Science Quarterly*, 83, 1026-1043.

Stickney, M. I., & Miltenberger, R. G. (1998). School refusal behavior: Prevalence, characteristics, and the schools' response. *Education & Treatment of Children*, 21, 160-171.

Suh, S., Suh, J., & Houston, I. (2007). Predictors of categorical at-risk high school dropouts. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 85, 196-203.

Taras, H., & Potts-Datema, W. (2005). Childhood asthma and student performance at school. *Journal of School Health*, 75, 296-312.

U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2008). Household data annual averages: 7. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 25 years and over by educational attainment, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity. Retrieved March 24, 2008 from <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat7.pdf>

Vance, Y. H., & Eiser, C. (2002). The school experience of the child with cancer. *Child: Care, Health & Development*, 28, 5-19.

Veale, J. R. (2002). The cost of dropping out of school in Iowa [Electronic Version]. Retrieved March 24,

2008, from [http://www.learningalternatives.net/  
Costs\\_of\\_Dropping\\_Out.pdf](http://www.learningalternatives.net/Costs_of_Dropping_Out.pdf)

Viadero, D. (2004). Panel urges new system for h.s. data.

*Education Week, 24*, 1-16.

Wagstaff, M., Combs, L., & Jarvis, B. (2000). Solving high school attendance problems: A case study.

*Journal of At-Risk Issues, 7*, 21-30.

Walton, G. M., & Cohen, G. L. (2007). A question of belonging: Race, social fit, and achievement.

*Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 92*, 82-96.

Wrenn, C. G. (1962). *The counselor in a changing world*.

Washington, D.C.: American Personnel and Guidance Association.

#### Chapter 4: General Conclusion

This fourth and final chapter completes the article-style dissertation format selected for this manuscript. It summarizes the conclusions drawn and statistical findings presented in the first three chapters and offers suggestions and recommendations for further investigation.

The conclusions drawn from the study are as follows: Elementary and secondary school attendance is an issue perceived to be of high importance. Furthermore lack of school attendance may be linked to a variety of contributing factors. More specifically, many of these factors are related to the domain and/or influence of school counseling. This being true, it is reasonable to suggest that school attendance rates and counselor program effectiveness may be correlated. Counseling program effectiveness is limited by the availability of counselors to interact with students. By comparing counselor density (the number of students served by each counselor) to attendance rates it might be possible to show a correlation between the two. A review of the development of each of these ideas follows.

School attendance has been, and continues to be, a widespread and pervasive concern. Evidence of interest over time is reflected in such forms as laws, literature, and artwork. Concerns have been expressed from the local school level extending up to that of the national government. It is specifically mentioned in "No Child Left Behind" as one possible indicator of school success.

The reasons behind these concerns vary. At the national level concerns include the need for academic and technical advancement, an educated workforce, and the power and strength provided by an educated and technically proficient military force. National interests also involve financial concerns that result from the cost of lost potential in tax revenue as well as the increased cost of unemployment and related crime. At the local school level, concerns are intensified by loss of funding when students are absent, the cost of tracking and reducing absenteeism, and the use of attendance rates for measures of accountability. Most importantly, individual students are impacted by decreased learning resulting from poor attendance and the consequential decrease in opportunities for success, fulfillment, and financial security.

Many issues contribute to students missing school. These may be grouped into the following three categories: School-related factors, family-related factors, and student-related factors. Because of the many factors that influence whether or not a student goes to school, it has been suggested that attendance may be viewed as an indicator of school engagement for students.

The aforementioned three categories which are used to group factors linked with absenteeism are also useful in organizing the interventions employed to reduce it. A comparison of the school counselor's role to attendance-related factors and interventions reveals substantial common ground, even beyond the obvious intervention of counseling, which is often utilized to deal with students missing school. In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, attendance was considered part of the responsibility of guidance and counseling programs. As the role of school counselor matured in the 1960s, attendance was left on the outside of its domain and counselors distanced themselves from related responsibilities and involvement. However, it has recently been suggested that attendance rates may be useful as an indicator of counseling program effectiveness, but, as yet, little attention has been given to establishing a correlation between the two.

In this era of accountability, it is vital to be able to demonstrate what roles school counselors perform. Might attendance rates be used to show performance? If a correlation was found between counselor density, viewed as level of treatment for counseling, and attendance rates, conceptualized as an indicator of student engagement and a proxy for all contributing factors, it very well might be. Advantages for this approach would include the ready availability of data, relatively short time of incubation between treatment and outcome, and ties to issues valued by administrators, parents, and government leaders such as academic achievement, graduation rates, and the future financial stability of successful students.

This study was designed to investigate the possible relationship between counselor density and attendance rates, as suggested above. It was also designed to reduce the impact of possible confounding variables by choosing a single state, the state of Oregon; a single school year, 2004-2005; and a single level and type of educational configuration, that of traditional public high schools with grades 9 through 12. After filtering out the institutions that did not fit this description,

and after removal of schools with less than one full-time counselor, 139 schools remained in the study.

The study used the Pearson correlation coefficient as an indicator of relationship presence and strength. Data for other school-related factors connected with attendance were also collected in order to partial out their effects from the outcome should a correlation be found. The study, however, did not find a statistical correlation between attendance rates and student-counselor ratios. Possible explanations for not finding such a correlation were grouped into three categories: That school counseling is not able to impact school attendance, and therefore no relationship would be expected; that school counseling might impact school attendance, but, for any of a number of reasons, that potential is not realized; and that school counseling impacts school attendance, but not to the extent that it might be detected by the means used in this study.

Suggestions for future studies included utilizing a case study design to link distinct intervention strategies, such as motivational interviewing and career related interventions to specific population characteristics.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Amatea, E. S., & Clark, M. A. (2005). Changing schools, changing counselors: A qualitative study of school administrators' conceptions of the school counselor role. *Professional School Counseling, 9*, 16-27.
- American School Counseling Association. (2004). *ASCA national standards for students*. Retrieved from [http://www.uschamber.com/publications/reports/education\\_reform.htm](http://www.uschamber.com/publications/reports/education_reform.htm)
- American School Counseling Association. (n.d.). Student-to-counselor ratios. Available from <http://www.schoolcounselor.org/>
- American School Counselor Association. (2005). *The ASCA national model: A framework for school counseling programs* (2nd ed.). Alexandria, VA: Author.
- Baker, M. L., Sigmon, J. N., & Nugent, M. E. (2001). *Truancy reduction: Keeping students in school*. Juvenile Justice Bulletin. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Retrieved April 15, 2007, from <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/188947.pdf>
- Bazemore, G., Stinchcomb, J. B., & Leip, L. A. (2004). Scared smart or bored straight? Testing deterrence

- logic in an evaluation of police-led truancy intervention. *JQ: Justice Quarterly*, 21, 269-299.
- Bell, A. J., Rosen, L. A., & Dynlacht, D. (1994). Truancy intervention. *The Journal of Research and Development in Education*, 27, 203-211.
- Benbenishty, R., Astor, R. A., Zeira, A., & Vinokur, A. D. (2002). Perceptions of violence and fear of school attendance among junior high school students in Israel. *Social Work Research*, 26, 71-87.
- Berg, I., & Jackson, A. (1985). Teenage school refusers grow up: A follow-up study of 168 subjects, ten years on average after in-patient treatment. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 147, 366-370.
- Bimler, D., & Kirkland, J. (2001). School truants and truancy motivation sorted out with multidimensional scaling. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 16, 75-102.
- Bleuer, J. (1987). Counseling underachievers: A counselor's guide to helping students improve their academic performance. Ann Arbor, MI: ERIC Clearinghouse on Counseling and Personnel Services. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED286112)
- Bleuer, J. & Walz, G. (2002). New perspectives on counseling underachievers. ERIC Digest. Greensboro, NC: ERIC Clearinghouse on Counseling and Student

Services. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED470602)

Branham, D. (2004). The wise man builds his house upon the rock: The effects of inadequate school building infrastructure on student attendance. *Social Science Quarterly, 85*, 1112-1128.

Brown, D., & Trusty, J. (2005a). The ASCA national model, accountability, and establishing causal links between school counselors' activities and student outcomes: A reply to Sink. *Professional School Counseling, 9*, 13-15.

Brown, D., & Trusty, J. (2005b). School counselors, comprehensive school counseling programs, and academic achievement: Are school counselors promising more than they can deliver? *Professional School Counseling, 9*, 1-8.

Brown, T. L., Henggeler, S. W., Schoenwald, S. K., Brondino, M. J., & Pickrel, S. G. (1999). Multisystemic treatment of substance abusing and dependent juvenile delinquents: Effects on school attendance at posttreatment and 6-month follow-up. *Children's Services: Social Policy, Research and Practice, 2*, 81-93.

- Bryk, A. S., & Thum, Y. M. (1989). *The effects of high school organization on dropping out: An exploratory investigation* (No. CPRE-RR-012). Washington, DC: Center for Policy Research in Education.
- California Department of Education (2003). *Assembly Bill 722, Study of Pupil Personnel Ratios, Services, and Programs in California: Counseling and Student Support Office*, California Department of Education. Retrieved December 13, 2008, from <http://www.umass.edu/schoolcounseling/PDFs/ResearchMonograph3.pdf>
- Campbell, D., & Wright, J. (2005). Rethinking welfare school-attendance policies. *Social Service Review*, 79, 2-28.
- Capps, W. R. (2003). The new face of truancy. *School Administrator*, 60, 34.
- Carafano, J. J. (2008). On teaching war: The future of professional military education. Retrieved March 15, 2009 from <http://www.heritage.org/press/commentary/ed080108d.cfm>
- Carrell, S. E., & Carrell, S. A. (2006). Do lower student to counselor ratios reduce school disciplinary problems? *Contributions to Economic Analysis & Policy*, 5(1), Article 11. Available at

[http://www.bepress.com/ bejeap/contributions/  
vol5/iss1/art11](http://www.bepress.com/bejeap/contributions/vol5/iss1/art11)

Center for School Counseling Outcome Research (n. d.).

Retrieved March 16, 2009, from [http://www.umass.edu/  
schoolcounseling/mission.htm](http://www.umass.edu/schoolcounseling/mission.htm)

Clement, R., Gwynne, T., & Younkin, W. (2001). Attendance  
waivers evaluation report. Retrieved March 23, 2008,  
from [http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/  
research\\_evaluation/Evaluations/Attendwaiveeval.pdf](http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/research_evaluation/Evaluations/Attendwaiveeval.pdf)

Constantino, S. M. (2007). Keeping parents involved  
through high school. *Education Digest*, 73, 57-61.

Davis, H. V. (1969). *Frank Parsons: Prophet, innovator,  
counselor*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University.

De Clercq, D., Sacko, M., Behnke, J., Gilbert, F., &  
Vercruysse, J. (1998). The relationship between  
*schistosoma haematobium* infection and school  
performance and attendance in Bamako, Mali. *Annals  
of Tropical Medicine & Parasitology*, 92, 851-858.

Dimmitt, C. (2003). Transforming school counseling  
practice through collaboration and the use of data:  
A study of academic failure in high school.  
*Professional School Counseling*, 6, 340.

Deschamps, A. B. (1992). An integrative review of  
research on characteristics of dropouts. Unpublished

doctoral dissertation, George Washington University.

(ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED378520)

Dollarhide, C. T., Smith, A. T., & Lemberger, M. E. (2007). Critical incidents in the development of supportive principals: Facilitating school counselor-principal relationships. *Professional School Counseling, 10*, 360-369.

Eamon, M. K. (2005). Social-demographic, school, neighborhood, and parenting influences on the academic achievement of Latino young adolescents. *Journal of Youth & Adolescence, 34*, 163-174.

Eaton, D. K., Kann, L., Kinchen, S., Ross, J., Hawkins, J., Harris, W. A., et al. (2006). Youth risk behavior surveillance - United States, 2005. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, 55(SS-5)*.

Education Policy and Data Center. (2007). *School attendance and enrolment: Global trends and projections*. Paper commissioned for the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2008, Education for All by 2015: Will we make it? For further information, please contact [efareport@unesco.org](mailto:efareport@unesco.org). Retrieved October 12, 2008, from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001555/155501e.pdf>

- Ensign, F. C. (1921). *Compulsory school attendance and child labor*. Retrieved February 16, 2008, from [http://books.google.com/books?id=KN9JAAAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=ensign&ei=pOLqR8j\\_NoIStAPhj9zKAw](http://books.google.com/books?id=KN9JAAAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=ensign&ei=pOLqR8j_NoIStAPhj9zKAw)
- Epstein, J. L., & Sheldon, S. B. (2002). Present and accounted for: Improving student attendance through family and community involvement. *Journal of Educational Research, 95*, 308-318.
- Evans, W. P., & Carter, M. J. (1997). Urban School-Based Counseling: Role Definition, Practice Applications, and Training Implications. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 75*, 366-374
- Fashola, O. S., & Slavin, R. E. (1998). Effective dropout prevention and college attendance programs for students placed at risk. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 3*, 159-183.
- Fein, D. J., Lee, W. S., & Schofield, E. C. (1999). The abc evaluation: Do welfare recipients' children have a school attendance problem? Retrieved February 10, 2008, from <http://www.abtassoc.com/reports/sch5.pdf>
- Fitch, T. J., & Marshall, J. L. (2004). What counselors do in high-achieving schools: A study on the role of the school counselor. *Professional School Counseling, 7*, 172-177.

- Flakierska-Praquin, N., Lindstrom, M., & Gillberg, C. (1997). School phobia with separation anxiety disorder: A comparative 20- to 29-year follow-up study of 35 school refusers. *Comprehensive Psychiatry, 38*, 17-22.
- Ford, J., & Sutphen, R. D. (1996). Early intervention to improve attendance in elementary school for at-risk children: A pilot program. *Social Work in Education, 18*, 95-102.
- Garrison, A. H. (2006). "I missed the bus": School grade transition, the Wilmington Truancy Center, and reasons youth don't go to school. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice, 4*, 204-212.
- Gladding, S. T. (2004). *Counseling: A comprehensive profession* (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Grabowski, L. J. S., Call, K. T., & Mortimer, J. T. (2001). Global and economic self-efficacy in the educational attainment process. *Social Psychology Quarterly, 64*, 164-179.
- Griffiths, M., & Parker-Jenkins, M. (1994). Methodological and ethical dilemmas in international research: School attendance and gender in Ghana. *Oxford Review of Education, 20*, 441-459.

- Gysbers, N. C., & Henderson, P. (2001). Comprehensive guidance and counseling programs: A rich history and a bright future. *Professional School Counseling, 4*, 246-256.
- Gysbers, N. C. (2004). Comprehensive guidance and counseling programs: The evolution of accountability. *Professional School Counseling, 8*, 1-14.
- Gysbers, N. C., & Henderson, P. (2006). *Developing and managing your school guidance and counseling program* (4th ed.). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.
- Ham, B. D. (2004). The effects of divorce and remarriage on the academic achievement of high school seniors. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage, 42*, 159-178.
- Hansen, C., Sanders, S. L., Massaro, S., & Last, C. G. (1998). Predictors of severity of absenteeism in children with anxiety-based school refusal. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, 27*, 246-254.
- Harris, M. B., & Franklin, C. G. (2003). Effects of a cognitive-behavioral, school-based, group intervention with Mexican American pregnant and parenting adolescents. *Social Work Research, 27*, 71-83.

- Henry, K. L. (2007). Who's skipping school: Characteristics of truants in 8th and 10th grade. *Journal of School Health, 77*, 29-35.
- Hughes, W., Wood, W. M., Konrad, M., & Test, D. W. (2006). Get a Life: Students Practice Being Self-Determined. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 38*, 57-63.
- Jimerson, S., Egeland, B., Sroufe, L. A., & Carlson, B. (2000). A prospective longitudinal study of high school dropouts: Examining multiple predictors across development. *Journal of School Psychology, 38*, 525-548.
- Kearney, C. A. (2001). *School refusal behavior in youth: A functional approach to assessment and treatment*. Washington, DC, US: American Psychological Association.
- Kearney, C. A., & Bensaheb, A. (2006). School absenteeism and school refusal behavior: A review and suggestions for school-based health professionals. *Journal of School Health, 76*, 3-7.
- Kearney, C. A., & Silverman, W. K. (1995). Family environment of youngsters with school refusal behavior: A synopsis with implications for

assessment and treatment. *American Journal of Family Therapy*, 23, 59-72.

Lamdin, D. J. (1996). Evidence of student attendance as an independent variable in education production functions. *Journal of Educational Research*, 89, 155-162.

Joronen, K., & Åstedt-Kurki, P. (2005). Adolescents' experiences of familial involvement in their peer relations and school attendance. *Primary Health Care Research & Development*, 6, 190-198.

Lapan, R. T. (2001). Results-based comprehensive guidance and counseling programs: A framework for planning and evaluation. *Professional School Counseling*, 4, 289-299.

Lapan, R. T., Gysbers, N. C., & Petroski, G. F. (2003). Helping seventh graders be safe and successful: A statewide study of the impact of comprehensive guidance and counseling programs. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 79, 320-329.

Lapan, R. T., Gysbers, N. C., & Sun, Y. (1997). The impact of more fully implemented guidance programs on the school experiences of high school students: A statewide evaluation study. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 75, 292-302.

- London Metropolitan Archives (1997). Information leaflet No 8: *London school attendance medals*. Retrieved February 16, 2008 from [http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/nr/rdonlyres/8e41713b-981d-4ec6-9211-5bba4c6d81d8/0/lh\\_lma\\_schoolattend.pdf](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/nr/rdonlyres/8e41713b-981d-4ec6-9211-5bba4c6d81d8/0/lh_lma_schoolattend.pdf)
- Lehr, C. A., Sinclair, M. F., & Christenson, S. L. (2004). Addressing student engagement and truancy prevention during the elementary school years: A replication study of the check & connect model. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 9*, 279-301.
- Luiselli, J. K. (2000). Case demonstration of a fading procedure to promote school attendance of a child. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 2*, 47-52.
- Lyon, A. R., & Cotler, S. (2007). Toward reduced bias and increased utility in the assessment of school refusal behavior: The case for diverse samples and evaluations of context. *Psychology in the Schools, 44*, 551-565.
- Martin, P. J. (2002). Transforming school counseling: A national perspective. *Theory Into Practice, 41*, 148.

- Martin, J., Romas, M., Medford, M., Leffert, N., & Hatcher, S. L. (2006). Adult helping qualities preferred by adolescents. *Adolescence, 41*, 127-140.
- Matthews, M. (2006). Gifted students dropping out: Recent findings from a southeastern state. *Roeper Review, 28*, 216-223.
- McCluskey, C. P., Bynum, T. S., & Patchin, J. W. (2004). Reducing chronic absenteeism: An assessment of an early truancy initiative. *Crime Delinquency, 50*, 214-234.
- McCray, E. D. (2006). It's 10 A.M.: Do you know where your children are? *Intervention in School & Clinic, 42*, 30-33.
- Mueller, D., Giacomazzi, A., & Stoddard, C. (2006). Dealing with chronic absenteeism and its related consequences: The process and short-term effects of a diversionary juvenile court intervention. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 11*, 199-219.
- National Center for Mental Health Prevention and Youth Violence Prevention. (2007). *Reducing truancy*. Retrieved December 30, 2007, from [http://www.promoteprevent.org/Publications/center-briefs/Truancy\\_Prevention\\_Brief.pdf](http://www.promoteprevent.org/Publications/center-briefs/Truancy_Prevention_Brief.pdf)

- National Center for School Engagement. (2005). *Facts on truancy*. Retrieved April 15, 2007, from <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/truancy/pdf/FactsonTruancy.pdf>
- Nichols, J. D. (2003). Prediction indicators for students failing the state of indiana high school graduation exam. *Preventing School Failure*, 47, 112-120.
- No child left behind act of 2001, Pub. L. No. 107-110, 115 Stat. 1425 (2002).
- Northwest Association of Accredited Schools. (2008). *Northwest Association of Accredited Schools high school consensus self study manual*. Retrieved June 10, 2008, from <http://www.northwestaccreditation.org/publications/selfstudy.html>
- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, & Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools. (n.d.). *Truancy prevention: Empowering students, schools, and communities to succeed*. Retrieved April 15, 2007, from <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/truancy/>
- Okun, B. F. (2002). *Effective helping: Interviewing and counseling techniques* (6th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Oregon Department of Education. (n.d.). Retrieved June 1, 2008, from <http://www.ode.state.or.us/data/reports/toc.aspx#schools>

- Partin, R. L. (1993). School counselors' time: Where does it go? *School Counselor*, 40, 274-281.
- Population Research Center (2006). Table 4. Population estimates for Oregon and its counties and incorporated cities: April 1, 1990 to July 1, 2005. Retrieved August 5, 2008 from [http://www.pdx.edu/sites/www.pdx.edu/prc/files/media\\_assets/prc\\_2005completed.pdf](http://www.pdx.edu/sites/www.pdx.edu/prc/files/media_assets/prc_2005completed.pdf)
- Prochaska, J. O., Norcross, John C. (2003). *Systems of psychotherapy: A transtheoretical analysis* (5th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Reid, K. (2000). *Tackling truancy in schools: A practical manual for primary and secondary schools*. London: Routledge. Retrieved from <http://books.google.com/books?id=mHLKVE73j7MC&printsec=frontcover#PPP13,M1>
- Reid, K. (2005a). Any wonder they truant?. *Community Care*, (August 2005), 34-35.
- Reid, K. (2005b). A comparison between inspection reports on the management of school attendance throughout the education service. *Pastoral Care*, (December 2005), 31-41.
- Riding, R. J., & Baker, G. (2003). Cognitive style and school attendance, conduct behaviour and attainment. *Research in Education*, (May 2003), 99-103.

- Roby, D. E. (2004). Research on school attendance and student achievement: A study of Ohio schools. *Educational Research Quarterly, 28*, 3-14.
- Sabella, R. A. (2006). The ASCA National School Counseling Research Center: A brief history and agenda. *Professional School Counseling, 9*, 412-415.
- Safran, J. D., Muran, J. C. (2000). *Negotiating the therapeutic alliance: A relational treatment guide*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Sears, S. (1999). Transforming school counseling: Making a difference for students. *NASSP Bulletin, 83*, 47-53.
- Segal, D. R., & Segal, M. W. (2004). America's military population. *Population Bulletin*, (December, 2004). Retrieved March 15, 2009 from [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_qa3761/is\\_200412/ai\\_n9468428/pg\\_3?tag=content;coll](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3761/is_200412/ai_n9468428/pg_3?tag=content;coll)
- Shendell, D. G., Prill, R., Fisk, W. J., Apte, M. G., Blake, D., & Faulkner, D. (2004). Associations between classroom CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations and student attendance in Washington and Idaho. *Indoor Air, 14*, 333-341.
- Shelton, H., & Dalton, J. H. (2009). Strong military needs early education focus. Retrieved March 15,

2009 from <http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0109/17180.html>

- Sink, C. A. (2005). Comprehensive school counseling programs and academic achievement--a rejoinder to brown and trusty. *Professional School Counseling, 9*, 9-11.
- St-Hilaire, A. (2002). The social adaptation of children of Mexican immigrants: Educational aspirations beyond junior high school. *Social Science Quarterly, 83*, 1026-1043.
- Stickney, M. I., & Miltenberger, R. G. (1998). School refusal behavior: Prevalence, characteristics, and the schools' response. *Education & Treatment of Children, 21*, 160-171.
- Suh, S., Suh, J., & Houston, I. (2007). Predictors of categorical at-risk high school dropouts. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 85*, 196-203.
- Taras, H., & Potts-Datema, W. (2005). Childhood asthma and student performance at school. *Journal of School Health, 75*, 296-312.
- The Education Trust, (2005). Stalled in secondary: A look at student achievement since the No Child Left Behind Act. Retrieved November 23, 2008 from

<http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/77670E50-188F-4AA8-8729-555115389E18/0/StalledInSecondary.pdf>

Twain, M. (1920). *The adventures of Tom Sawyer*. New York:

A. L. Burt. (Original work published 1876.)

U.S. Census Bureau. (2007). Current population survey:

Annual social and economic supplement. Retrieved

March 24, 2008, from

<http://pubdb3.census.gov/macro/032007>

[/perinc/new03\\_001.htm](http://pubdb3.census.gov/macro/032007/perinc/new03_001.htm)

U.S. Chamber of Commerce (2006). Education reform:

Insight into business community's views about the

U.S. education system. Available from

<http://www.uschamber.com/publications/reports/>

[education\\_reform.htm](http://www.uschamber.com/publications/reports/education_reform.htm)

U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics.

(2008). Household data annual averages: 7.

Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional

population 25 years and over by educational

attainment, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino

ethnicity. Retrieved March 24, 2008 from

<http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat7.pdf>

Vance, Y. H., & Eiser, C. (2002). The school experience

of the child with cancer. *Child: Care, Health &*

*Development*, 28, 5-19.

- Veale, J. R. (2002). The cost of dropping out of school in Iowa [Electronic Version]. Retrieved March 24, 2008, from [http://www.learningalternatives.net/Costs\\_of\\_Dropping\\_Out.pdf](http://www.learningalternatives.net/Costs_of_Dropping_Out.pdf)
- Viadero, D. (2004). Panel urges new system for h.s. data. *Education Week, 24*, 1-16.
- Wagstaff, M., Combs, L., & Jarvis, B. (2000). Solving high school attendance problems: A case study. *Journal of At-Risk Issues, 7*, 21-30.
- Walton, G. M., & Cohen, G. L. (2007). A question of belonging: Race, social fit, and achievement. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 92*, 82-96.
- Walz, G. R., & Bleuer, J. C. (2002). *Scientifically based research: What does it mean for counselors?* ERIC Digest. Greensboro, NC: ERIC Clearinghouse on Counseling and Student Services. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED470604)
- Weitzman, M., Alpert, J. J., Klerman, L. V., Kayne, H., Lamb, G. A., Geromini, K. R., et al. (1986). High-risk youth and health: The case of excessive school absence. *Pediatrics, 78*, 313-322.

Wrenn, C. G. (1962). *The counselor in a changing world*.

Washington, D.C.: American Personnel and Guidance Association.

Zierold, K. M., Garman, S., & Anderson, H. A. (2005). A comparison of school performance and behaviors among working and nonworking high school students. *Family and Community Health, 28*, 212-224.

Zinth, K. (2005). Truancy and habitual truancy: Examples of state definitions [Electronic Version]. *State Notes*. Retrieved April 15, 2007, from <http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/61/16/6116.doc>

APPENDICES

Appendix : 2004-2005 School Year Data for Oregon High  
Schools Used in Study

SCHLID	Attend	Stu/Cnsl	Pop(k)	Freredlnch	Stu/Tchr	Stu/Adm
8	0.92	325.00	10.0	0.2983	22.81	325.00
22	0.921	293.00	4.4	0.2	23.44	293.00
40	0.909	231.96	53.2	0.2344	28.49	433.00
41	0.923	320.61	53.2	0.1636	31.12	341.29
51	0.933	433.71	24.1	0.0509	24.13	379.50
61	0.965	374.24	36.1	0.0407	29.47	411.67
62	0.957	350.00	36.1	0.048	29.25	350.00
85	0.942	277.43	254.9	0.1778	30.11	388.40
86	0.893	256.40	20.7	0.3512	29.14	320.50
87	0.918	273.80	20.7	0.2655	30.42	342.25
104	0.943	265.00	5.0	0.2135	22.27	265.00
118	0.911	438.20	29.0	0.2908	25.93	438.20
135	0.923	249.00	2.5	0.387	23.13	373.50
138	0.937	389.00	12.2	0.2826	24.54	389.00
140	0.914	327.80	14.4	0.226	25.02	409.75
141	0.932	336.75	6.7	0.2671	25.18	286.60
142	0.935	404.50	6.4	0.3379	23.59	269.67
146	0.94	392.00	9.9	0.3507	23.54	392.00
154	0.898	214.00	6.2	0.3743	20.19	205.77
162	0.978	276.40	5.7	0.2767	21.94	345.50
169	0.892	199.00	9.9	0.1521	19.32	124.38
178	0.895	238.00	2.3	0.2324	17.63	158.67
185	0.906	336.67	11.8	0.2288	58.05	531.58
191	0.936	360.00	4.2	0.3073	22.09	180.00
201	0.894	283.50	15.9	0.4353	28.56	405.00
209	0.891	278.00	9.6	0.3853	29.32	239.66
218	0.922	274.00	3.1	0.4555	19.71	137.00
225	0.89	466.50	9.1	0.3397	24.55	311.00
229	0.915	128.00	1.2	0.5476	13.62	640.00
237	0.919	555.45	6.2	0.5629	21.82	244.40
239	0.916	215.00	1.9	0.4016	15.93	215.00
251	0.926	404.00	70.3	0.2822	22.87	404.00
252	0.925	417.58	70.3	0.1688	24.09	459.33
253	0.892	247.00	5.8	0.4972	24.70	247.00
263	0.908	328.80	20.0	0.3108	26.01	411.00
268	0.937	182.73	0.9	0.3892	18.96	402.00
280	0.904	357.82	20.8	0.3371	22.83	357.82
285	0.9	281.00	1.7	0.2577	20.07	281.00
293	0.867	270.50	3.5	0.4603	22.54	180.33
316	0.893	171.43	5.3	0.3846	16.22	240.00
321	0.9	240.50	7.5	0.434	20.30	240.50
359	0.918	306.00	3.0	0.3746	18.66	161.05
369	0.94	298.00	6.5	0.4657	20.03	397.33

SCHLID	Attend	Stu/Cnsl	Pop (k)	Freredlnch	Stu/Tchr	Stu/Adm
374	0.839	372.00	4.7	0.3644	20.72	248.00
381	0.913	271.75	20.9	0.2004	21.65	362.33
389	0.897	317.56	15.6	0.2657	25.07	238.17
397	0.91	236.67	7.6	0.4154	24.02	284.00
401	0.887	409.00	2.0	0.3853	37.18	204.50
423	0.905	444.25	70.9	0.3074	27.77	423.10
424	0.9	641.00	70.9	0.2385	25.92	427.33
434	0.918	352.40	5.6	0.6856	34.15	293.67
442	0.927	451.50	26.1	0.3726	25.62	451.50
455	0.906	415.50	26.1	0.3776	28.17	277.00
456	0.886	442.00	1.5	0.7372	24.56	147.33
457	0.929	357.50	26.1	0.418	27.50	238.33
485	0.93	319.50	20.4	0.2588	22.03	213.00
487	0.885	312.67	20.4	0.4807	26.72	234.50
488	0.916	300.67	20.4	0.4121	25.92	225.50
502	0.945	426.00	5.3	0.1421	21.96	213.00
536	0.916	340.38	146.2	0.2889	20.21	295.00
538	0.956	478.48	146.2	0.1426	30.54	526.33
539	0.943	414.00	146.2	0.1307	26.29	473.14
540	0.958	662.50	146.2	0.2075	31.25	331.25
560	0.864	419.72	55.9	0.4705	26.28	377.75
561	0.907	370.53	55.9	0.3065	25.60	352.00
567	0.934	493.00	2.6	0.3124	22.82	493.00
572	0.938	337.00	4.5	0.7825	22.47	337.00
580	0.928	423.50	9.1	0.426	21.55	282.33
588	0.905	396.94	146.2	0.4062	23.66	357.25
597	0.937	594.00	4.9	0.246	22.25	297.00
610	0.92	216.80	8.2	0.1224	19.64	271.00
627	0.881	687.00	9.9	0.3012	35.60	343.50
628	0.865	538.00	7.6	0.4856	30.92	269.00
629	0.873	399.00	3.6	0.4024	31.92	199.50
649	0.92	314.25	45.4	0.2302	25.71	419.00
650	0.892	380.67	45.4	0.3636	24.88	380.67
669	0.885	309.60	8.5	0.5468	23.82	258.00
678	0.927	231.00	0.7	0.3224	14.90	231.00
683	0.915	218.00	1.6	0.5397	18.96	136.25
688	0.871	322.00	13.9	0.4737	24.39	322.00
689	0.916	251.00	3.3	0.3236	20.08	278.89
699	0.896	367.00	11.2	0.5816	18.35	209.71
704	0.959	309.00	3.2	0.5597	15.77	114.44
723	0.913	264.00	2.5	0.3681	18.21	176.00
726	0.894	282.00	0.8	0.4399	24.52	282.00
771	0.907	332.22	147.3	0.5828	21.49	358.80
772	0.91	404.67	34.7	0.3307	22.37	364.20
773	0.89	414.55	147.3	0.5566	21.66	364.80
774	0.931	403.72	147.3	0.1817	24.52	347.20

SCHLID	Attend	Stu/Cnsl	Pop(k)	Freredlnch	Stu/Tchr	Stu/Adm
775	0.901	378.86	147.3	0.3538	21.24	333.40
800	0.887	312.25	22.1	0.7454	17.28	312.25
808	0.908	300.00	2.2	0.6314	16.67	300.00
809	0.913	384.50	7.5	0.3602	25.89	256.33
811	0.919	358.50	1.6	0.3483	23.13	239.00
909	0.917	312.44	556.4	0.2509	22.83	427.00
911	0.907	297.35	556.4	0.4345	25.21	485.67
912	0.916	212.00	556.4	0.2346	26.12	450.50
914	0.934	238.00	556.4	0.1031	24.54	476.00
915	0.912	193.60	556.4	0.6758	20.51	322.67
922	0.916	280.94	556.4	0.1464	24.69	496.33
931	0.908	208.00	556.4	0.3813	20.39	208.00
957	0.928	240.90	14.9	0.4601	18.00	481.80
967	0.927	352.00	95.9	0.3747	27.29	440.00
983	0.922	366.86	556.4	0.6423	32.84	513.60
986	0.942	269.71	95.9	0.2511	26.39	458.50
987	0.94	266.18	95.9	0.2184	24.73	452.50
995	0.911	406.52	14.0	0.4084	25.48	233.75
1002	0.898	315.60	7.5	0.4895	23.91	263.00
1017	0.917	355.00	4.3	0.4032	33.02	355.00
1033	0.902	295.00	6.4	0.6105	15.36	173.53
1040	0.9	248.80	15.0	0.4782	19.87	414.67
1052	0.895	374.00	17.0	0.4026	39.62	311.67
1064	0.926	433.00	6.5	0.5906	15.98	216.50
1073	0.938	21.00	12.5	0.3049	1.42	14.00
1083	0.942	132.00	1.7	0.446	13.61	264.00
1101	0.922	305.67	12.5	0.4503	17.60	352.69
1124	0.929	408.00	1.4	0.1027	22.54	204.00
1134	0.949	390.75	19.6	0.4599	20.90	390.75
1146	0.931	331.45	45.5	0.1796	25.01	607.67
1186	0.909	255.43	83.1	0.3372	24.10	447.00
1187	0.917	318.83	83.1	0.2792	24.88	478.25
1188	0.927	314.00	556.4	0.216	23.29	471.00
1200	0.94	281.60	82.0	0.2938	29.77	469.33
1201	0.932	275.40	82.0	0.3494	28.81	459.00
1222	0.944	380.50	20.6	0.2652	23.60	434.86
1226	0.861	327.00	1.9	0.3912	18.69	327.00
1234	0.924	470.50	30.0	0.3322	29.59	376.40
1237	0.973	259.00	5.8	0.4638	19.19	259.00
1238	0.921	282.67	0.8	0.2489	21.97	424.00
1294	0.949	382.67	1.7	0.1397	24.96	382.67
1301	0.928	414.75	25.5	0.134	25.06	553.00
1320	0.932	308.53	556.4	0.1946	25.37	462.80
1323	0.925	465.00	16.5	0.1715	24.28	310.00
1345	0.939	102.31	556.4	0.0364	13.30	133.00
1368	0.941	276.60	82.0	0.3029	28.05	461.00

SCHLID	Attend	Stu/Cnsl	Pop (k)	Freredlnch	Stu/Tchr	Stu/Adm
2783	0.928	277.39	83.1	0.1406	26.01	478.50
3216	0.929	391.33	70.3	0.129	24.72	391.33
3463	0.937	383.43	147.3	0.2331	22.37	268.40
4018	0.948	253.56	82.0	0.3612	26.78	380.33