

# Connected Counseling: Connecting Students to Success

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**Solutions**  
*to the Dropout Crisis*

“Helping students to succeed academically and graduate with the knowledge and skills for higher education and/or high-skill jobs.”



# Multi-year project (2002-2009)

- Project funds made available through generous financial support of the Archibald Bush Foundation.

<http://www.bushfoundation.org>



# Goals of Connected Counseling

- Goal 1: School counselors accept a new vision of comprehensive standards-based school counseling program and assume new roles.
- Goal 2: School counselors design guidance curriculum and new initiatives.
- Goal 3: School counselors and advisors effectively guide students and support them.
- Goal 4: Implementation of the Six Year Plan for all students to complete.
- Goal 5. Expand College Access.



# Guiding Principles

- Primary:
  - Increase high school graduation rates for all student groups.
  - Connect students to rigor, relevance, and relationships.
  - Redesign high school counseling programs by implementing the ASCA (American School Counselors Association) National Model to ensure equity and access for all students.



# School counselors are:

- Partners in ALL students' academic achievement.
- Challenging each other to answer the question:
  - How are ALL students better as a result of receiving the services of school counseling programs?



# School Counseling Programs are about:

- Developing leaders
- Using technology
- Fostering collaboration
- Advocating for ALL students
- Making data-driven decisions
- Helping all students achieve academically
- Promoting systemic change



# Phases of the grant:

- Phase I: (2003-'05): “Begin the Course”
- Phase II: (2005-'07): “Staying the Course”
- Phase III: (2007-09): “Getting Results for ALL Students”







# Phase One: (2003-05) “Begin the Course”



- Counselors learn/implement the ASCA (American School Counselors Association) National Model.
- Develop collaborative teaming with monthly meetings to share best practices.
- Guidance technicians are added to each school to handle noncounseling duties: administration of tests and clerical duties.
- Six Year Plan: Web-based tool launched for students to record four years of high school and two years beyond.



# Phase II: (2005-2007)

## “Staying the Course”

- Counselor monthly meetings continue.
- Career Resource Centers expand.
- Focus on developing Action Plans using templates from the national model:
  - Guidance curriculum for all students
  - Closing the Gap activities for students needing more support.



## Phase III: (2007-09)

# “Getting Results for ALL students

- Six Year Plan becomes a graduation requirement (2008).

- Next generation of the Six Year Plan added:

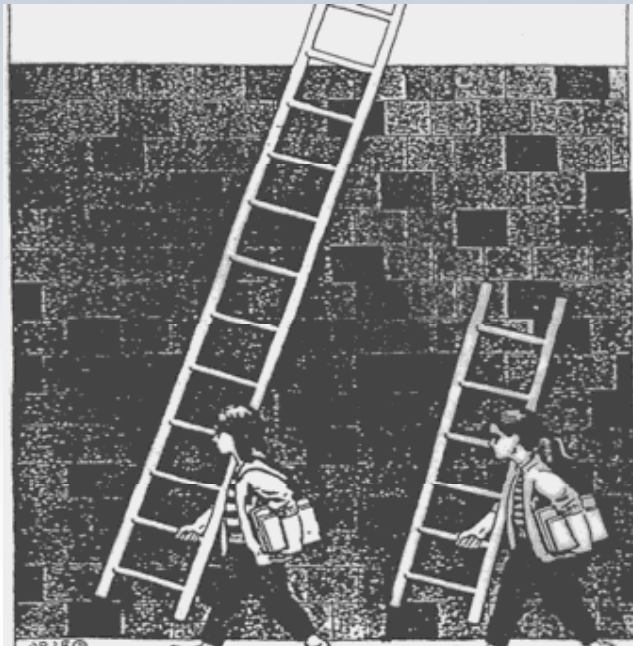


NAVIANCE



# “How are students different as a result of the school counseling program?”

(ASCA National Model 2003)





## Six Year Plan:



“Live Tomorrow What You Dream Today”

[www.6yearplan.spps.org](http://www.6yearplan.spps.org)

- A few goals of the Six Year Plan:
  - Motivate students to become engaged with their career and life planning beginning in the ninth grade.
  - Increase the relevance of what students are doing in high school with their future.
  - Increase graduation rates.
  - Increase each student’s knowledge of career options.
  - Increase the number of students who go on to higher education after high school.
  - Increase all stakeholders’ involvement with students career and life planning.



# Some results summarized by our external evaluators:

the CAREI Team (Jan. 2007)

<http://cehd.umn.edu/CAREI/Reports/Connected>

- CAREI: Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement: University of MN:
  - **Graduation and Dropout Rates:**
    - Despite increasing number of students receiving free/reduced price lunches and receiving ELL services, graduation rates are increasing.
    - Saint Paul school counselors have ***accepted the vision of the ASCA National Model for school counseling programs***. The CCIT (Connected Counseling Implementation Team) members were proud to be following ASCA standards and said, “Not many districts can say that.”
    - ***College and Career Resource Centers*** have been expanded in most schools where students can check their academic progress on the web-based Student Portal or explore college and career options.
    - The ***Six Year Plan graduation requirement*** for the Class of 2008 provided the motivation to create web-based resources and to explore appropriate curriculum to meet the requirement.



# Concluding Comments

- Systemic change of school counseling programs and personnel takes time, patience, and resources.
- Challenging students to complete their Six Year Plans could lead to life-long learning as they learn how to navigate the career planning process.



# Concluding comments

(continued)

- Learner engagement and motivation are essential components of high school reform movements.
  - Six Year Plan engages and motivates students to learn more about the subject they know best: themselves.

