

Principals' Perceptions of Novice School Counselors' Induction: An Afterthought

This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of school administration and K-12 education.



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Principals have a clear impact on the transition of teachers into their initial work setting (Allensworth, Ponisciak, Mazzeo, 2009; S. T. Bickmore & D. L. Bickmore, 2010; Scherff, 2008). School administrators' influence on teacher induction is both organizational and relational as they develop structures and practices that support novices. Supporting effective induction structures (i.e., orientation, mentoring, collaboration), as well as developing positive working conditions and relationships with novices, leads to teacher satisfaction and retention, resulting in improved student achievement (Glazerman et al., 2010; Henry, Bastian, & Fortner, 2011; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). However, little empirical evidence exists delineating principals' role in the induction of other school personnel, such as school counselors. The purpose of this study was to examine how principals conceptualized and engaged in the induction of novice school counselors (NSCs). Specific questions that guided this examination were: (1) How did principals perceive the support given in NSCs in their transition? (2) How did principals' understanding of school counseling influence induction supports provided for NSCs?

NCPEA International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation, Vol. 8, No. 2– October 2013
ISSN: 2155-9635 © 2013 National Council of Professors of Educational Administration

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Induction

With little research guiding effective school counselor induction, the teacher induction literature provides the foundation for understanding how principals may support NSCs. Induction supports or elements that appear to increase teacher satisfaction, retention, and effectiveness include mentoring, structured collaboration among colleagues, professional development, reduced workload, positive school climate, effective orientation, and positive interactions and support from the principal (S. T. Bickmore & D. L. Bickmore, 2010; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Although mentoring has been the predominant method of supporting novices (Glazer et al., 2010; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004), a growing body of evidence suggests that a multifaceted approach to induction that includes several elements of support is most effective for teacher retention and positive performance (D. L. Bickmore & S. T. Bickmore, 2010; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Research further indicates that collaborative school cultures, structures and practices that promote collaboration among teachers, are needed to support all teachers and particularly novice teachers (Bickmore, Bickmore, & Hart, 2005; Johnson, Kraft, & Papay, 2012). The principal has a central role in the development of collaboration through organizational structures and practices, as well as interpersonal interactions (Boyd et al., 2011; Johnson et al., 2012).

How principals perceive their role in the induction of novices is less clear. Bickmore and Bickmore (2010) studied two principals that had planned and received grant funding to implement a multifaceted induction program. Their findings suggested that when principals understand their impact on novices, both organizationally and personally, they provide effective induction support. By contrast, Scherff (2008), in a study of two novice teachers, delineated how principals can negatively impact novices when they do not plan induction elements and when their interactions with staff are perceived as negative.

Counselor Induction

Though there is a dearth of literature highlighting research on NSC induction. Matthes (1992) conducted the most notable early study of the induction experiences of NSCs. The majority of NSCs reported having no assigned mentors, no reduced workload, and minimal resources (e.g., clerical staff, discretionary funds, guidance materials). Following Matthes' study, Stickel and Trimmer (1994) used a case study approach to explore one NSC's induction experience. Stickel and Trimmer observed that NSCs needed opportunities for reflection, guidance for developing problem-solving skills, and the opportunity to develop processes for dealing with complex issues in their school settings. In order for NSCs to develop these skills, Stickel and Trimmer specifically suggested that the induction elements of formal mentoring, reflective practice opportunities, and additional resources be provided. Since Matthes (1992) and Stickel and Trimmer (1994) conducted their research, there has been no systematic or confirmatory research to explore NSCs induction experiences.

Unique Issues to Counselor Induction

School counselors are trained to design and implement comprehensive programs (American School Counselor Association [ASCA], 2012). School counselor preparation is focused on evidence-based and best practice services (i.e., classroom guidance curriculum, small group and individual counseling). However, principals receive little pre-service or in-service training on effective school counseling and current standards for the counseling profession (Finkelstein, 2009; Protheroe, 2010; Zepeda & Mayers, 2004). Principals may have a more antiquated conceptualization of the role of school counselors and may relegate school counselors to ancillary duties – being the hall monitor, test coordinator, scheduler, planning for prom – rather than allowing NSCs to implement effective practices learned in preparation (Finkelstein, 2009). NSCs educated in programs accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP, 2009) have received training focused on counseling skill development as well as programming that enhances college and career readiness. The incongruence between school counselor preparation and the reality of the daily work assigned to NSCs can cause increased stress, career dissatisfaction, and lower career commitment (Baggerly & Osborn, 2006; Scarborough & Culbreth, 2008; Wilkerson & Bellini, 2006). Yet another impediment to principals' induction support for NSCs is the singularity of the position. The NSC may be the only counselor in the building, precluding the principal from organizing effective mentoring, collaboration, or professional support.

NSCs without teaching experience. According to ASCA (2011), only seven states require school counselors to be certified as teachers or to have teaching experience. Many school counselors enter the profession with little exposure to the daily functioning of schools other than field experiences as part of their preparation program. The lack of familiarity with school systems, coupled with being hired into a new environment with new colleagues, students, and administrators can create a steep learning curve for NSCs without teaching experience.

Methods

This study was a reanalysis of data collected in a multi-case study of counselor induction in which we interviewed principals and NSCs, and collected artifacts related to counselor induction. In this previous analysis we focused on NSCs' perceptions of their induction (Curry & Bickmore, 2012). Evidence surfaced in the original analysis suggesting principals' understanding and perceptions of NSCs' needs in relationship to effective school counseling may have impacted how novices were inducted. As a result, in this study we examined principals' perceptions of NSCs' induction needs and contemporary school counseling standards and practices. We employed social constructivism as our interpretive frame to examine principals' conceptualization and perceived engagement in the induction of NSCs (Creswell, 2013). The primary data source for this reanalysis was principal semi-structured interviews. Additionally, we collected artifacts related to principals' involvement with NSCs' induction, such as counselor evaluation instruments and professional development materials. These artifacts provided an understanding of context and served as secondary sources to triangulate interview data.

Principal semi-structured interviews were conducted in the first month of the school year. Interviews ranged in length from 26 to 60 minutes. The semi-structured interview questions were: (1) Describe your professional background; (2) How are counselors hired at this school or district; (3) What are your expectations of a new counselor; (4) How do you orient your school counselor to the school; (5) Describe induction activities for new counselors at the district; (6) Describe specific induction activities for new counselors that occur at your school; (7) Do you have other thoughts about the induction of new counselors to your school or the district?

Participants and Research Sites

In the original study we used convenience and purposeful sampling (Collins, Onwuegbuzie, & Jiao, 2007) to select case sites. We conveniently selected sites with NSCs (first and second year of service) who had graduated from the university in which we worked or who had been trained by the second author in the ASCA *National Model* (2005) of school counseling. We then purposefully selected sites that included a spectrum of school settings – rural, suburban, urban settings, and public, private, elementary, middle, and high schools. Five final sites were selected and we interviewed each principal and an assistant principal at one site who acted as the NSC’s direct supervisor, for a total of six administrators. Table 1 outlines each school’s demographics and background information for each principal.

Table 1
Participant and School Background Data

Principal Pseudonym	School Context	Background
JoAnn Roland	Ace Elementary School: urban: public: 528 students: 91% F/r lunch, 89% Black, 4% Asian, 6 % White. Novice was the only counselor at the school	22 years in education; 2 years assistant principal; 4 th year as principal; 1 st year at Ace.
Lenny Hanks	Bell Elementary School: urban; public; 625 students; 91% F/r lunch; 5% Asian, 77% Black, 14% White, 2.5% Hispanic, 2.5% Multiethnicity. Two counselors at the school, one was novice.	Several years teaching elementary and middle school; 3 years as assistant at Bell; 19 th year as principal of Bell.
Sam Davis	Ulysses High School: suburban; public; 1355 students; 35.9% F/r lunch; 53% White, 44% Black, 1.5 Hispanic, 1% Asian, .5% Multi-ethnicity. 4 total counselors, three were novice.	12 years as teacher, 6 years assistant principal, 1 year (previous year) in district office, duties included counselor coordinator, child welfare/attendance, homeless, expulsion; 1 st year principal

Jack Savoy	Our Lady School: urban: private: 339 students: 30% F/r lunch: 54% African American, 41% White, 3% Asian, 2% Multi-racial, 62%; Catholic, 38% non-Catholic. Two counselors at the school, one was novice.	32 nd year in education at public and private schools; 20 th year at Our Lady as teacher and Dean of Students; 1 st year as principal.
Janice Lemon	Our Lady School	Teacher; Previously school counselor at Our Lady; 2 nd Year as Assistant Principal.
Seth Williams	Salem High School: rural; public; 1664 students; 32% F/r lunch; 12 Black, 3% Hispanic, 85% White, 1% multiethnicity. 4 counselors, one was novice	14 years as teacher, 7 th year as an administrator, 4 th year as a principal of Salem.

Analysis

In our original coding we used both inductive and deductive methods. Two sets of a priori codes were developed prior to coding, what Creswell (2013) would consider provisional codes that reflect the basic questions or constructs of the research. The first set included five induction elements that supported novice teachers culled from the literature: one-to-one mentoring, collaboration, professional development, principal interaction with novices, and orientation. The second set of codes included aspects of effective counseling practice as outlined by the ASCA *National Model* (2005): including appropriate direct and indirect services, advocacy, and student connections. Once coding began we also coded passages using in vivo and codes that emerged in the participant interview transcripts.

In our analysis reported here we reviewed all codes derived from principal interviews in the original analysis. A constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was employed in which we grouped and regrouped all codes in the process of the development of themes outlining how principals conceptualized and engaged in the induction of novice school counselors. To address trustworthiness – credibility, transferability, and confirmability – we triangulated data by comparing participant interviews and contrasting interview data with artifacts (Creswell, 2013). Transferability occurred through memos developed in the analysis process to expose and bracket our biases as former school practitioners (principal, school counselor) and to delineate differences between and among codes (Creswell). The purpose of these credibility techniques was to capture experiential data or researcher bias that may interfere with the researchers’ understanding and interpretation of participants’ statements as well as to provide a “thick” description of the participants’ experiences (Creswell). Finally, we supported confirmability through coding side-by-side and peer review of findings.

There were a total of 31 individual codes in the analysis, including the a priori codes, with 343 specific instances across all codes. This analysis resulted in three themes that represented principal conceptualizations of school counseling and the resulting

engagement of the principal in formalizing planned induction for the NSCs. These themes were: (1) limited understanding of effective school counseling; (2) “I never really thought about it [NSC induction]”; and (3) the happenstance of induction supports provided to novices.

Findings

Theme #1 Limited Understanding of Effective School Counselor Training and Practice

Within this theme, principals discussed their conceptualization of the work of school counselors. However, this conceptualization was often limited and disparate from the role of school counselors as described by the ASCA *National Model* (2005; 2012) and NSCs’ preparation. This lack of understanding affected the development of induction supports. For example, though school counselors were prepared to deliver a core counseling curriculum, the principals often used NSCs for administrative tasks (i. e., 504 coordinators, schedulers, test administrators). These tasks and services were not congruent with preparation novices had received in pre-service programs. In describing her vision of the school counselor’s role, Ms. Roland, the principal at Ace Elementary stated,

To be able to manage student records... test coordinators... so to make sure that, first of all the tests when they come in that they’re secured, that they’re coded and handled in a proper manner... that all children in need of 504 plans, accommodations... that all of those are completed and submitted to the state in a timely manner. To make sure that she is aware of all students that receive IEPs that have accommodations for testing... that they are receiving those accommodations in the classroom as well as for testing, and also to be... a go to person that teachers can ask questions.

The NSC at Ace Elementary was unprepared to meet Ms. Roland’s expectations having been prepared primarily in the roles outlined by the ASCA (2005) *National Model*, such as student career counseling and academic development. The NSC had no training in speech therapy or academic difficulties and no preparation to serve as test coordinator. Thus, the novice was unlikely to be an effective “go to” person for teachers as described by Ms. Roland. Most of the other principals shared Ms. Roland’s conceptualization of the NSCs’ role. For example, Mr. Savoy echoed this same understanding when describing that a school counselor’s daily duties included, “record maintenance and being able to interpret test scores.” This conceptualization of the role of school counselors may have caused NSCs to experience role ambiguity and stress if their own role conceptualization was vastly different from their principal’s view.

Underlying potential incongruence between principal and NSCs’ expectations for the school counselor’s role was the current demands faced by principals. Mr. Hanks at Bell Elementary acknowledged that the NSC at his school had received what he presumed to be a quality education, though he also admitted knowing little about her actual preparation,

So, when they come in, I don't know what their coursework is like. I know they do an internship, and we've had interns here with our other counselor and that's a good thing... So I was impressed. It is a thorough program to become a guidance counselor.

In spite of the perceived quality of preparation received by his NSC, Mr. Hanks was concerned that his NSC was not trained to do what he needed her to do. He summed up the disconnect,

[Preparation programs] need to put more emphasis on real life... What are you really going to do? What does that principal really need you for? I don't know what job description they have when they come out of the universities, but when they come into our schools, there's a whole different job description as a counselor... dealing with the problems of society, poverty, health, state accountability, testing, administering the tests... they don't know much of what they are getting ready to do, and it's a demanding job.

There were two principals, however, with recent training and experience in school counseling that had a perspective of contemporary school counseling practice that was likely more congruent with the NSCs than the other principals in the study. Mr. Davis, who had served as the district counseling coordinator prior to becoming a principal, had attended counselor trainings. Also, Ms. Lemon, assistant principal at Our Lady School, had previously been the school counselor. Mr. Davis noted that much of the problem with inducting NSCs was that many principals and district supervisors have not received training on the services school counselors are prepared to deliver. Mr. Davis stated,

[Administrators] are older, veteran, experienced people and the way they did things when they were maybe in the assistant principal role or in the classroom was a lot different than it is today. ... And there's a lot they don't know that these counselors have to do and take care of... So, it's sort of just like you going to a doctor for a procedure and they haven't learned anything new in the last 30 years. ... [S]ome things that administrators need to do, is to have professional development on areas that they don't know much about, and I think counseling is one of the things that a lot of times administrators don't really know.

Because of his recent training in school counseling, Mr. Davis's perspective on induction supported the role of NSCs at his school in developing prevention-based curriculum for students, the focus of the *ASCA National Model* (2005).

For most of the principals, however, the lack of understanding of current, effective counseling practice and preparation was apparent. The principals' perceptions of immediate needs superseded services novices were prepared to deliver (i.e., college and career curriculum). A prominent need was the accountability pressures felt by principals. Although all of the principals participating emphasized this issue repeatedly, it was best described by Mr. Hanks,

If you look back over the last several years, what has changed?; student performance. You've got to make your test scores. It opened up a whole new job for ... accountability, for a principal. If your test scores go down, your name gets in the paper... So, as education evolves, so does that counselor position... five years ago, ten years ago, who cared about 504? Who cared about test scores and state accountability and whether you were administering this test following the law? ...they even have to know, the law of special ed [educaton] situations, on account of testing, accountability, as it relates to 504 issues.

In discussing the preparation of school counselors and school needs as perceived by the principal, Mr. Davis expressed the perceptions of the other principals when he stated,

They need to know the testing background of how that... is supposed to happen. Because, really and truly, at this point, most systems don't have the luxury of just saying "Counselors, you don't have to worry about testing at all." That's not going to happen.

The combination of not understanding effective school counseling, along with pressures of accountability, left these principals with the perception that NSCs needed to enter their buildings fully ready to assume all tasks assigned without concomitant background.

Theme #2 "I never really thought about it much"

The title for this theme is a direct quote from Mr. Williams, the principal of Salem High school, when asked how he inducted his NSCs. Specifically, he stated,

I had never thought much about induction for guidance counselors because I've had good experiences... I never really thought about it much, but I would say that it's lacking, it needs to be there to make sure that... counselors don't struggle in their early years.

With the exception of Mr. Davis, this quote represents principals' thinking about NSCs' induction. As interviews progressed, however, principals began making comparisons between NSCs' and novice teachers' needs. As noted by Mr. Hanks, "Were they prepared? Sure... Do they have a lot to learn? Oh yes. Just like a brand new teacher." However, there was no intentionality on the principals' part in planning for NSCs' induction. When asked about how their counselors were inducted, each principal spoke in broad generalities and seemed to be caught off guard with the question, as exemplified by Mr. Savoy at Our Lady School:

Hmm (pause). It appears, as though from the input that I have gotten from them, that things are going well and that they feel comfortable and feel like they've got the necessary freedom to do what's required, you know to get the job done.

Mr. Savoy had informally turned the induction of the two novices at his school over to the assistant principal, Ms. Lemon, who had been a counselor. As Mr. Savoy explained,

They are available to report to anyone in authority, either myself or Ms. Lemon, our other Assistant Principal. And she is, functions as a resource probably more than anything else, know[ing] and having been there and done that she knows how to help them.

Although an administrator mentoring NSCs was unique, the notion of assuming other staff members would support the NSCs was the norm, not the exception. In each school, principals assumed the experienced counselor, or Ms. Lemon at Our Lady School, would take on the role of mentor, but this role was never formalized. There was no deliberate planning on the part of the principal in organizing these relationships. Even Mr. Davis, who had the most structured induction support for his three NSCs, assumed the experienced counselor and NSCs would work together, “When school starts you don’t have time to really intern, you just, ‘Hey, learn as you go and you all work together.’ And they have worked together and learned from each other.”

As principals were probed about support for NSCs, they expressed a vague understanding of district/diocese support for NSCs. Mr. Williams at Salem High discussed his understanding of district support for NSCs, first outlining orientation and then ongoing support by the district,

At the district level, any new employee would go to an orientation; probably a half day orientation at the beginning of a school year ...but to my knowledge there is no district-wide support system for new counselors. If there is one and I don’t know about it, I apologize for being ignorant.

Mr. Williams assumed supports were in place but had no real knowledge. For the most part, the planned induction of NSCs was, at best, an afterthought for these principals.

Theme #3 Happenstance of Induction Supports Provided to Novices

According to principals, there were some induction supports for NSCs, though they were generally not intentional or planned. We discuss the availability and quality of these supports as outlined in the literature – orientation, professional development, mentoring, reduced workload, collaboration, and principal interactions with novices (Bickmore, Bickmore, & Hart, 2005; Johnson, Kraft, & Papay, 2012; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004).

Orientation. Although orientation was provided for NSCs at the district level, the orientation was generally the same orientation provided to teachers and other employees. As Ms. Lemon observed, “they go through ... the same orientation that the new teachers do, but I think it would be helpful for them to have a process for the counselors.” Principals were generally unaware of what information, resources, or training was provided during the orientation, as noted by Mr. Williams previously. There were two notable exceptions to a generic district orientation. Mr. Hanks at Bell Elementary outlined one of the exceptions, “There is an initial meeting for new counselors.” He didn’t know what was included but continued, “We just got a new director of guidance counselors and she’s doing a great job.” The other exception was at Our Lady School, where Ms. Lemon delivered an orientation specific to the NSCs at her school beyond

orientation provided by the diocese. Ms. Lemon described the orientation as,

I walked them through what I had done the previous year, the programs we had. I had put together a binder with all the reports, the computer reports and everything we generate from the computer about the students, from transcripts to grades to reports, anything, student lists... things like that.

Other than the one district and one school orientation, NSCs were not afforded initial guidance on how to implement district or school expectations or policies related to school counseling.

Professional development. Little formal or planned professional development (PD) was provided NSCs. Most of the principals either relied on the district to provide PD opportunities or waited until they were approached by the NSC with a request to attend PD. Principals, for the most part, were loosely aware of PD offered novices by the district as expressed by Mr. Williams,

Our counselors go and meet at the district level, maybe once, maybe twice a year.... like principals we have monthly meetings, for instance. I don't believe that there's any kind of monthly, or even quarterly type meeting that guidance counselors, new or experienced, would go to.

Moreover, when principals were aware of the content of PD, the topics of the trainings were often related to accountability or services out of the scope of school counseling practice based on the *ASCA National Model (2005)*. For example, Ms. Roland described PD provided in her district,

There are some trainings that the counselor and the principal go to. They may attend on the statewide data base for testing, how we access that, they give us our passwords and show us how to use the data... how you can form different reports and things like that.... She's gone to trainings on managing student records, 504 plans... They meet... monthly, to talk about topics, pertinent to her job responsibilities.

Ms. Roland's quote also highlights the issue of principals' being unaware of the quality of the training to meet NSCs' needs. Ms. Roland assumed training provided by the district was sufficient to prepare her NSC as a 504 coordinator. Yet, data triangulation through documents evidenced that this was approximately a 10 minute training. With no pre-service training in coordinating this federally mandated process, such limited training would likely be insufficient.

Mr. Davis was unique in that the NSCs as his school were provided with multiple PD opportunities. As an example, all counselors at Ulysses High attended and presented at a conference on the *ASCA National Model (2005)*. Mr. Davis chose to attend as well, stating,

[A]ll of them presented at the conference... they did such a great job, there's a lot of people said 'the state needs to hire y'all to go around and teach people, teach the administrators what we need to be doing'.

In Mr. Davis' prior experience at the district office he had gained knowledge of effective school counseling, which seemed to translate to encouraging and supporting school counselor PD. When asked why the counselors at his school, including novices, went to so many PD activities he responded by connecting his previous experience at the district office by stating,

... they [counselors at his school] go to a lot of professional development... I think I was also lucky in being able to have once a month those counselors meeting last year when I didn't really know other than school based stuff... it was definitely professional development for me. You know, so, anyway that was a big help.

Other than Mr. Davis, principals thought little about providing professional learning experiences specific to novices' professional needs.

Mentoring. As previously outlined, in all but one case, principals assumed the experienced counselor at the schools would mentor novices. However, there was no mentorship structure or training provided to the experienced counselors in order to perform the duties of a mentor. Principals further assumed mentoring was effective. When asked how he monitored the mentoring process at his school, Mr. Hanks stated, "I talked to the other, more experienced counselor yesterday, I said making sure the new counselor is learning, getting experience with things that you do to help ...cause that's very important." Even Mr. Davis, with his experience as the district coordinator of counseling, assumed the experienced school counselor at his school, with no mentorship training, could effectively mentor three new counselors. Additionally, no reduction in workload was given to the experienced counselor.

Mentoring at Ace Elementary was unique, as the novice was the only counselor at the school. A school-based counselor mentor was not an option. Ms. Roland's solution was to provide limited initial visits from the previous counselor and another school counselor in the same district. However, the supports she described were limited to two partial days and were more managerial and logistical than actual mentorship support,

...we did buddy her or pair her with the counselor that was here for so many years,... Mrs. Young... So this summer, Mrs. Young came over and met with Mrs. Carter and talked to her about the community and about the needs of our students. She transitioned her to show her how the records had been kept prior and where all of the guidance materials were. In addition, there's another counselor that's very good with testing and managing testing and organization, and she's at Nichols Elementary School, and we've paired Mrs. Carter with her. Mrs. Carter has gone to Nichols Elementary ...and spent the day with her to see how her school was set up for the maintenance of state-wide testing.

Mr. Williams, like the other principals, initially assumed the experienced counselors in his school would help the novice. However, as he spoke during the interview he compared teacher induction support and mentorship and realized that the process in place in his building for NSCs may not be the most effective,

Sometimes we'll hire somebody and we'll suddenly realize, when that teacher doesn't turn in grades on time or something, we'll go, 'oh, you know, we never assigned him or her a sponsor', and we're like 'gosh, we should have done this'. So we kind of created that situation where the teacher was destined to fail...come to think of it, why wouldn't we treat a guidance counselor the same way?

Workload. Similar to Matthes' (1992) findings, principals in this study did not recognize that NSCs might not be capable of managing the workload of a more experienced counselor. Most of the principals noted that there was an overwhelming amount of work to be done in their schools, yet they expected NSCs to perform all of the tasks assigned from the moment NSCs started the job. With the exception of two principals, administrators appeared not to consider easing NSCs into their workloads. One exception was Mr. Hanks who reduced the novice's workload by giving the experienced counselor testing responsibilities. The other exception was Mr. Davis, who specifically hired a test coordinator, knowing he would have three NSCs in his building. Other than these two instances, principals expected NSCs to assume all counseling duties. When talking about assigning duties to her NSC, Ms. Roland stated,

...She manages all of her responsibilities very well. I try not to overwhelm her, but it's hard to do. It's unbelievable the kinds of things we have to do on a school site to best meet the needs of kids. Kids have a lot of issues, families do in this time that we're living in. You know, [our state] is a high poverty state, and there's things that come along with servicing a high poverty population.

Although Ms. Roland stated that she tried not to overwhelm her NSC, she also indicated that the needs of students and families often were overwhelming. At her school, the duties she gave to the NSC were quite cumbersome including collecting and distributing winter coats for students in need, coordinating 504, Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and the child study team, response to intervention (RTI) services, classroom guidance, parent workshops, all testing, and individual and small group counseling.

Similarly, Ms. Lemon at Our Lady school stated, "my expectations were that they would be pretty well prepared to step in and do the job. Just going through the process myself, knowing that they have the training to do the job in the various areas." However, she also noted that many NSCs have no educational background or experience, as school counselors are no longer required, in most states, to have teacher experience. Ms. Lemon acknowledged that they may need more time and help with classroom lesson plans, understanding and supporting teachers, and learning classroom management strategies. This same sentiment was shared by Mr. Davis, as he expressed that one of the NSCs at his school did a great job with counseling but needed extra help with classroom guidance lessons. Although acknowledging some counselors had no experience in schools and that NSCs experienced high workloads, principals, for the most part, did not consider

reducing novices work requirement to allow them time to build skills.

Collaboration. Principals were more apt to be aware of the importance of the ongoing collaboration among counselors in their building than of other potential induction supports. Mr. Williams represents this recognition when asked what supports may have been important in the success of his NSC;

Now one of the things that I think has helped us is that we've had, with these 4 counselors, they've been very helpful in making the newest counselor or counselors feel at home and helping in their process of becoming accustomed to [Ulysses] High School... they just kind of form a family and a bond and kind of help each other out.

Mr. Davis was particularly cognizant of setting a positive collaborative working relationship among his three NSCs and the other members of the counseling staff. He described how they were able to meet for an entire week in the summer before any other faculty started:

Because they are all new, that week they spent together was big. The senior counselor came in a week before, and also the testing coordinator was here, so they were both here for a week together. Then the other three came in the next week, so the five of them worked together. I think that was the key to us being successful this year at this point.

Principals placed a high value on the ongoing relationship and job-embedded collaborative work among counselors as a support to novices. This was particularly exemplified by Ms. Roland at Ace Elementary, where there was only one counselor. When asked what recommendations she would make for NSCs she stated;

Unfortunately, a lot of the job is baptism by fire. I don't know if she shared this with you but things just kind of happen here and they happen very quickly. ...I'd like to see two counselors on the elementary level... I would say support from veteran counselors.

Although all principals recognized that ongoing collaboration with other counselors was important for the support of NSCs, only Mr. Williams at Salem High formally structured the collaboration process. He required all staff to engage in professional learning communities (PLCs) during early dismissal. He explained,

... the guidance counselors make up a PLC. So during those early dismissals at least twice a week they do meet. They have smart goals we call them, to help students achieve better, and their main focus is getting, how do we help students achieve at higher levels, so that they can earn diploma endorsements, industry based certifications, those kinds of things, and be best prepared for what's to come after their career at this school.

Adding a structured collaboration process provided another layer of support for novices

beyond the informal collaboration the other principals assumed was valuable to NSCs' induction.

Administrator as induction element. An administrator serves as an induction element both through formal, structured interactions and purposeful, informal interactions with staff (S. T. Bickmore & D. L. Bickmore, 2010; Boyd et al., 2011). These interactions may be more important for NSCs than teachers as a NSC's work is largely intertwined with that of the principal. Mr. Davis provided an example of planned, purposeful interactions with NSCs through weekly meetings with his school counselors. The assistant principal and the counseling team met to discuss upcoming projects, weekly events, challenges and any assistance the counseling team might need to meet deadlines. Mr. Davis attended about half of those meetings and assured that administrators were in the meeting. He stated,

...our assistant principal of instruction Debbie Smith meets with all counselors every Monday morning at 8:00. I probably make 50% of those meetings, but if there's something specific they need me for, then I'll make a point to make sure I'm in there. But, they meet every Monday and of course then Ms. Smith comes to me and gives me the whole run down. ...having that time to collaborate and work together is big.

The meetings provided structured access to the administration and opportunities for the NSCs to plan alongside principals and receive feedback in the process. Although a positive, effective way to promote counselor induction, most principals did not schedule such a meeting.

Ms. Lemon, the assistant principal who was formally a counselor, reiterated the importance of formal, structured interaction with NSCs. She outlined that the former principal who had retired had weekly meetings which she had found helpful as a counselor. When asked if she were the principal would she reinstate the weekly meetings, she stated,

I think I probably would. Just because there has been a question in the past as far as communication between everyone and I think that would just help; that would be a benefit to them and to me... talk about what's going on that week you know, and do we need to talk about certain kids, what's going on, when things come up just have a consulting meeting once a week; just formalize the process a little bit.

Unlike Mr. Davis, most of the principals described their interactions with the novices as informal and not purposeful. Mr. Hanks typified how principals provided informal support to NSCs and most often took a hands-off approach,

I didn't have a set time or set schedule, but she knew she could come on in that door. But I kept an eye on the situation. I monitored what she was doing and how I thought she was doing. Again, back to the luxury of having an experienced counselor, she would also keep tabs with me on how she thought she was doing.

Mr. Hanks believed that "keeping tabs" on the novice, through the perspective of the

experienced counselor, was an effective purposeful interaction. Overall, principals did not formally structure or purposefully interact with NSCs, limiting the principals' positive effect on their induction.

Discussion

With the exception of Ms. Lemon and Mr. Davis, the principals in this study had not received specific training on the role of school counselors, which may be common in U. S. schools (Armstrong, MacDonald, & Stillo, 2010). As a result, principals were most often using counselors in a manner not congruent with their preparation in current counseling practices (ASCA National Model; 2005; 2012), particularly engaging NSCs in accountability activities and non-counseling duties. This is concerning in light of the findings of Lee et al., (2007), which indicated counselors who performed higher amounts of non-guidance activities (e.g., clerical work) had higher levels of burnout. Yet, due to principals' immediate needs for accountability tasks to be done, the NSCs were assigned to activities such as 504, child study team coordination, test coordination, and other tasks outside the scope of the *ASCA National Model* (2005) training the NSCs had received. The reactive nature of taking care of urgent accountability needs meant that the NSCs may have had limited time for developing the prevention based curriculum or responsive services (i.e., individual and small group counseling) for which they were trained, thereby, potentially narrowing NSCs' positive role in student outcomes. These principals were unaware that they may have created greater stress and role ambiguity, factors that could ultimately reduce career satisfaction and commitment (Baggerly & Osborn, 2006).

The lack of principal training in the current role of the counselor may have also contributed to principals' constricted induction support for NSCs. Although there were some induction elements present for NSCs, support mostly occurred out of happenstance. The principals in this study did not systematically plan or structure school counselor induction; rather, some induction activities were informally provided, largely without intentionality. This lack of planning for induction was particularly disconcerting given that many of the NSCs had never worked as teachers in schools. Noteworthy, a few principals seemed to recognize during the interview process that they had perhaps overlooked the need to induct their NSCs. This recognition of the need for induction may indicate that with some training and guided reflection principals could be more apt to include planned processes for induction of NSCs.

Of the induction supports that were present, most were not effectively implemented (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Specifically, mentoring was problematic; mentors were never formally assigned to mentees, they had no formal training to be a mentor, no structured mentorship activities were provided to the mentee, and mentors were not given a reduced workload in order to make time to mentor novices. Lack of an assigned mentor was particularly problematic when only one NSC worked in a building with no experienced school counselor present. Not reducing the experienced counselor's workload was particularly problematic at Ulysses High School where one experienced school counselor was expected to mentor three novices. Additionally, there was a pervasive assumption that mentoring experiences were occurring and were effective in spite of the lack of evidence, planned monitoring, and evaluation of mentoring relationships and activities. We speculate that part of the issue related to mentoring was

that the principals in this study were unaware of effective mentoring practices in general and specifically for NSCs.

A growing body of evidence suggests novices benefit from structured collaborative interactions with peers (Boyd et al., 2011; Johnson et al., 2012). Principals expressed the value of collaboration among the counselors as supportive for novices. With few exceptions, however, principals assumed counselors were regularly meeting and that novices were benefiting from these meetings. In only one instance did the principal set specific structures that required counselors to meet and where the principal monitored these interactions.

Professional development and orientation were additional induction elements available to novices but limited in their implementation and potential effectiveness. Most of the principals relied on the district to provide PD for the NSCs and were generally unaware of the content and quality of the PD in meeting NSCs' needs. Principals did not provide structured professional learning experiences for NSCs at the school level, assuming the experienced counselor would take care of needed learning. As with PD, principals relied on the district to provide orientation to NSCs, which in all cases was the same orientation given all new faculty and staff. School orientation was also the same general orientation given to teachers. This could be particularly problematic when the NSC did not have previous teaching experience.

The principals' interactions with NSCs, as an induction element, occurred in all schools, but again, in most cases in a less than optimal manner. Although principal formal and informal interaction with all novices under their supervision is important in meeting novices' needs, this is particularly poignant for NSCs. There may be a greater need for more formal, regular interactions between principals and NSCs than between principals and novice teachers because of their overlapping and integrated work tasks and whole school focus (Finkelstein, 2009). Finkelstein (2009) found communication, trust, and shared decision-making between principals and counselors was perceived to be critical to school effectiveness for both principals and school counselors. Without formal, regular interactions these precursors to school effectiveness may be difficult to develop between principals and NSCs. Principals in this study felt they were available to novices but, with the exception of two principals, did not structure time to meet with counselors in general and specifically the NSCs in their schools. Several of the principals in this study, upon reflection, noted how they had not really thought about providing specific support for their NSCs and suggested the need to do so in the future. Yet, principals did not consider meeting formally with their NSCs as one of the needed induction supports to be implemented.

Overall, our analysis indicated that more high quality induction practices occurred at schools where principals had participated in some training or who had experience in current school counseling practices. Induction practices at Ulysses High School, where the principal had participated in training on the *ASCA National Model* (2005), included a formal, planned school orientation for the novices, encouragement and support for more professional development aligned with the ASCA model, and hiring a testing coordinator to reduce some duties incompatible with the ASCA model. At Our Lady School, the assistant principal, a former school counselor, took the lead in providing induction support for the novices that included structured interaction with the NSCs and professional development specifically for the novices.

Limitations

There are specific limitations to our study. First, although we have included a variety of settings, these settings do not represent other contexts. Conclusions and implications must be considered in this light. Second, we relied primarily on what the principals said they valued and what induction supports they claimed to have implemented. Although we had artifacts to support the principals' views, we did not confirm these perceptions with counselors or by observations. We further have no evidence of the effectiveness of the induction elements claimed to have been implemented by the principals. However, with the limited research surrounding school counselor induction, and particularly how principals understand counselor induction, this study may act as a foundation for future research and more effective induction practices in schools.

Implications and Conclusions

The findings from this study suggest several important considerations related to the principal's role in the induction of NSCs in five school contexts. In general, NSC induction was an afterthought for the principals in this study. Overwhelmingly, principals had limited training in the *ASCA National Model* (2005) and as a result did not understand contemporary school counseling practice. This, in combination with a lack of consistent induction planning resulted in the principals assuming that the novices were receiving sufficient support. Therefore, principals need training in the *ASCA National Model* and quality induction programs. Recommendations for strengthening induction programs for NSCs include developing multifaceted programming – reducing the workload for novices and mentors, providing mentorship training, monitoring and evaluating mentorship activities, providing NSCs specific orientation and PD that supports the current role of school counselors, developing and monitoring structured collaboration among counselors, and structured, formal interactions with the principal.

The limited research surrounding NSC induction suggests that future research is needed on a broad array of topics. Our study uncovered questions concerning principals' understanding of effective induction in general, as well as induction practices specific to school counselors. Principals' knowledge of effective induction may be a needed precursor to understanding their role in the induction of NSCs. Specific to school counselor induction, more nuanced investigation concerning principals' knowledge of the ASCA model and effective induction practices are warranted. Finally, future studies should include a greater variety of settings.

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