



SCHOOL COUNSELING PARENT-TEACHER PRESENTATION

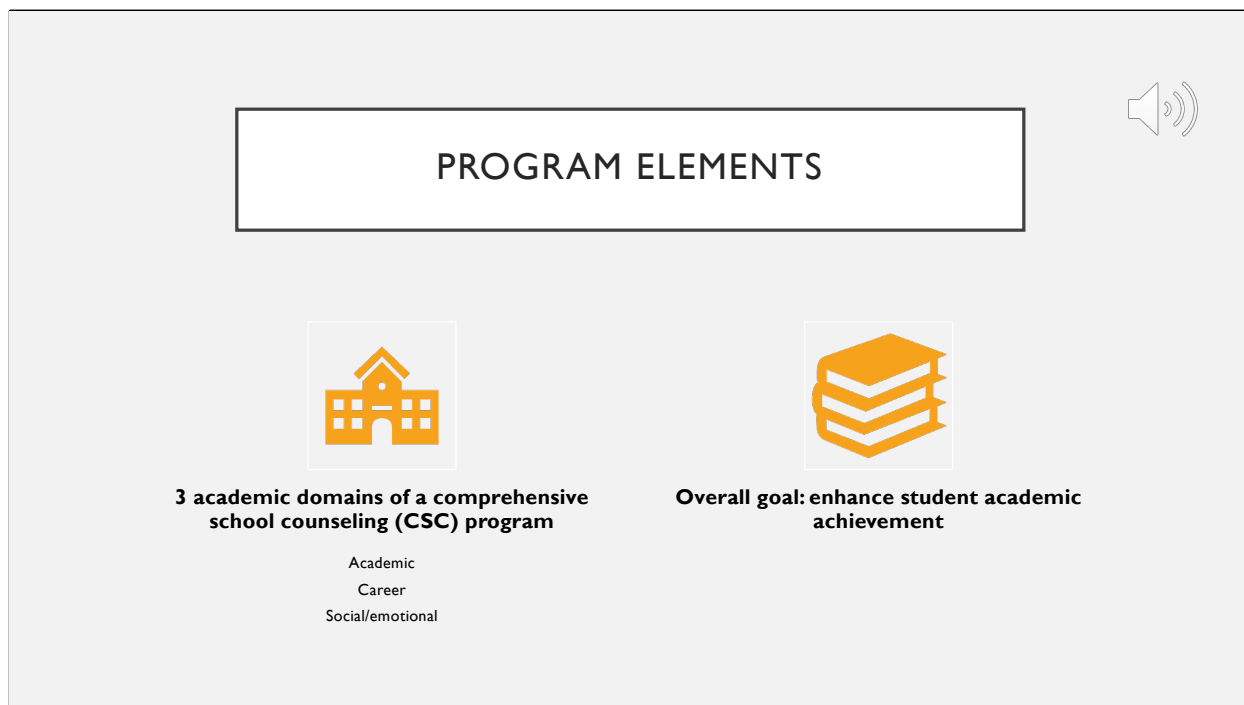
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COSC 660 Spring B 2024

Hello everyone! I want to welcome parents and teachers to this presentation. Today, we will focus on the comprehensive school counseling program I have created in order to achieve academic success for students, which is a standard upheld by the American School Counselor Association. Let's begin!



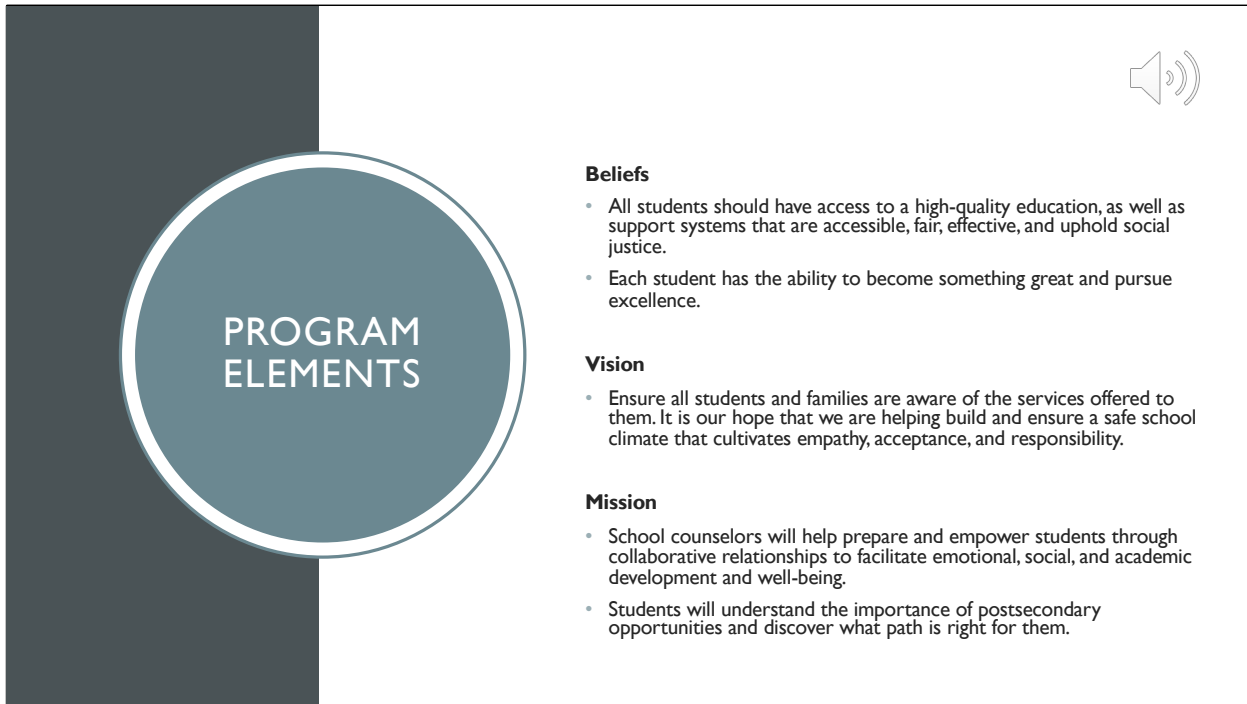
PROGRAM ELEMENTS

The first major component of this comprehensive school counseling program is the program elements. These outline what I aim to do, the areas I intend to target, and the overall beliefs of the school counseling department. Let's get into it!



This slide is a brief overview of what the program elements of a comprehensive school counseling program actually are. I included these to show the specific areas we try to target as counselors to enhance student academic success. The three academic domains are academic, career and social/emotional. By targeting these specific areas of a student's life, we hope to have a well-rounded approach to helping students understand their greater purpose and potential future pathways.

Our overall goal is student academic achievement, but this simply does not mean getting good test scores. As we cover each domain individually, this will become clearer.



PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Beliefs

- All students should have access to a high-quality education, as well as support systems that are accessible, fair, effective, and uphold social justice.
- Each student has the ability to become something great and pursue excellence.

Vision

- Ensure all students and families are aware of the services offered to them. It is our hope that we are helping build and ensure a safe school climate that cultivates empathy, acceptance, and responsibility.

Mission

- School counselors will help prepare and empower students through collaborative relationships to facilitate emotional, social, and academic development and well-being.
- Students will understand the importance of postsecondary opportunities and discover what path is right for them.

Before we get into the details of the three academic domains, I want to review the beliefs of the school counseling department, our vision, and our mission statements.

Within the school counseling department, we believe that all students should have access to a high-quality education, as well as support systems that are accessible, fair, effective, and uphold social justice.

We also believe that each student has the ability to become something great and pursue excellence.

We know that each student is different and will achieve excellence in a variety of ways. This brings us to the vision statement.

This is our hope for what the counseling department can achieve in the coming years. We strive to ensure that all students and families are aware of the services offered to them. It is our hope that we are helping build and ensure a safe school climate that cultivates empathy, acceptance, and responsibility.

Lastly, our mission statement is the purpose for our work. This reads, “School counselors will help prepare and empower students through collaborative

relationships to facilitate emotional, social, and academic development and well-being. Students will understand the importance of postsecondary opportunities and discover what path is right for them.”

From these statements alone, it can be demonstrated that student success is of the utmost importance to us. It is our goal as professionals to help serve students and their families, making sure each student discovers their own path to meaningful success and positive transitions. We want to help equip students with the tools to be able to make positive change and find meaning in their decisions.



PROGRAM ELEMENTS

A C A D E M I C

Goal: provide services, implement activities, and provide guidance to ensure all students are achieving the appropriate academic standard

- 1:1 academic appraisal and advising
- Utilization of data and data disaggregation to make meaningful decisions and remove academic barriers
- Support students through academic difficulties (Hines et al. 2020)
- Have an in-depth understanding of 504 and IEP plans
- Group counseling offering discussion of relevant topics such as goal setting, academic success, balancing schoolwork with life, time management, etc.
- Advocate for student's educational needs (Hines et al. 2020)
- Helping create student schedules

Looking at the academic domain first, the goal and responsibilities of the counselor are to provide services, implement activities, and provide guidance to ensure all students are achieving the appropriate academic standard. We recognize that every student is different, so the same outcome is not expected for every child. For example, we know that each student will thrive in different classes, different difficulty levels, and different environments. It is our role to help students identify where they perform the best academically. There are numerous ways we do this.

1:1 academic appraisal and advising

Appraisal is taking inventory of a student's strengths, weaknesses, interests, personality, and ideas. Advising is taking the results from the appraisal process and applying them to course registration and schedule creation.

Utilization of data and data disaggregation to make meaningful decisions and remove academic barriers (American School Counselor Association, 2023)

Support students through academic difficulties (Hines et al. 2020)

Have an in-depth understanding of 504 and IEP plans

Group counseling offering discussion of relevant topics such as goal setting, academic success, balancing schoolwork with life, time management, etc.

Advocate for student's educational needs (Hines et al. 2020)

Helping create student schedules

We don't expect every student to get A+s in every class, as this is not a realistic goal. In this domain, we want each student to be able to do the best they can. We want to see students succeed, and this definition is very unique to each person.



PROGRAM ELEMENTS

C A R E E R

Goal: aid students in preparing for the future by helping them recognize their interests, strengths, and passions

- Individual and group counseling sessions, lessons, and activities on the importance of goal setting, creating an action plan, etc.
- Personality and interest profilers
- Helping secure shadowing experiences, internships, and other professional exposure
- Advertise the different pathways available to students
- Work with staff to integrate career education in everyday learning environments
- Identify and address biases and barriers
- Continually expand on the world of work on an age and developmentally appropriate level

This section is closely related to the appraisals discussed on the previous slide. However, rather than applying it to present and upcoming school classes, we use the information to guide students in preparation for their future careers. Changes in student interests are expected, and we are there to help them navigate identifying what the future may hold for them. Again, there are many ways counselors work through the career domain of a comprehensive school counseling program. Some of these elements include:
Individual and group counseling sessions, lessons, and activities on the importance of goal setting, creating an action plan, etc.

Personality and interest profilers

Helping secure shadowing experiences, internships, and other professional exposure

Advertise the different pathways available to students

Work with staff to integrate career education in everyday learning environments

Identify and address biases and barriers

Continually expand on the world of work on an age and developmentally appropriate level

Again, we know children, adolescents, and young adults all change their minds. This part of the program is designed to expose students to various areas, which in turn can help shape their future. Students are ultimately the ones who get to decide where they want their life to go. We are there to be supportive and provide them with the resources they need to make a decision in which they feel comfortable in. The future can be a daunting thought. I recognize this, and I want to help students and their families understand various pathways, options, and ideas in order to make transitions smoother.



PROGRAM ELEMENTS

S O C I A L E M O T I O N A L

Goal: creating a positive environment in which students feel comfortable to be vulnerable, explore their social and emotional health, and know the importance of having positive relationships.

- Routine 1:1 check-ins with students
- Group sessions that focus on different topics and promote social emotional learning (SEL)
- Sending out appropriate referrals to outside sources when needed in best interest of the student
- Collaborating with families
- Allowing for student walk-ins to ensure openness and a strong rapport
- Promoting social justice and advocacy within the school environment
- Celebrating diversity
- Classroom instruction and school assembly on important topics such as prioritizing mental health, empathy, therapy, bullying, stress/anxiety, resilience, emotion regulation, conflict resolution etc.

The last domain is the social and emotional aspect. This aspect deals with student mental health, emotional regulation, and encourage positive social behavior. This is the element where student learn about the importance of interpersonal skills, celebrating differences rather than letting them divide, and creating an overall positive school environment and climate. Like the other domains, school counselors can take many different approaches into accomplishing the overarching goal of creating a positive environment in which students feel comfortable to be vulnerable, explore their social and emotional health, and know the importance of having positive relationships. Examples of interventions include

Routine 1:1 check-ins with students

Group sessions that focus on different topics and promote social emotional learning (SEL)

Sending out appropriate referrals to outside sources when needed in best interest of the student

Collaborating with families

Allowing for student walk-ins to ensure openness and a strong rapport

Promoting social justice and advocacy within the school environment

Celebrating diversity

Classroom instruction and school assembly on important topics such as prioritizing mental health, empathy, therapy, bullying, stress/anxiety, resilience, emotion regulation, conflict resolution etc.

Mental health and emotional wellbeing are critical pieces in a student's success, no matter their age. By introducing these concepts early on, there is a greater likelihood that students become comfortable when discussing these topics and are encouraged to seek help when needed.



PROGRAM ELEMENTS



KEY IDEAS:



All three domains (academic, career, and social/emotional) of the program overlap and can have major influences on each other



School counselors are there to help ensure the academic and emotional well-being of students, as well as help them plan for the future



School counselors work with families and outside resources to ensure students have the needed supports

As we end this portion of the presentation, I want to review a few key points before moving on.

1st- All three domains (academic, career, and social/emotional) of the program overlap and can have major influences on each other

2nd- School counselors are there to help ensure the academic and emotional well-being of students, as well as help them plan for the future

3rd -School counselors work with families and outside resources to ensure students have the needed supports



ADVOCACY

The next major section I will review is advocacy. In this section, I will go over strategies for promoting advocacy, promoting equitable educational practices, and responsive climates in pluralistic schools. Here we go!



ADVOCACY

What is advocacy?

Advocacy: public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy (Oxford University Press, 2023)

Who can advocate for a student?

- School counselors
- Parents
- Teachers
- Even students themselves!

Before we begin our discussion how we can advocate for our students, we must have a baseline understand of what advocacy actually is. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the definition of the word “advocacy” is public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy. We advocate for things we believe in and the people we want to see succeed.

Next, who can be an advocate in a school setting? The answer is almost all of us! School counselors, parents, teachers, and even students themselves. The American school counselor association’s ethical standards calls for school counselors to advocate for students. But how do we do this in a meaningful way? We will explore this on the upcoming slides.



ADVOCACY

What does acting as an advocate look like?

According to ASCA's Ethical Standards for School Counselors, (2022) an advocate can be defined as...

"A person who speaks, writes or acts to promote the well-being of students, parents/guardians, school and community stakeholders, and the school counseling profession. School counselors advocate to create and maintain equitable systems, policies and practices."

Speaking of the American school counselor association, their code of ethics provides a definition for the word "advocate" that is worth looking at. This definition reads "A person who speaks, writes or acts to promote the well-being of students, parents/guardians, school and community stakeholders, and the school counseling profession. School counselors advocate to create and maintain equitable systems, policies and practices."

This does a great job in putting us as counselors, parents, and teachers in this role and really highlights our role within the school system itself.



ADVOCACY

Strategies on HOW to advocate for students (based on Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory):

- **Microsystem:** a student's immediate environment
 - We are all a part of the students' microsystem
- **Mesosystem:** the connection between a student's different environments
 - How teachers interact with counselors, counselors with parents, parents with teachers etc.
 - Impactful advocacy can happen as this level by targeting relevant parties in the microsystem (Cigrand et al., 2015)
- **Exosystem:** environments that a student is exposed to indirectly
 - Advocacy can include relevant parties here, as well (Cigrand et al., 2015)
 - State governments, neighborhood associations, counselor training programs, state boards of education, etc.
- **Macrosystem:** cultural and social values
 - Advocacy here is working to sustain or weaken societal norms, stereotypes, beliefs, etc. (Cigrand et al., 2015)

Now, we can move onto how to be an advocate. Because schools are multitiered systems, its important to look at what this looks like on different levels. Using Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, we can apply this to the school setting. This theory relies on the belief that we cab break down our lives into different systems- getting more broad as we go.

First- Microsystem: a student's immediate environment

We are all a part of the students' microsystem

Mesosystem: the connection between a student's different environments

How teachers interact with counselors, counselors with parents, parents with teachers etc.

Impactful advocacy can happen as this level by targeting relevant parties in the microsystem (Cigrand et al., 2015)

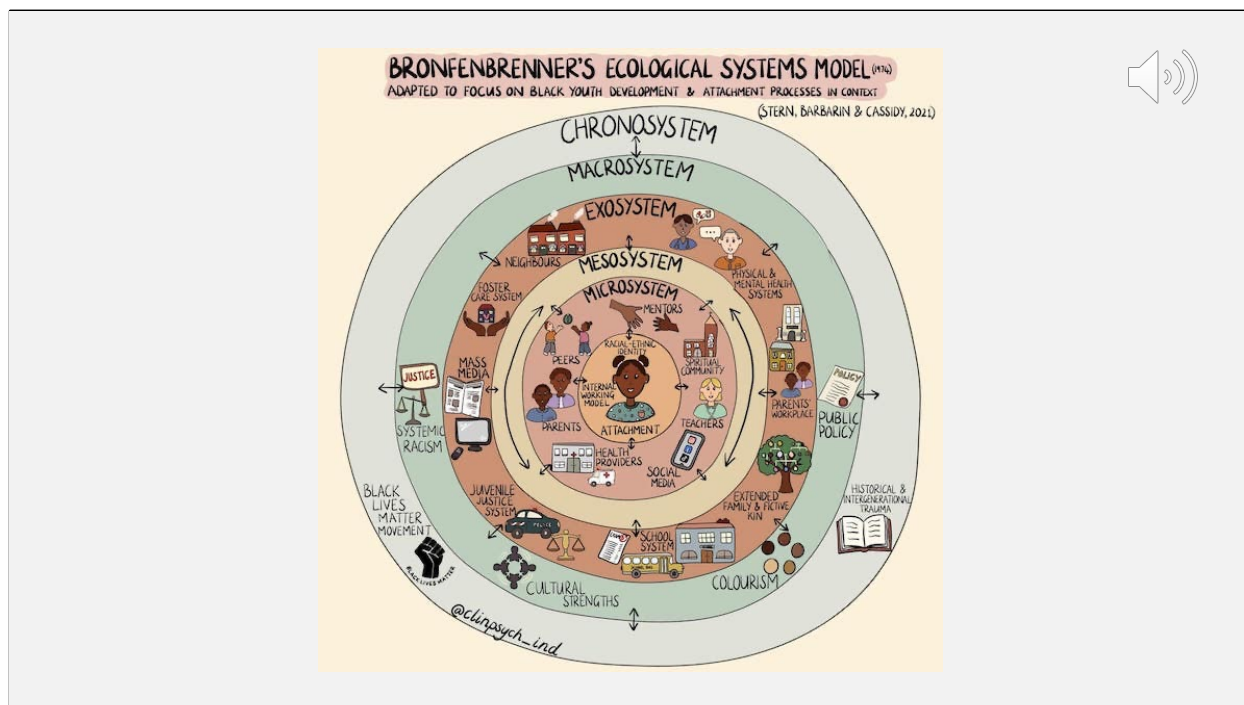
Exosystem: environments that a student is exposed to indirectly

Advocacy can include relevant parties here, as well (Cigrand et al., 2015)

State governments, neighborhood associations, counselor training programs, state boards of education, etc.

Macrosystem: cultural and social values

Advocacy here is working to sustain or weaken societal norms, stereotypes, beliefs, etc. (Cigrand et al., 2015)



Building on our last slide, this has been included for our visual learners. As you can see, all of these systems build on one another. While Cigrand et al., 2015 stopped the discussion at the exosystem, we can arguably state that advocacy can be seen within the chronosystem as well. Social justice movements are a large part of advocacy today, and their effects can greatly be seen in schools. A lot of the time, the chronosystem gives people a community in which they feel they belong to something greater- such as the BLM movement.



ADVOCACY

American Counseling Association (ACA) recommendation (2011):

- 1. Contact your representative and senators.
- 2. Be brief.
- 3. Focus on only one issue in each communication.
- 4. Ask for something specific.
- 5. Keep a copy of your email or letter for future reference.
- 6. Follow up.

Another strategy for advocacy is provided by the American counseling association. This is helpful when trying to make specific change. The ACA recommends

1. Contact your representative and senators.
2. Be brief.
3. Focus on only one issue in each communication.
4. Ask for something specific.
5. Keep a copy of your email or letter for future reference.
6. Follow up.

This can be extremely helpful in the process of making meaningful and detailed change. This can be used when writing someone in an official seat or role, and the advocacy is extremely specialized with an action plan.



ADVOCACY

PROMOTING EQUITABLE EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES (Oakes et al., 2021)

- Develop and encourage high-quality early childhood education
- Hire, prepare, and be willing to retain a diverse, high-quality workforce
- Provide additional time, resources, and capacity to schools in need
- Find and provide resources, opportunities, and supports to address out-of-school barriers to learning

PROMOTING RESPONSIVE CLIMATES IN PLURALISTIC SCHOOLS

- Trauma informed counseling
- Discussing social justice issues and awareness in a positive light within the school environment
- Celebrating the differences of each student
- Help students find a group in which they feel they belong
- Zero-tolerance bullying policies
- Cultural competence trainings for school professionals

Lastly, here are strategies for promoting equitable educational practices and responsive climates in pluralistic schools.

According to oakes et al (2021), we can promote equitable education practices in many ways- these include

Develop and encourage high-quality early childhood education

Hire, prepare, and be willing to retain a diverse, high-quality workforce

Provide additional time, resources, and capacity to schools in need

Find and provide resources, opportunities, and supports to address out-of-school barriers to learning

In order to promote a responsive climate, we have to be aware of our own personal thoughts, biases, and beliefs. We must also teach students to do this in a healthy, as well as how to facilitate healthy conversation. To create a positive school environment, we can

Implement trauma informed counseling

discuss social justice issues and awareness in a positive light within the school environment

Celebrate the differences of each student

Help students find a group in which they feel they belong
And implement Zero-tolerance bullying policies
Cultural competence trainings for professionals

By implementing all of these strategies, we can ensure that the school environment is one safe for children and students of all ages, races, ethnicities, religions, sexual orientation, gender, ability and disability, and so on. Diversity is what propels the world, and we must recognize this.



ACCESS, ATTAINMENT & ACHIEVEMENT

The next major section with will cover in this presentation is access, attainment, and achievement of students within the school system.



ACCESS, ATTAINMENT, AND ACHIEVEMENT

What are these constructs? What do they mean?

(Merriam-Webster, n.d.)

Access: permission, liberty, or ability to enter, approach, or pass to and from a place or to approach or communicate with a person or thing; : freedom or ability to obtain or make use of something

Attainment: the act of attaining something

Attain: to reach as an end; to come into possession of; to gain or achieve

Achievement: the act of achieving something; a result gained by effort; accomplishment; to succeed

Like the other sections, before we apply these concepts, we must have a baseline understanding what they mean.

What are these constructs? What do they mean?

(Merriam-Webster, n.d.)

Access: permission, liberty, or ability to enter, approach, or pass to and from a place or to approach or communicate with a person or thing; : freedom or ability to obtain or make use of something

Attainment: the act of attaining something

Attain: to reach as an end; to come into possession of; to gain or achieve

Achievement: the act of achieving something; a result gained by effort; accomplishment; to succeed

The biggest thing I want you to take away from this slide is the difference between attainment and achievement. In a school setting, attainment looks like meeting an academic standard. This could be through test scores or knowledge checks. Achievement builds on attainment and takes various things into consideration such as difficulty level and progress made overtime.

ACCESS, ATTAINMENT, AND ACHIEVEMENT



What affects student access, attainment, and achievement?

Culture & ethnicity

- Individual and familial belief of various gender roles
- Innate morals and values
- View of and feelings toward self

Legal constructs

- Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Economics

- SES
- Level of funding received
- Financial health of society as a whole (Ward & Tierney, 2017)

Political issues

- Social justice issues such as gender, homosexuality, etc.
- Federal, state, and local composition and characteristics of politicians (Ward & Tierney, 2017)
- Voting behaviors (Ward & Tierney, 2017)

Now that we have an understanding of what these concepts mean in general and applied in a school setting, we can discuss the cultural, ethical, economic, legal, and political issues surrounding these constructs. Student education, health, and well-being are impacted by all of these facets on some level. It is important to recognize how the access, attainment, and achievement can be impacted. So reviewing each of these issues starting with:

Culture & ethnicity

Individual and familial belief of various gender roles

Innate morals and values

View of and feelings toward self

Economics

SES

Level of funding received

Financial health of society as a whole (Ward & Tierney, 2017)

Legal constructs

Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Political issues

Social justice issues such as gender, homosexuality, etc.
Federal, state, and local composition and characteristics of politicians (Ward & Tierney, 2017)
Voting behaviors (Ward & Tierney, 2017)



BARRIERS

The last major section of this presentation is barriers. Here we will explore the barriers found that hinder academic achievement and student well-being. This section is closely related to our discussion in the previous section.



BARRIERS

Possible barriers to academic achievement and student well-being:

- Lack of staff training (trauma-informed care, cultural competency, evidence-based practices, professional development)
- Lack of consideration of student diversity
- Physical barriers
- Underuse of existing resources
- Lack of organizational and didactic strategies (non-inclusive curriculum, outdated beliefs, etc.)

(Arnaiz Sánchez et al., 2019)

There are many barriers that stand in the way of student academic achievement and well-being. I want to note that this list is not exhaustive but includes many points that are important for this discussion.

Possible barriers to academic achievement and student well-being include:

Lack of staff training (trauma-informed care, cultural competency, evidence-based practices, professional development)

Lack of consideration of student diversity

Physical barriers

Underuse of existing resources

Lack of organizational and didactic strategies



BARRIERS

Opportunities to enhance academic achievement and total student development:

AKA: mitigating the identified barriers!

- Require teachers, counselors, and staff to take part in continuing education
- Use student data to examine and understand the demographics of the student body
- Connect students and families to outside referrals and resources to mitigate outside barriers
- Careful consideration of what resources are needed and what will have the biggest impact on student achievement overall
- Create lesson plans that promote student achievement and well-being
- Prioritize mental and physical health

Moving onto the more positive side of things, there are also many opportunities to enhance academic achievement and total student development. Again, this list is not exhaustive.

To mitigate the barriers previously identified, we can

Require teachers, counselors, and staff to take part in continuing education

Use student data to examine and understand the demographics of the student body

Connect students and families to outside referrals and resources to mitigate outside barriers

Careful consideration of what resources are needed and what will have the biggest impact on student achievement overall

Create lesson plans that promote student achievement and well-being

Prioritize mental and physical health

Recognizing the barriers that impact student academic achievement is important, as it helps us understand where we need to improve to create a better future for the upcoming leaders and professionals of the world.

PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

- Review and examination of program elements
 - Academic
 - Career
 - Social/emotional
- Advocacy
 - What is advocacy?
 - How can we advocate for our students in a healthy way?
- Access, attainment, and achievement
 - What are these concepts in school?
 - Why are they important?
- Barriers
 - What barriers exist?
 - How can we mitigate the barriers?



As our presentation comes to a close, I want to quickly review the things we touch on.

Review and examination of program elements

Academic

Career

Social/emotional

Advocacy

What is advocacy?

How can we advocate for our students in a healthy way?

Access, attainment, and achievement

What are these concepts in school?

Why are they important?

Barriers

What barriers exist?

How can we mitigate the barriers?



THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

Please contact me with any questions!

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That concludes my presentation! Thank you all so much for listening. I know that was filled with a lot of information, sources, and propositions. Please feel free to contact me or my supervisor with any questions. We look forward to continuing to serve you in any capacity we can.

References



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This is a reference sheet of all the sources I utilized within this presentation. Please feel free to look into any of these articles and resources.