John C. Carey · Belinda Harris
Sang Min Lee · Oyaziwo Aluede *Editors*

International Handbook for Policy Research on School-Based Counseling

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Preface

This *International Handbook for Policy Research in School-Based Counseling* is an ambitious attempt to document what we currently know about the relationships between policy and school-based counseling practice around the globe, to identify what needs to be known in order to promote effective practice, and to identify how research can help us know what is still unknown. As we worked on the handbook, we became aware that while policy research on school-based counseling is being conducted in many countries, policy research is a neglected focus within the counseling professional community in nearly every country. Moreover, mechanisms to support rigorous international policy research are almost totally lacking. As noted in the capstone chapter, we have come to believe that the establishment of these mechanisms should be a priority given the potential power of school-based counseling and the ways (both positive and negative) that policy is affecting practice.

School-based counseling has major potential to contribute to the public good. School-based counseling practice is affected by policy. Too often this policy is not guided by sound research. Rigorous policy research is urgently needed to ensure that all students and their parents have access to high-quality school counseling services. We advocate greater collaboration between academics, counseling educators, and professional associations to develop and support practice research networks of school-based practitioners, so that data from schools contributes to regional and national databases of outcomes and also yields powerful stories of change and growth. We are indebted to many people who contributed in many ways to the development of this handbook. We must first acknowledge the outstanding work of the chapter authors who took up the major challenges of developing valuable guidelines for different methodologies and summarizing policy landscape and policy research in important national and regional contexts around the globe. We are certain that handbook readers will profit tremendously from the quality of their work. Their work has established that policy research is an essential and exciting research focus within school counseling. In many ways, they have founded a new field of research.

In addition, we wish to thank our colleagues who provided guidance in the organization and realization of this handbook. These include Dr. Michael Krezmien, Dr. Catherine Griffith, Dr. Virginia Lee, and Ms. Karen Harrington.

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Amherst, MA, USA John C. Carey

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Part I

Conceptual Introduction

Introduction to Policy Research in School-Based Counseling

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Sharon F. Rallis and John C. Carey

Policy articulates a desired way of being for a society. Starting as a broad statement of values, a policy describes a set of conditions preferable to those currently in place. Ideally, a policy is meant to serve the public good, not the material benefit of those who establish the policy. Embedded within any policy, we should be able to find a *theory of action*: we want X to happen, so we must do Y. This cause → effect statement, however, is seldom clearly articulated. Designing, enacting, and implementing policy are not a clear and linear process. Furthermore, because the scope of policy tends to be general and broad, it is open to multiple interpretations across individuals and contexts. Thus, the relationship between policy and practice is usually convoluted and often somewhat unpredictable.

Policy statements are mere words. While the words are meant to result in actions that produce the desired new state or condition, multiple forces at various levels mediate the gap between the words and actions. The explicit or implicit theory of action of the policy may be difficult to find and/or inaccurate so that even effective implementation of a policy leads to the "wrong" outcomes. Even with a sound theory of action, resulting programs and practices, often largely dependent on available resources, may bear little resemblance to the envisioned state – or may produce any number of unintended (positive or negative) consequences. The particular interests of stakeholders (e.g., powerful individuals, professional groups, agencies, taxpayers, consumers) influence the allocation of resources and shape the programs and practices that are put in place. Ultimately, because policy makers are not the people who implement policy, the elements of resulting programs or practices are seldom executed as elements of the policy were originally conceptualized.

Given this complex relationship between policy and practice, policy researchers and analysts have a lot of work to do. They ask questions: What is the public good? Who decides? What roles and influence do various stakeholders have? How does the policy propose to support the public good? What purposive actions or practices does the policy encourage or suggest? What procedures, programs, and practices are needed to move forward this policy goal? What benefits can we expect? What consequences – anticipated, negative, positive, and unintended – might result? The answers that policy research generates can

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inform and improve both practice and future policy making.

The focus of this handbook is policy research on school-based counseling internationally. Decision makers in government need good data to inform their efforts to promote school-based counseling. They also need data to tell them whether these actions achieve their intended effects. Policy research provides decision makers with information that supports effective action for public good. Yet, while the need for high-quality policy research related to school-based counseling is widely recognized around the world, the discipline of policy research in school-based counseling is still in its infancy. The *International Handbook on School-Based Policy Research* offers a benchmark analysis of the state of policy research related to school-based counseling. Chapters consider the utility of different policy research methods and summarize what is currently known in the field as well as areas for further exploration. We aim to provide an integrated and coherent understanding of the various ways that policies regarding school-based counseling are created and implemented to further the common good and to identify questions that policy research needs to answer in order to advance the ethical practice of school-based counseling.

The work of school-based counselors and university-based counselor educators who prepare these counselors is shaped by *policies* that communities and governments create and attempt to impose. At times, these policies may support effective practice; often they constrain or impede practice. What are their purposes? Where do they come from? How do educators and practitioners respond to them? But what exactly is *policy*, a vague, overused, and often misunderstood term? The term evokes varying emotions: indifference in those who do not believe policy affects them, control in those who see it as a reflection of power, curiosity in those who see its potential, concern in those who are challenged to implement, and anticipation in those who recognize the opportunity to interpret. We begin this chapter developing a working definition of the term *policy* that reflects the multiple nested levels of policy contexts within a nation and the international variability in policy landscapes. Next we describe policy research and identify how research and evaluation can be used to improve policy so that it can have a powerful, positive impact on practice. Finally, we suggest ways policy makers and policy advocates can collaborate with policy researchers and evaluators and with counselors and counselor educators to construct meaningful and useful policy studies. We suggest that including the counselors in this mix is critical to improving practice; they must contribute to the creation of policies that will directly affect them.

The Many Ps of Policy

Above we defined policy as a broad expression of values or guiding principles meant to serve the public good. For example, during the cold war the US federal government encouraged the education and placement of school counselors in all high schools by providing tens of millions of dollars in funding to state department of education (who in turn funded university-based training programs and school-based counseling positions) through the National Defense Education Act (NDEA). The act was intended to place counselors in schools so that they could encourage students to pursue careers in science and engineering to maintain the country's competitive edge in space and defense-related technologies. A current example directed toward practice relates to the culture-specific value of protecting confidentiality of clients.

Such broad statements can be seen as uppercase *Policy* with lowercase *policies* as those that target more local or focused actions that emerge from the more encompassing Policy statement. In the previous case of NDEA, the state departments of education and local school districts were less interested in having counselors prospecting for scientists and engineers and more interested in having them address practical perceived problems related to students' course choice, vocational planning, social development, and mental health. State department of education drafted licensure-related competencies and adopted models of counseling that sought to address a

broad set of perceived problems in schools (including the original intended NDEA purposes). Federal policy with a very narrow intent resulted ultimately in the widespread placement of counselors in schools with the expectation that they would help solve a very broad range of problems. Policies governing confidentiality tend to be regulations (that may differ internationally) to guide decisions for keeping and providing reasons for breaking confidentiality. Policies (upper and lowercase) direct allocation of resources and may originate at central or local levels. Implementing these policies directly affects the counselor/client relationship.

When studying policy and policy implementation, we have found it helpful to distinguish the term policy from the other related P words: programs, procedures, and practices. Both broad *Policy* and focused *policies* typically lead to the establishment of specific *Programs*, that is, initiatives aimed toward realizing of the policy's intent (the valued state, the public good). A program is the planned intervention to achieve the policy goal. Programs specify coordinated sets of activities with identified populations. In the USA, almost all state departments of education have developed an official state model of school counseling that describes the goals, organization, and activities of school counseling programs in school. Almost all of these models indicate that the counseling program should be structured to serve all students through a combination of primary prevention and remedially focused activities. Many state department of education invest funds to support the implementation of the state model in public schools. Another example is the Gatekeeper Training Program designed to normalize talking about suicide among students.

Procedures may be the rules or regulations or guidelines that stipulate how the policy or program is to be implemented. Procedures, often confused with the policy itself, specify actions that should or should not be taken; they represent choices made from among the many that could serve to achieve the policy goals. At the local level, many school districts in the USA have elaborated specific procedures, some of which support and some of which detract from the original policy objectives. One district, for example, mandated that every school counselor had to have three individual sessions with every student on his or her caseload (n = 300) every year. In the interests of ensuring that all students benefit from counseling services, this district precluded counselors from engaging in cost-effective classroom guidance and group counseling activities by locking up 900 h of counselor time each year in individual counseling sessions – the majority of which were not needed.

Practices occur at the ground level of policy and program implementation. Practices are the routinized behaviors and actions – *the way we do things here* – that constitute the everyday world in the program. Practices are how the people use the resources and activities and how they interact, to move toward the goal of an improved condition. For example, in the USA, school counseling programs show great diversity of actual practices. For example, while there is a growing trend to use empirically supported prevention curricula, the use of counselor-constructed curriculum units is still the most prevalent practice. Thus, one school may respond to policy directives regarding anti-bullying programming by implementing a well-research curriculum, while a neighboring school may respond by implementing curriculum units developed by the counselors themselves. Thus, in short, policies and programs articulate the *what*; procedures and practices represent the *how*. Policy research can address each or all of these levels of *P* or *p*.

Policy Research as Lever for Improving Programs and Practices

Just as the word policy may be ambiguous and oft misunderstood, so too is the concept of policy research. "Policy research is a close relative of social science, and even though it has put on its working clothes, rolled up its sleeves, and gone out to labor in the offices, legislative chambers, and corridors of government, it has not relinquished the 'science' label" (Weiss, 1991, p. 37). Seen as a branch of science, policy research must

produce systematic and objective data – and once available, the information will be used by policymakers who are meant to serve the needs of society. Those who make these social decisions need a wide range of information - from data on what is needed to information on what works to address these needs. They must understand the tradeoffs: how do the advantages of a particular action balance the disadvantages? The assumption is that, grounded in the products of research, programs will be effectively designed and implemented and thereby improve the lives of the program participants (Weiss, 1987).

However, this assumption can be challenged from several angles. First, the products of policy research are seldom simple. In the real world, advantages and disadvantages are not clear-cut, and stakeholders may disagree on what is advantageous to whom – and on whose advantages should be privileged. Moreover, we have learned that the results of policy research are seldom used in any linear instrumental way (see, e.g., Tseng, 2012). In reality, findings usually served to expose the many shortcomings of the social policies studied without uncovering alternatives or solutions (Weiss, 1987); such studies are easily ignored. Moreover, objectivity itself may be a myth or "illusion" (Weiss, 1991, p. 38). Since policy researchers are human, they construct the worlds they study according to their values and interests, which in turn shape what they find.

How, then, can policy research inform and influence policy decisions that lead to genuine social improvement, specifically practices in school-based counseling? Drawing on Weiss' position that policy research can be used to advocate a preferred position (1991), we suggest that policy research can serve as a lever to improve programs and practices by – in addition to producing data – supporting or offering ideas, critique, and grounds for argument. Our perspective begins with a look at the difficulties in attributing social or academic improvement directly to a policy or program and its practices. Regarding school counseling policy research, attribution becomes doubly difficult because the links between counseling activities and students' academic achievement are not linear; counseling activities can be expected to modulate rather than mediate gains in achievement.

To prove whether a policy has directly led to the desired, valued condition, a direct causal link must be determined. First, we ask: Can we attribute the existence of the program and its practices to the policy? Our analysis must decide if the program would have existed without the policy. To answer, we need a counterfactual, that is, a setting absent the policy. Conducting a controlled experiment to create such a setting is usually unrealistic, so policy analyses tend to trace resource allocation and map contexts. Policy studies also consider if the program design aligns with the policy intents; that is, does the program theory match the policy goal?

If the values, policy, and program theory all appear aligned, we evaluate the program: what are the outcomes? And can we attribute these to the specific activities that occur in the program? Again, to make a direct causal link, we would need to compare the outcomes of a program against a counterfactual to see what would have happened to beneficiaries without the program, controlling for any external influences. Put simply, we use an experiment or quasi-experimental design. In many instances, however, such designs may not be possible, due to various barriers including limited funding, size of program, and lack of comparison. And what if the program was not implemented with fidelity to the design? What if the practices emerged on site rather than on those written in the proposal? If and when these instrumental and causal policy analyses and evaluations are conducted with validity, potentially useful data can be produced. Unfortunately, studies resulting in these data are few, and when policy makers and program decision makers do have access to such data in evaluation reports, they seldom act to change policy, programs, or practice. Without research that captures what actually happens, sustaining specific positive changes is difficult.

Nevertheless, despite discouraging reports of instrumental use, policy research and evaluation results are widely used to affect positive change. Results can become far more than findings to inform a specific policy question or prove a

program effective. Results can become ideas and insights that enlighten policy makers and program decision makers (Weiss, 1977). "The generalizations and ideas that they produce percolate into the consciousness of informed publics, and over time they can alter the terms of policy discourse. Some things once taken for granted become open for discussion, while other issues in hot contention are laid to rest. New ideas come into currency; priorities are changed; new conceptual handles are used to grapple with old policy problems" (Weiss, 1987, 44). Put simply, information from research can capture the public interest and accumulate over time to change the way we think and behave – to *enlighten* the public.

Policy research and evaluation as enlightenment addresses important questions we raised earlier. Informed by insights and evolved understandings, policy discourses can revisit values, beliefs, and the articulated desired state or condition. What exactly *is* the public good? Who decides? What roles do various stakeholders play? In what ways can policies and corollary programs support the public good? Will counselors deem a policy meaningful enough to truly follow it? Research results can uncover conflicting interpretations; misunderstandings, as well as problems in resource allocation; special interests; power dynamics; and unexpected and unintended consequences. Results can also suggest solutions, redirect efforts, garner interest, and provide encouragement.

Within these enlightened policy discourses, we see that results are often used politically or symbolically. Policy makers and program leaders want their work to be viewed as legitimate, so stakeholders use research results to advocate a particular position, to strengthen the arguments, to make them acceptable. A policy's or program's legitimacy can also be bolstered by making it seem similar to others that are considered to be effective. Research can support such isomorphic efforts through several processes: mimetic, by providing models (e.g., Ockerman, Mason, & Feiker-Hollenbeck, 2012); coercive, by establishing what is appropriate (e.g., Militello, Carey, Dimmitt, Lee, & Schweid, 2009); or normative, by defining standards for professional practice (e.g., Dahir, 2000) (see DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

An illustrative example of how policy research is used to leverage change comes from the medical field. An enlightened Congress passed the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Revitalization Act of 1993 in response to an accumulated body of research documenting how gender and race influence individual responses to medications. This policy mandated that clinical trials include minorities and women. Policy research over the next 20 years revealed that disparities persisted in clinical trials. Various advocacy groups passed these findings to Congress, which eventually requested a Government Accounting Office (GAO) study reporting compliance with the 1993 law. The GAO report demonstrated that the NIH had not operated according to the law. Widespread dissemination of the report led an embarrassed NIH to change their policies regarding the law; their revised policy required the inclusion of adequate numbers of women and minorities. In this case, policy research was used instrumentally, to enlighten, for advocacy, and politically.

Our point is that policy research *can* make a difference. By our very presence and actions while conducting the research, we researchers interfere with the places and people we study; thus, our obligation to ensure that our work is ethical is paramount. We also want our findings to be used to improve policies, programs, and practices. We believe our results can inform, enlighten, and shape policy. But what is the state of policy research in school-based counseling? What do we know about the purposes, methods, and utility of this research? What do we need to know for the field and how can this research be used for the common good?

Who Are the Users of Policy Research?

Policy has not only several levels; it also has many varied stakeholders, that is, different groups involved in the elaboration of policy and who are consequently potential consumers of policy research. We will illustrate this point with reference to the US context.

In the USA, public education policy is made at the national, state, and local levels. Some education

policies directly influence school-based counseling (e.g., NDEA, the adoption of a state model, state licensure requirements for school counselors). Other policies indirectly affect school-based counseling in subtle and dramatic ways. The implementation of standards-based education model through the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and corresponding state educational reform initiates, for example, did not directly address school counseling practice. However, by narrowing the goals of public education, by focusing the evaluation of school quality on standardized achievement test scores, and by making it much easier to remove school leaders whose schools failed to show achievement test gains, NCLB called into question the value that school counselors added to quality of students education (especially in the context of the definition of quality being narrowed to test scores). Both the American School Counselors' Association (ASCA, 2012) and the Education Trust (Martin, 2002) developed models of school-based counseling that were compatible with standards-based reform. Most state department of education then revised their official state model to make them consistent with these models (Martin, Carey, & DeCoster, 2009).

To understand the needs of different policy research users, we distinguish among which types of decisions are made at which levels and what policy levers are available at what levels. It is also important to distinguish between policy makers and policy advocates. The former makes policy and the latter influences policy formation. Each national context will be different in these regards. To illustrate the principles, we will return to the US example.

In the USA, laws related to public education are made by Congress, enacted by the Executive branch (the President and Department of Education), and interpreted by the Supreme Court. Laws can originate through the committee process (e.g., the legislative committees on education) or through the initiatives of individual legislators or groups of legislators. Consistent with the US tradition of local control over public education, the federal government has traditionally respected the autonomy of states and localities to make decision related to education. The federal government has acted in circumstances where state and local practices violate the constitutional rights of students (e.g., segregation) or in cases where the changes in educational systems are perceived to be necessary for the welfare of the nation (e.g., NDEA and NCLB). Even in these instances, the federal government acts by using funds to encourage states to adopt changes. The responsibility for allocating funding and monitoring compliance resides in Federal Department of Education. The DOE also funds education research that is intended to promote good policy and effective practice.

The policy making structures at the state level parallel those at the federal level. In the past 10 years, Governors have been very active individually and collectively in education policy formation through advocacy for federal and state laws. Education-related laws are made by State Legislatures, interpreted by the Executive branch (the Governor and State Department of Education), and interpreted by the State Supreme Court. As above, laws can originate several ways. States differ in the extent to which public educational decisions are made centrally or locally. State Legislatures (respecting local control) typically require in law that certain programs be delivered in school without specifying who should deliver them or how they should be delivered. It has been popular recently for legislatures to require that school help all middle school students develop 5-year career focused plans for their coursework without indicating how the plans will be developed or who will assist students. Relatedly, State Legislatures are typically very sensitive creating laws that reflect unfunded mandates that will place restraints on how local educational budgets are spent. State Departments of Education typically have the responsibility for allocating funding and monitoring compliance with state laws. In addition the state DOEs influence school counseling practices by establishing licensure requirements for school counselors, awarding licensure, accrediting school counselor preparation programs, developing state models for practice, funding institutional change and professional development initiatives to facilitate implementation of quality school counseling programs, and monitoring the implementation and

outcomes of state laws related to school counseling. In very rare instances, state DOEs support policy research, typically to evaluate programs and practices.

Local policy makers include elected school boards and the educational leaders who are hired to lead and oversee public education (e.g., superintendents and principals). They are ultimately responsible for the tangible representation of policy decisions as they determine the actual organization of the school counseling program, the actual activities and services that are included, the number of staff hired, and the orientation and expertise of the staff hired. In addition, local leaders supervise and evaluate the performance of school counselors. Local school districts occasionally commission evaluations of program and practices in order to examine their effectiveness.

In addition to policy makers, policy advocates use policy research to justify their advocacy for policy that is in service to their interests. Both national professional counseling associations (e.g., the American Counseling Association, American School Counselors' Association, National Association for College Admissions Counseling) and the related associations are major advocates. In addition, nongovernment organizations (e.g., the College Board and Education Trust) advocate for policy affecting aspects of school counseling practice that is related to their organization's mission. Policy advocacy groups commission research studies on the school counseling issues that they deem as important. The results of this research are packaged to influence federal and state policy makers, the decisions of local policy makers, and the perceptions of the general public.

Working Together to Build, to Learn, and to Improve

This first *International Handbook for Policy Research on School-Based Counseling* is intended to promote high-quality policy research that will lead to the improvement of practice. School-based counseling is rapidly becoming a worldwide phenomenon as governments are searching for innovative ways to improve the well-being and productivity of their citizenry. Even in countries like the USA where school-based counseling has a long and distinguished history, policy research has been neglected. Very few studies actually have been conducted to intentionally address critically important policy issues (Carey & Martin, 2015). Very few counselor education doctoral students are trained to conduct policy research. Policy makers and advocates lack the information that is necessary to engage together in the policy formation process. In countries where school-based counseling is less developed, educational policy makers are reluctant to dedicate precious resources to promoting school-based counseling without guidance on which activities are likely to be maximally effective and without confirmation that investments bring returns.

This *Handbook* therefore represents a starting point – the founding of an international collaboration to promote quality policy research on school-based counseling. Eminent scholars from around the globe have come together to take stock of what we now know, what we need to know, and how we can come to know what we need to know.

The *Handbook* is organized in four related sections. The first section introduces policy research and includes a very practical reflection on the research that is needed by policy makers. The second section includes a critical examination of the various methods that are used in policy research with practical examples of these methods. The third section includes analyses of the policy landscape, existing policy research, and needed policy research in a very broad range of national contexts. Finally, the fourth section summarizes this work, proposes steps to further the cause of international policy research work, and places this work in the context of the ethical imperatives associated with research in school counseling.

It is our sincere hope that this work will be judged both by its own quality and by the quality of the work that it stimulates.

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What Government Policy Makers Need to Know About School-Based Counseling

2

Dawn Stevenson and Nathan Edvalson

It is very important at the beginning of an International Handbook focusing on policy research in school-based counseling to consider the research needs of government policy makers. The government has legitimate interests in encouraging, supporting, and regulating the practice of school-based counseling to the extent to which it contributes to the public good. The government enacts laws and policies and creates institutions and agencies in order to promote its legitimate interests. The government funds schemes, programs, and initiatives. Decision-makers in the government need good information in order to know what to do and whether actions they take to promote school-based counseling are achieving their intended effects. Policy research can provide decision-makers with information that supports effective action.

Different countries have different government structures that support and influence the practice of school-based counseling. Countries differ, for example, in terms of whether policy regarding school-based counseling (and other components of public education) is made at the national or regional levels and whether the government is vested with the power to mandate or to just encourage practices at the local (school) level. Despite these differences, all governments have decision-making bodies that effect school-based counseling through laws and/or through some type of executive order that provide direction and funding. Most governments also have agencies (e.g., Ministries of Education or State Department of Education) that are charged with implementing government decisions through actions such as the oversight of schools and school-based programs; the development, funding, and implementation of school improvement and educational change initiatives; and the credentialing of educational personnel.

In this chapter, we will first describe what government policy makers need to know about school-based counseling. This will be elaborated in the context of a 20-year initiative to improve school-based counseling in one state in the United States of America (USA). We will then illustrate what this information has to say about the general needs of policy makers in the government regarding school-based counseling. In the USA, the primary responsibility for educational policy resides at the state (rather than at the national) level. State legislatures pass laws and allocate funds to promote effective practice in public schools. State Departments of Education are charged with implementing the laws and achieving their intent. Both laws and implementation approaches must

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be sensitive to the "local control" heritage of the USA that situates a good deal of decision-making authority regarding public education with local (city and town-level) school boards and school superintendents.

Adoption or Adaptation of a Written Model

Currently, ASCA recognizes 33 of the 50 states in the USA that have implemented a state comprehensive school counseling program (State School Counseling Programs & Web Sites, n.d.). In a study conducted for this policy manual, the following distribution of model variations was discovered: three of the ASCA recognized states have adopted the ASCA National Model (American School Counselor Association, 2003; 2005; 2012) outright, three states have a slightly modified version of the ASCA National Model, and 16 states have made state adaptations of the ASCA National Model, incorporating state initiatives and related programs into the model. The remaining 11 states have a state-created model, three of which are variations of the original Gysbers model with ASCA elements incorporated. The Gysbers model was heavily incorporated into the ASCA National Model so the state level variations of the Gysbers model differ mostly in terms or language and organization of the models, but not in substance.

Eric Sparks, Assistant Director of ASCA, in a recent conversation (personal communication, June, 2015) stated that ASCA created a national model specifically so that states did not have to create their own model with no starting point and no guidelines. Martin, Lauterbach, and Carey (2015) in an international study of the factors that affect the development of school-based counseling in different national contexts have noted that the development or adaptation of a model of school counseling practices is an important factor affecting the development of the profession. Martin et al. (2015) have identified ten additional factors that affect how school-based counseling is practiced including culture, the nature of the public education system, and educational policy and laws. While it would be tempting for governments and professional associations around the globe to use the ASCA National Model as a starting point for developing a written national model for school-based counseling for their location, it would be unwise to adopt the model in total since it was developed to fit one particular national context. For the international level, school counseling leaders and policy makers are well advised to develop a strong government- or agency-sponsored model for school-based counseling. Having such a strong model that meets the values and needs of the sponsoring government or agency facilitates the implementation of effective school-based counseling programs at the regional or local government and school level.

Fostering Favorable Conditions

Carey (2009) published a study of the levels of school-based counseling model implementation across the 50 states in the USA. Working with the National Leadership Cadre under the US Office of Vocational and Adult Education, the investigators selected "nine salient features" (p. 379) and identified which features were present and to what extent in each of the surveyed states. The features shown in Table 2.1 are duplicated from the published study.

Martin, Carey, and DeCoster (Carey, 2009) determined that a state having seven to nine of the features identified in Table 2.1 indicated an "Established" model for school counseling programs in that state, four to six features present indicated a "Progressing" model in that state, and one to three features present indicated a "Beginning" model in that state. "Seventeen states were considered to have "Established" models, 24 states were considered to have "Progressing" models, and ten states were considered to be at a "Beginning" stage." From this study, it is clear that even after a state model is developed, considerable work needs to be done to enable the model to be properly implemented. According to the 2009 study by Carey et al., "despite a long history of model development, most states in the USA had not developed the necessary mechanisms to

Table 2.1 Nine salient features of school counseling programs (Carey, 2009)

Feature	Example
Written model	Model distributed on Department of Education (DOE) Web site
Modern model features	Model based on ASCA National Model
Model endorsement	Model endorsed by the commissioner of education and by vote of the state association leadership
Linked to career planning	Model uses state career development guidelines
School counseling leadership	State Department of Education has a designated school counseling director with 50% of time devoted to school counseling who is housed the State Department of Education
Supportive legislation	State School Board rules mandating that all students will complete 6-year career plans
Supportive licensure and accreditation	Licensure process requires documentation that school counselors can implement Comprehensive Developmental Guidance (CDG)
Professional development	State sponsors programs on model implementation at the state association conference
Model evaluation	Districts voluntarily submit results reports to DOE

adequately direct and support model implementation." While the development of a written model is within reach of any state or nation that has an identified leader and some willing volunteers, sufficient time becomes a critical resource as does supportive funding both for gathering writing team members and later for publication of the written model and professional development for personnel who will be implementing the school-based counseling model. A well-balanced model will include a coherent program structure with a foundation, delivery system, accountability processes, and program management or similar processes that will ensure the delivery of a full counseling program to all students in the local education system.

The more support that can be garnered for the development and implementation of a CSCP program at the state or national level, the better. Much research has been conducted on education change process in the USA. Gysbers frequently refers to the "sandwich model" (personal communications—Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance Training June 1990–June 2000) in which policy is developed at the top levels of the government with similar change initiatives among the grass roots or school-level personnel who will be doing the actual work of delivering a CSCP program at the student level. Governmental departments of education working in partnership with professional school counseling associations can lead to more rapid progress in the development of policies that improve practice (Martin et al., 2015).

Even the best-designed model for school-based counseling must be supported by ongoing professional development. Professional development, in terms of implementing a new school-based counseling model and program, should also be part of the process pre-model development as well as post-model development. It is well to consider *nemawashi*, a term from Japan meaning laying the groundwork or foundation, or the sense of building consensus (Nemawashi-Toyota Production System Guide, n.d.).

Building consensus is a slow process, but it's necessary to get everybody on board before taking a decision. Otherwise, the implementation will be delayed and (unconsciously) sabotaged by those who didn't agree or weren't involved (Nemawashi-Toyota Production System Guide, n.d.).

The Utah case study in the following section will illustrate the *Nemawashi* process of consensus building. Leadership at the government or agency level does not simply develop a school-based counseling model and require implementation without gaining input for the development and implementation process from the working school counselors and the local school-based counseling leadership. By soliciting insights from those at the ground level of program implementation, the recommended model becomes realistic for the local needs and useful for the working school-based counselors and counseling leaders. As the Toyota model notes, "It's not just about building support for your ideas. The consensus-building process solicits ideas and review from

everyone involved so that the final idea is usually a lot stronger than the original" (Nemawashi-Toyota Production System Guide, n.d.). The process of model development and program implementation then becomes self-informing as noted by Dean L. Fixen and Karen A. Blase as they developed a model for fidelity of implementation for research-based social programs (2009). When the components for effective program implementation are recognized and valued, weakness in one area of program implementation can be compensated for by strength in another area (Fixen & Blase, 2009). When all stakeholders in the process of school-based counseling program implementation are recognized and involved, the process itself is strengthened and the outcome is likewise more effective. As noted by Fixen and Blase, leaders and implementers arrive at policy-informed practice and practice-informed policy. As the Toyota model states, "…there's one big misunderstanding about consensus. Consensus doesn't require Compromise" (Nemawashi-Decisions by consensus without compromise, June 19, 2009). Rather, consensus building and program implementation for school-based counseling programs require long-term commitment and effective collaboration.

Case Study: Implementation of CDG Programs in Utah

Further elaboration on the features identified by Carey (2009), beyond a written model and modern model features, might be most easily explained by following a case study of a highly implemented model for school-based counseling in one US state. The Utah Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance Program (CCGP) was developed and implemented through the steps outlined in Table 2.2.

Emphasizing Evaluation

The final element of the nine features of well-implemented school-based counseling models is program evaluation. From the early days of the Utah pilot schools for model implementation, rigorous evaluation has been built into the program. At the outset, school counseling programs participated in an every-three-year on-site review process. School counselors at the site undergoing review would develop a written description of how the program met the 12 Utah Model Program Standards (Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance Program Performance Review, 2013). Additionally, local school counselors kept a file of evidence for school counseling activities to support the 12 standards. Ongoing incentive funding for the local CSCP was dependent on successfully "passing" the on-site review process. Occasionally schools have been placed on probation and given 6 months to make needed program improvements, or, more rarely, a school failed their on-site review and had to forego the incentive funding for a year or until a successful site review.

The original on-site review process for approval of the school-level implementation of the Utah Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs required an out-of-district evaluation every 3 years with the state school counseling leader in attendance. During the 2003–2004 school year, the formal on-site review was changed to a 6-year schedule with local districts facilitating an interim 3-year review focused on sharing of CSCP student outcome data projects: Guidance Activities and Closing the Gap Action Plans and Results Reports, patterned after the action plans and results reports developed by ASCA. The original 1990s site review document was a simple yes/no checklist based on the 12 program standards. In 2003–2004, the 12 program standards checklist was expanded to a five-level rubric with multiple indicators under each program standard. In 2011–2012, the rubric was simplified to three levels. In 2012–2013, the Utah State Office of Education administration directed that the out-of-district site evaluation teams be replaced by an on-site visit from state school counseling leadership. This effort to keep more school counselors in their schools and offices unfortunately eliminated an important aspect of professional development for school counselors who were able to trade ideas and share activities in the highly collaborative on-site review process.

Table 2.2 Steps in Utah Statewide Implementation of CCGP (CSCP)

Date	Event	Benefit	Additional info
1971	State hires full-time staff to oversee CCGP		
1972	Student Planning Component required by Utah State Board of Education	All students enrolled in Career and Technical Education courses required to have a graduation plan	Early emphasis on student planning directly impacts program development and evaluation
1980	1. Professional consultation on the "Missouri Model" 2. Five main components to the adaptation	Successfully created the "fertile ground" for a 20-year implementation process that has resulted in Utah's almost universal adoption of a standardized CCGP model	Five main components of restructuring: 1. Broad support at state level was necessary 2. Adequate time for implementation was crucial 3. Building administration needed to be on board 4. Administration, counseling, and other teachers had to participate in the change effort 5. Adequate funding for counselor planning and development (Utah Model, 2005)
1986	CCGP model was embraced at state level	CCGP was preserved through this fragile time period	
1989	1. Dissatisfaction of guidance and counseling resulted in a blossoming of the CCGP model constructed 3 years earlier 2. Training provided to 11 pilot schools	This event created the right environment for programmatic delivery to develop strongly Pilot programs lessen the chance of faculty resistance and promote faculty buy-in (Utah Model, 2005)	
1990	1. Twelve more schools join the pilot program 2. Annual conferences were established as a professional development source for counseling	Annual conferences provided a professional development opportunity for counselors as well as helped continue to gain legitimacy in the educational community	Utah School Counselor Association, chartered in 1960, emerges as a strong partner and advocate for establishing CCGP in all secondary schools (Utah Model, 2005)
1992–1993	1. Twelve of twenty-three schools approved for full implementation of CCGP program 2. Incentive funding provided by Utah Legislature	Program approval resulted in prestige, results, and financial incentives. These reinforcements encouraged others to seek this funding source for support in important counselor roles (Jensen, 1995)	Powerful financial incentive was provided which caused growth from 12 fully implemented schools to 251 fully implemented schools by 2003
1994	Utah State Board of Education codifies program approval standards in administrative code R277–462	Codifying the process cemented the program's survival. Legislative power imbues educational programs with a weight and force to make impact on practitioners (Utah Admin Code, 2016)	Continual updates and changes to code R277–462 to update incentive grant funding formulas, program approval standards, counselor to student ratios, and counselor licensing requirements (Utah Admin Code, 2016)
2000	Midwinter professional development conference refocused on disaggregated student groups	Increased the professional development opportunities for school counselors	Increased information and skill development for meeting the needs of diverse students

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Date	Event	Benefit	Additional info
2003–2004	251 out of 257 target secondary schools receive program approval	Comprehensive guidance gains great momentum ensuring that CCG programs become the cultural norm instead of the exception	Perkins funding tied CCGP to CTE (Jensen, 1995) and created a link that according to Martin, DeCoster, and Carey (Carey, 2009) created the interface between different constituencies. This kind of support has been shown to ensure program survival
2005–2006	Charter school inclusion into CCGP approval process	A validation of the importance of the funding and impact that CCGP has on educational institutions	
2006–2007	CCGP implemented in 262 schools	CCGP firmly established as the standard of practice and the expectation for all	
2007–present	Continued expansion to many charter schools and district schools		

This collaborative practice had led to the proliferation of many highly effective CSCP practices, such as the round-robin model for classroom-size student planning conferences, classroom integration of the computer-based career information delivery system (CIDS), and models and practices for group-based responsive services.

Leveraging Program Evaluation

In addition, to the individual school site program evaluation, Utah, through the vision and foresight of early school counseling leadership by R. Lynn Jensen, engaged in an ongoing statewide program evaluation strategy. Each of the statewide studies in the following discussion can be found on the Utah School Counseling Web site publications section (Utah State Board of Education, 2016) (Table 2.3).

Leveraging Support with the Use of Student Data by a Local District and the School Counselor Association

As illustrated in the previous discussion, Utah, at the state government agency level, established a culture for school-based counseling research and evaluation early in the program implementation process. This culture of evaluation and research on levels of program implementation and program effectiveness has created a strong expectation that has benefited regional and local government districts, individual school-based counselors, and leadership at the state school counselor association. The use of program evaluation and the use of school counselor effectiveness data can be found in two recent specific examples: one at the local district level and another with lobbying the Utah State Legislature.

In the local education agency example, Jordan School District was able to use local district level data to leverage the hiring of 14.5 new school counselors in one school year. The Jordan District experience was well summarized by the Education Trust in their document, Poised to Lead: How School Counselors Can Drive College and Career Readiness (Education Trust, 2011). In brief, leadership for Jordan School District approached the local board of education to request an additional 14.5 school counselors to lower the district school-based counselor to student ratio to 1:350 in accordance with Utah State Board of Education rules. Chris Richards-Kong, then the secondary school-based counselor specialist, presented the " results of a small

Table 2.3 Summary of research and evaluation in Utah Statewide CSCP

Date and event	Research questions	Outcomes	Additional comments
1995 Study of the Student Education and Occupation Plan (SEOP) (Kimball and Gardner, 1995)	In what ways has CCGP funding affected schools? How much have career-related services and resources (such as SEOP) been improved by funding? Have school counselors become more available for students?	Responses from 42 of 49 schools receiving funding 95% of schools have students develop a 4- or 5-year plan 91% of respondents have students revise plans annually 91% of the plans address specific postsecondary goals 83% of schools indicate that 70% or more of parents attend SEOP conferences 95% of schools offer special education, bilingual, learning disabled and at risk students' equal treatment 98% of students and counselors use computerized career information delivery systems 88% of administrators create and support school goals related to SEOP	These positive responses are presented to the Utah Legislature and used to leverage the 1993 incentive funding from the initial trial level of $3 million to full funding of more than $7 million by 1997. The SEOP remains an important part of school-based counseling in Utah. The language in everyday school counselor practice has been updated to College and Career Readiness Plan or more commonly CCR Plan
1998 An Evaluation of the Comprehensive Guidance Program in Utah Schools (Nelson and Gardner, 1998)	What impact does the level of implementation of the Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance Program have on important descriptors of student success and other characteristics?	Responses from 176 of 193 eligible schools Students in high implanting schools: Took more advanced mathematics and science courses Took more [CTE] technical courses Had higher scores on standardized college aptitude test (ACT) in every area of the test Rated their overall educational preparation as more adequate Rated their job preparation as better Fewer described their program of study as general Rated guidance and career planning services in their schools higher	Results of this study were valuable when the 1998 Utah Legislature moved the funding for the Utah CCGP from a line item in the annual education budget to part of the overall block funding for CTE. With full support from local district leaders, the CCGP funds were identified as a separate funding column in the annual CTE spreadsheet and were recognized as a protected fund to be used only for supporting school-based counseling programs

(continued)

Table 2.3 (continued)

Date and event	Research questions	Outcomes	Additional comments
March 1998 Study II: Contrasts Between Students in High Implementation and Low Implementation High Schools in the Utah CCGP (Nelson et al., 1998)	What is the relationship of CCG program implementation and counselor to student ratios?	A statistically significant relationship exists between counselor to student ratios and the level of program implementation Secondary schools with highest rates of implementation of CCGP had counselor to student ratios below 1:400 Secondary schools with the lowest rates of program implementation had counselor to student ratios over 1:500 Schools with lower ratios report more effective in making SEOPs meaningful Schools with lower ratios report more effective individual assistance through responsive services (Gardner et al., 1998)	The expectation for counselor to student ratios of 1:400 or better becomes widely accepted. In November 2008 The Utah State Board of Education (USBE) passed a resolution proposing a counselor to student ratio of 1:350 or better. By 2010 the USBE changed the R277–462 Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance rule, officially lowering the recommended counselor to student ratio to 1:350 or lower and requiring an annual school by school report on school-based counselor to student ratios. Incentive funding becomes contingent on meeting recommended ratios
2007 An Evaluation of Utah's Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance Program—The Fourth Major Study of Utah's 13-Year Program (Nelson et al., 2007)	What is the current level of implementation statewide of the CCGP in Utah secondary schools? How do current levels of implementation compare to past levels? What is the relationship between the level of implementation of CCGP and student outcomes?	252 eligible secondary schools 247 schools implementing CCGP 208 secondary schools received surveys and 175 responded Successes of 1998 study replicated Students in higher implementing schools: Take more high-level mathematics, language arts, and science classes Score higher in every area of the standardized college aptitude test (ACT) Students in higher and lower implementing schools are less likely to describe their program of study as general, improving from the 1998 study levels of 49 percent and 58 percent to 38 percent and 46 percent, respectively	Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance implementation continues as a cultural norm for secondary schools in Utah. 2016 ACT data indicates that in Utah secondary schools, only 13% of students consider their program of study as general. ACT data was the source used for this outcome in the 1998 and 2007 studies. Annual incentive funding for CCGP in the 2016–2017 school year is $9.5 million, an average of $33 per student per year

(continued)

Table 2.3 (continued)

Date and event	Research questions	Outcomes	Additional comments
2010 National Study of School Counseling Programs, including Utah, Connecticut, Missouri, Nebraska, Rhode Island, and Wisconsin (Carey and Harrington, 2010)	Do school counseling programs in high schools contribute significantly to students' educational outcomes? What aspects of school practice contribute most to students' educational outcomes? Based on these results, how might school counseling practice be improved?	Outcome and demographic data collected from 280 secondary schools. Survey data from 161 school counselors and 128 principals. Effective school counseling programs and effective school counselor practice impact the following student outcomes: More students achieving math proficiency More students achieving reading proficiency More students taking the standardized college aptitude test (ACT) Higher graduation rates and career and technical education programs More students participating in nontraditional career preparation programs (less than 25% of workers are the minority gender)	Additionally, improved counselor to student ratios had an impact on these student outcomes: Lower discipline rates Higher attendance rates (in Utah we now know that chronic absenteeism—defined as missing 10 percent or more of class time in an attendance period—results in dropout rates two to seven times higher) Length of time a CCGP has been implemented has an impact on these student outcome: Higher attendance rates Lower suspension rates

pilot program designed to increase participation of historically underserved students in Early College and honors programs." Through the pilot program, "school counselors were trained in the importance of postsecondary education, labor market trends, what makes a student college and career ready, and how to analyze and disaggregate their school's student data." As a result of the pilot program, an additional 32 percent of the students, helped by the counselors, chose to participate in Early College and honors programs. Subsequently, the Jordan School District (JSD) Board of Education made funding school counselors their number one priority for the 2010–2011 school year and funded all 14.5 positions. In a district with 48 school counselors, this represents an increase of over 30 percent. During the 2011–2012 school year, JSD expanded this project district wide.

The summary of the TSCI document reinforces the connection between research, evaluation, and policy that supports effective school-based counselor practice: "School districts have a specific mission and, like any employer, they need to see how every position contributes to that mission. School counselors cannot expect their jobs to continue if they aren't able to provide data that show how they contribute to college and career readiness. If counselors do make that case, armed with real evidence, their profession has the potential to endure and grow, even in hard economic times" (The Education Trust, 2011 p. 4).

The Jordan School District story has an interesting corollary in school-based counseling-related legislation passed by the 2015 Utah Legislature (personal communication Holly Todd, June 2016). House Bill 198 Strengthening College and Career Readiness sponsored by Representative Patrice Arent and Senator Stephen Urquhart (Utah State Legislature, 2015) requires the following three components to strengthen

school counselor preparation for preparing students for college and careers:

1. Course work provided by SREB through University of Utah and Utah State University focused on college readiness.
2. USOE Updates and Essentials training focused on the Utah School Counseling Program with the emphasis on College and Career Readiness, using data to drive services and resources for students.
3. Coursework provided by UEN through Southern Utah University focused on career readiness, with emphasis from business and industry.

In order to earn the certificate for the Strengthening College and Career Readiness Program, counselors must complete all three components. The coursework and cost for each participating school counselor is covered through the $600,000 in funding that supports the requirements of HB 198. Once all three components are complete, Utah School Counselors will have the certificate indicated on their state educator license. To our knowledge, Utah was the first to offer the additional certificate for school-based counselor licensing.

The goal for this professional development is to help school counselors work with students to increase preparation to enter the work force to boost Utah economy. The focus is on helping students see the need to further their education in a variety of ways through certificate programs as well as college and university programs. Working with business and industry partners, students can complete their "1, 2, 4 or more" years of study in programs that prepare them to be ready to sustain a high wage/high demand profession.

The Utah School Counselor Association (USCA) was the driving force behind this legislation. USCA approached Representative Arent, asking for her support in creating legislation to increase the number of school counselors. While researching the proposed project for Representative Arent, the Association learned that they needed to change the approach. As noted in the TSCI document in the Jordan School District example, school counselors work hard, but sometimes their work does not meet the desired outcomes, or evidence is not available showing that work does meet the desired outcomes. The Utah SCA determined that the best approach to improving school counselor ratios was to ask Representative Arent to promote professional development for school counselors. USCA actively promoted HB 198, working with business and industry partners in Utah, Utah System of Higher Education, State School Board Association, State Superintendent Association, Parent Teacher Association (PTA), and counselors across the state. In a state which discourages any lobbying by public agency personnel such as state-level school counseling leaders, the state school counseling association fills this need by providing media interviews, public service announcements, and direct contact with supportive partners.

When Todd was asked "How did research or data projects support the effort?" She responded,

> Representative Arent referred to research she had from Park City School District on the number of scholarships received when targeted information was provided to students. Her research lead us to believe if counselors had more information and time to work with students on college and career readiness, students would be better informed and prepared. (Personal Communication-Holly Todd, July 2016)

Todd further noted that,

> One of the pieces of information that was frequently sought [was] information on the ratios of counselors to students, and if that were lower, were students better prepared for college and career readiness? (personal communication, June 14, 2016)

In both the Jordan School District and HB 198 examples, improvements in CSCP came through the efforts of leadership outside of the state agency school counseling leadership. Creating, nurturing, and supporting strong partnerships at the local level and with leaders in the school counseling association were critical in improvements for CSCPs. This provides further evidence

of the assertion (Carey, 2009) that "having an identified school counseling leader who is well-placed in the state government, who has access to funds that can be used to support school counseling program development, who has sufficient time to provide school counseling leadership, and who can bring together 'different constituencies to support school counseling, had a greater capacity to promote school counseling model development'" (p. 385).

Summary

The following specific answers are provided to the questions posed in the introduction: What did state policy makers need to know from research/evaluation in order to invest properly in the development of school-based counseling? What specifically directed their decision-making? What confirmed the value of school-based counseling?

School-based school counseling leadership in Utah, with the support of stakeholders and the collaboration of a leadership advisory group, determined to adopt a CSCP model that included a strong emphasis on individual student planning processes. So specifically, the initial 1995 (Kimball & Gardner) study sought to confirm that time and financial investment in both the Utah CSCP model and the individual student planning process were effective and supported the expansion of incentive funding for the Utah CSCP. This confirmation was needed to satisfy the interests of parents in positive outcomes for students, to satisfy the investment of CTE program funds to support CSCP implementation and positive outcomes, to satisfy the needs of school-based counselors that the intense work of CSCP implementation was worth the efforts, and to satisfy the Utah Legislature that their initial pilot funding was successful and worthy of additional funding.

Additional statewide studies sought to confirm that the time and funding provided for expanded implementation of CSCP program expansion was effective and worth the investment. The Utah CSCP funding was predicated on meeting program standards, so additional studies sought confirmation that levels of program implementation had a positive effect on student outcomes. The continued positive outcomes for students were confirmed by the research and evaluation in the studies from 1998, 1998 Study II, 2007, and 2010. The importance of levels of program implementation and the importance of school-based counselor to student ratios included in those studies have confirmed overall CSCP program outcomes for students and parents, for school counselors, for state and district leadership, and for the Utah Legislature.

We posit that the following research/evaluation needs for government policy makers were satisfied in the Utah case study:

- Governments enact laws and policies and create institutions and agencies to promote its legitimate interests.
- Governments fund schemes, programs, and initiatives.
- Decision-makers need good information in order to know what to do and whether the actions they take to promote school-based counseling are achieving their intended efforts.
- Evaluation supports effective decision-making for school-based counseling programs.

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