

5-2023

## Identification of Lacking Support Systems Relevant to the Job Performance of School Counselors

Claire Patricia Selna  
*California State University, Monterey Bay*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.csumb.edu/caps\\_thes\\_all](https://digitalcommons.csumb.edu/caps_thes_all)



Part of the [Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#), and the [Student Counseling and Personnel Services Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Selna, Claire Patricia, "Identification of Lacking Support Systems Relevant to the Job Performance of School Counselors" (2023). *Capstone Projects and Master's Theses*. 1570.  
[https://digitalcommons.csumb.edu/caps\\_thes\\_all/1570](https://digitalcommons.csumb.edu/caps_thes_all/1570)

This Capstone Project (Open Access) is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ CSUMB. It has been accepted for inclusion in Capstone Projects and Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ CSUMB. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@csumb.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@csumb.edu).

**Identification of Lacking Support Systems  
Relevant to the Job Performance of School Counselors**

Claire Selna

Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, California State University Monterey Bay

SBS 402-02: Senior Capstone II

Capstone Professors: Jennifer Lucido, Yong Lao

Capstone Advisors: Sarah Dahlen, Tolga Tezcan

May 19, 2023

### **Abstract**

This capstone report displays a comprehensive report about the struggles and demands of school counselors and how various factors such as: the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) code of ethics and standards, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), and school counselor advocacy and support, all play a part in school counselors daily lives. This report also describes the use of intersectionality theory with all of the previously stated factors, allowing researchers to better understand the complexity of the role of school counselor. Knowing these factors, this report asks: What support systems most impact the job performance of school counselors? In order to answer this question, the report describes a systematized review method that identified eight sources that described multiple support systems that impact school counselors' job performance. After analysis of the results of these sources, it is concluded that wellness opportunities, caseload size and appropriate/inappropriate roles, are key to positively impacting a school counselor's job performances. Future research should focus on how implicating more positive aspects of these characteristics can alter the overall well being of school counselors, and the entirety of the students they take charge of.

## Table Of Contents

<b>Abstract</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Literature Review</b>	<b>5</b>
Intersectionality Theory within School Systems	6
Practice and Application of the ASCA and ACA Ethics and Models	9
Identifying ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences)	10
School Counselor Advocacy and Support	13
Conclusion	15
<b>Methodology</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Results</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Discussion</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>34</b>
ERIC Boolean Search Strings:	34
PsychINFO Search Strings:	35
Social Services Abstract Search Strings:	36

## **Introduction**

An educational facility relies on various systems to give students the best experience in learning and developing at school ASCA 2022, and the role of school counselors holds high importance when it comes to making sure these experiences are of the highest quality for students. School counselors have a duty to uphold the ethics and standards provided by the ASCA, the association in charge of school counselors, as well as their own standards for themselves and their school. School counselors have a vital role in the wellbeing of students' lives, their success is dependent on school counselors ability to perform their job efficiently (Bowers & Hatch, 2003; Fye et al., 2017; Reiner & Pérusse, 2009). School counselors face oversized caseloads, burnout, administrative pressure, funding problems, and more, yet still need to perform their duties. Therefore, finding out what factors affect school counselors' ability to have peak job performance is an important factor in ensuring young students can continue to be guided to a better future. This notion is guided by the following question regarding support systems available to school counselors in any K-12 school system:

1. What are the most effective support systems that impact the job performance of school counselors as they fulfill their roles?

This capstone project discusses recent literature on school counselors' ability to use intersectionality as a tool in their work, and how I plan to use intersectionality as a tool in my own work. In addition, research regarding the school counselor occupations, specifically the ASCA model that guides school counselors curriculum and ethics, the importance of identifying Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), and the advocacy and support of school counselors, is discussed. The paper then goes on to discuss the methods which I use to collect data to answer my question, via a systematized review of any empirical study investigating the support systems

impacting public and/or private K-12 school counselors job performance. I anticipate my results demonstrate that the job performance of school counselors and their confidence in their capability, will be hindered or excelled by the different funding and community involvement of the school the counselor works in, and how much emotional/social support they receive. My ultimate goal for this research is to identify which support systems are lacking for school counselors, how they impact their job performance, and explore ways in which these support systems can be improved for school counselors to be able to work at peak job efficiency.

### **Literature Review**

School counselors function as an important piece in making a school system operate at its best level through their role to maintain the operation of students' wellbeing and the school. However the implications of said role, such as being given too many responsibilities and being at risk of burnout, (Geesa et al., 2019; Hamelin et al., 2022) are often overlooked by parents and staff alike. Research confirms that although the roles of counselors appropriate and inappropriate roles are defined, (Bowers & Hatch, 2003; Fye et al., 2017; Gay & Swank, 2021a; Gay & Swank, 2021b; Geesa et al., 2019; Hurless & Kong, 2021) school counselors still find themselves lacking in numbers, completing a multitude of tasks they are not assigned, and face frequently changing barriers within their work. By using recent studies, I have observed intersectionality theory plays a part in almost every section of the school counselor occupation, along with how themes of practical use of the ASCA (American School Counselors Association) National Model and American Counselor Association (ACA) ethics, the identification of ACE's (adverse childhood experiences), and the concept of counselor support and advocacy, can be combined to create a better framework for school counselor's job efficiency and confidence.

### ***Intersectionality Theory within School Systems***

This research uses a subset of intersectionality theory, defined as the use of multiple characteristics of a person, such as race, class, gender, cultural background, self identity, role identity and duty to address how power and disparities exist in different aspects of a person's life (Chan et al., 2018; Hurless & Kong, 2021; Sanetti et al., 2017; Wright & Chan, 2022). School counselors must use intersectionality theory to appropriately assess their cases and find a solution to their issues, while also applying intersectionality to their own privileges and background when addressing a case and how they respond to said case (Chan et al., 2018; Wright & Chan, 2022).

School counselors have a unique opportunity to connect with students in personal ways, where their experiences may align with what a student has or is experiencing, or recognize their lives have proceeded in completely different forms, and their physical, racial, familial, or cultural characteristics are dissimilar and unrelated. Regardless of this school counselors have a duty to advocate for each of their students equally, with an open mind, completely unbiased. Knowing that their experiences in life can be a form of privilege, intersects in their helping the student, thus they must be knowledgeable, accepting and understanding of their student's background and experiences as well as their own (Chan et al., 2018). Intersectionality theory can bridge the idea that some school counselors have their own form of privilege compared to the cases they speak about, whether this be their gender, race, or financial stability. Intersectionality can also be used as the explanatory method for why some school counselors experience significantly less support within their school system compared to others, and how this affects their ability to do their job and continue to remain confident in their own capabilities.

By understanding how intersectionality theory specifically plays a part in the privilege of

the counselor compared to the student, intersectionality also applies to specific portions of the student's life. An example of this can be found between students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) and (CLD). Counselors are required by the ASCA to dedicate themselves and advocate for students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD), in addition to being competent in counseling culturally and linguistically diverse culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students (Hurless & Kong, 2021). Knowing a student has an EBD and recognizing their cultural background allows a more competent and efficient approach to helping this student, such as a trauma informed approach that can intersect personal trauma, to sociopolitical complexity of trauma. Heritage and stigma can be recognized and applied to this student's case, whatever that may be, and the conclusion of said case will be more successful because of a more knowledgeable approach. This can also be said for historically marginalized students who have had uneven disparities amongst them compared with other privileged groups. Intersectionality theory allows a dialogue to open up about what opportunities were missed out on by marginalized groups during defining events such as the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic (Wright & Chan, 2022). Intersectionality of historically marginalized students intertwined with the pandemic, brings about questions regarding the impact of this trend on a person's career readiness, college preparedness, and or financial stability compared to other students. Similar questions could be asked regarding the intersectionality of student cases and the pandemic, when comparing how school counselors approach their cases in future research.

Heritage, ethnicity, race and culture are just some of the characteristics that are applicable to intersectionality theory in the practice of school counseling. It is implied by Acosta et al., (2021) that characteristics such as biological sex and school level, are associated with the risk of anxiety, depression, or OCD, thus another type of intersectionality within students. These EBDs



then intersect with a student's experiences in how their families have been able to handle themselves in times of stress such as the COVID-19 Pandemic, which can bring up questions of how different students of different familial backgrounds may or may not have experienced financial and food insecurity, or emotional and physical distress as inferred by Gay & Swank, (2021b) and Wright & Chan, (2022). Questions such as how do these factors apply to the student's academic performance and psycho-social well being, or how are historically more vulnerable children such as those in poverty and/or with disabilities, treated within school systems being more at risk of visual impairments, asthma, obesity if these factors lead to decreased academic achievement, behavioral disorders, social issues (Sanetti et al., 2017) become paramount to school counselor's case approaches. Knowing all of these factors and characteristics of a student's life can intertwine and mix to create their current situation, forcing school counselors to understand intersectionality theory. Besides knowing and understanding intersectionality, school counselors have a duty to put the theory into practice by pushing for the creation of multidisciplinary care practices that will better help their students. This definition of intersectionality allows me to create a larger, more intricate picture of the relations within student cases, between their school counselor and student, and between the school and the counselor. Intersectionality is also key when it comes to understanding how school counselors place importance upon the ASCA National model, how they feel on their own regardless of said model, and how this impacts how they perform their duties while trying to uphold their own moral duties.

### ***Practice and Application of the ASCA and ACA Ethics and Models***

Most studies referencing school counselors or school counseling, have mentioned the vitality of models and ethics. Being a school counselor requires a strong set of base models to

create curriculum, approach cases, and request support (Bowers & Hatch, 2003). School counselors must also follow a code of ethics in order to perform their job at top efficiency (Gay & Swank, 2021a).

Specifically, studies suggest the ASCA national model is the most important and most widely used model for counselors. The ASCA National model is meant to further students' achievement in academia, career planning as well as psycho-social growth through a framework of “foundation, delivery systems, management systems, and accountability” (Bowers & Hatch, 2003). The goal of this framework is to push for systemic change to achieve stated goals on behalf of students as well as counselors. Followed by this model, and held within this model, is also a code of ethics. The ACA code of ethics and ASCA code of ethics tags alongside the ASCA national model as guidelines for remaining professional and efficient when counseling specific students. For example, Camp et al., (2018) claims counselors must follow ASCA Ethical standards when working with at-risk populations, and students in general in order to create a safe and non-discriminatory environment. In addition, counselors should advocate at individual, group, institutional, and societal levels in order to acknowledge potential barriers and obstacles that obstruct access to services and students' growth and development (Gay & Swank, 2021a). Another important ASCA standard set for school counselors to follow is the 1:250 ratio of school counselor to student caseload. This ratio cannot be altered, for if more students are added to a school counselors caseload, they will be pushed to their limits in ability to efficiently do their job well, and therefore will be breaking ASCA and personal moral and ethical codes (Bowers & Hatch, 2003). The same code of ethics applies to SCITs (school counselors in training) in which counselor mentors have an ethical duty to remain unbiased and fair in training using decision making, rethinking clinical experiences, preparedness, and gate-keeping and setting standards for

distance counseling (Gay & Swank, 2021b).

In addition to ethics within the ASCA and ACA models, there are also defined roles and standards counselors must follow in order to work efficiently without the risk of being overworked. Counselors must take on a slew of roles which include, but are not limited to: assisting students with academic and career planning, assisting students with psycho-social development at the personal and interpersonal level, interpreting student records and ensuring that student records are maintained in accordance with state and federal regulations, as well as assist the school principal with identifying and resolving student issues, needs, and problems (Bowers & Hatch, 2003; Fye et al., 2017; Reiner & Pérusse, 2009). Counselors must wear an extensive amount of hats when it comes to doing their job at the standards of the ASCA.

Following the framework and ethics of the ASCA allows counselors to perform their responsibilities ethically and efficiently so long as they are not given inappropriate roles and are unable to follow the National model. Fye et al. (2017) mention this could lead to the creation of inefficient comprehensive school programs and a barrier to implement these programs successfully, due to the fact that counselors are too busy completing inappropriate tasks. The ASCA and ACA National Model and ethics are vital to the creation and success of student support programs, as well as keeping counselors on track with the duties and ethics they must follow as they complete their responsibilities.

### ***Identifying ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences)***

Part of a school counselor's morals and ethics in the ASCA national model includes the duty to be competent and knowledgeable of students' problems and needs, thus the need to understand adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). The term ACEs is defined as adverse childhood experiences children have encountered before the age of 18 that cause extreme

distress, reflecting in their adult lives as extensive medical, mental health, and behavioral or social issues (Zyromski et al., 2020). As a counselor, it is important to define and recognize ACEs within students so counselors may efficiently choose unique and appropriate techniques to solve issues and prevent future issues in student cases. Knowing ACEs gives counselors a better conceptualization of how to solve future cases in hopes of prevention, rather than intervention, thus it is vital the term ACEs is used in school counselor literature so counselors can more easily recognize and identify with similar cases within their field (Hong et al., 2021; Palmieri & La Salle, 2017; Zyromski et al., 2020).

There are multiple types of ACEs, with each falling into three categories of abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction. The 10 forms of ACEs within these categories are as follows: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, physical neglect, emotional neglect, mental illness due to neglect, divorce, substance abuse, violence against one's mother, mental illness due of a family member, and having a relative who is incarcerated (Zyromski et al., 2020). Vulnerable children such as those who are or have experienced homelessness, foster care, or any form of poverty, each fall into an ACE category (Camp et al., 2018; Felling et al., 2013; Palmieri & La Salle, 2017) and therefore are at a higher risk of developing emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) later in life (Hurless & Kong et al., 2021) such as anxiety, depression, trauma, suicidality, drug and alcohol abuse and more (Pincus et al., 2020). Research on ACEs determines that wraparound school and or outside programs to keep children financially, emotionally, physically, and mentally stable, are vital in order for students to perform in and enjoy school adequately with high wellbeing (Felling et al., 2013; McShane et al., 2019).

Obesity and trauma are also forms of ACE's and can lead to later dysfunctions in a child's adult life. Trauma, while interconnected with various ACEs, especially connects with

obesity and the social emotional ramifications of experiencing bullying. Specifically, Larrier et al. (2012) and Gagnon et al. (2022) suggest students who are obese are often categorized by their weight by other children, bullied into doing certain activities pertaining to their weight, or told remarks by students that could lead obese students to body image/confidence issues now and in the future. Being bullied due to obesity can lead to traumatic personal and social experiences such as identity issues, harming one's body, eating disorders, or mental self-confidence issues (Larrier et al., 2012; Pincus et al., 2020). In addition, other forms of ACEs such as being on welfare due to poverty, can lead to a student being victimized and bullied by other students or becoming the bully themselves, both of which can lead to traumatic experiences such as behavior disorders, social anxiety, anger issues, and depression (Hong et al., 2021). Traumatic experiences from being bullied due to obesity, or traumatic experiences from being obese or bullied in general, are both forms of ACEs that school counselors and teachers are responsible for addressing in their agendas as a form of prevention, and intervention to help students experiencing bullying and obesity, or a combination of the two (Gagnon et al., 2022; Larrier et al., 2012; Pincus et al., 2020).

The COVID-19 Pandemic made it extremely hard for children to get the proper education they needed due to this new opportunity to experience ACEs they may or may not have experienced prior. Similarly, natural disasters and economic recessions bring about the possibility for children to experience ACEs. As for the COVID-19 Pandemic, outside events such as parents being distressed from job losses, financial strains from being sick or jobless, social anxiety, fear of being ill, fear of safety, and fear of school shootings, all fall into ACE categories (Pincus et al., 2020). Not only this, but a lack of technology availability during the pandemic severely limited students of impoverished backgrounds as they had less of a chance to

access laptops, phones and computers that would allow them to keep up with their education; those with availability to proper technology now may develop technology addiction as that was their only form of socialization (Pincus et al., 2020). Isolation from friends and family, poverty due to job loss, fear of illness and safety, all of these ACEs were brought on or heightened by the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to an increase of future psycho-social, emotional, and academic barriers for young children. Having a grasp on ACEs and their frequently changing implications is important to recognize in a school counselor's training, for if a counselor does not advocate for their need to train more or need for more time and resources in order to better understand a case, they may miss out on important factors in their caseload.

### ***School Counselor Advocacy and Support***

School counselors can only do their job at peak confidence and efficiency if they are given appropriate roles, principal support, and advocacy of said roles by themselves and by others (Fye et al., 2017; Gay & Swank, 2021b; Geesa et al., 2019; Hamelin et al., 2022; Havlik et al., 2018). School counselors who advocate for themselves and have principals advocating for them are less likely to experience burnout, occupational identity suffering (OIS), and provide inefficient guidance to students. As counselors become better taken care of, the advocacy of their work is applied to better programming and success for students as well. It is a two-front gain for students and counselors (Fye et al., 2017; Geesa et al., 2019).

Advocacy within school counseling operates at the micro, meso, and macro levels. At the micro level, school counselors must advocate on behalf of themselves in terms of the work they are doing and why the programs and curriculum they are implementing are important (Geesa et al., 2019; Havlik et al., 2018). At the meso level, advocacy of SCITs via school counselor mentors allows the training of a school counselor to be vouched for and validated by someone of

professional merit (Gay & Swank, 2021a). Thus, school counselors can enter the field with the appropriate confidence, experience, support and training after being advocated for by their training mentors. As for the macro level of advocacy within school counseling, school counselors who have advocated for themselves, and have been vouched for by their mentors, indirectly boost their advocacy abilities for their students (Gay & Swank, 2021a; Gay & Swank, 2021b; Havlik et al., 2018). If counselors are able to support themselves through their own advocacy and previous advocacy on behalf of their mentors, the student success rates in academia and psycho-social well being dramatically increase (Fye et al., 2017).

Along the lines of advocacy, principal support plays a key role in making sure counselors can perform their job well. Principals and administration are stakeholders for counselors, they must understand a counselor's job in order to justify giving it more support (Havlik et al., 2018). In order to do so, principals must hold themselves accountable for assessing school counselors appropriately and fully learning the roles and responsibilities of counselors; this can be done via a comprehensive school counseling (CSC) program (Bowers & Hatch, 2003; Geesa et al., 2019). Principals who understand the roles of counselors can give school counselors proper feedback and more support when it comes to implementing new programs and making sure they are successful.

Principal support and advocacy lead directly into another key piece of success opportunities for counselors: appropriate and defined roles. The ASCA National Model has a clear set of defining roles and responsibilities (Bowers & Hatch, 2003; Geesa et al., 2019; Havlik et al., 2018), so long as those are followed school counselors lessen the risk of burnout and OIS (Hamelin et al., 2022). Counselors who experience an influx of responsibilities not deemed appropriate by the ASCA national model, risk the care they give to their students. Studies

suggest administration and staff who understand the appropriate and inappropriate roles of school counselors, have higher rates of successful program implementation, and students with higher rates of academic success and morale (Fye et al., 2017; Geesa et al., 2019; Hamelin et al., 2022; Reiner & Pérusse, 2009).

### ***Conclusion***

As previously discussed, the role of school counselors takes high importance. Their involvement in students' psycho-social, academic, behavioral, career, and familial lives is vital to the successful well-being of students (Bowers & Hatch, 2003; Fye et al., 2017; Gay & Swank, 2021a; Gay & Swank, 2021b; Geesa et al., 2019; Hurless & Kong, 2021). The applicability and practice of intersectionality plays a part in the involvement and therefore success, of each part of students' lives. When school counselors intersect their own lives in comparison to their cases or curriculum for students, they are impacting how a student sees the counselor and how they believe the student should succeed in school. (Chan et al., 2018). I, too, use intersectionality to intersect my own findings at the micro, meso, and macro levels of the school counselor profession amongst school counselors themselves, their peers, and across different situations. Using themes relevant to recent studies regarding school counselors, I also considered the ASCA National Model and ethics/standards, the identification and competency of ACEs amongst student cases, and the various forms of support and advocacy counselors need and or use in their profession, all in order to get a better sense of what current support school counselors have in reference to their duties, and what future changes need be made by their current support systems. Being aware of the knowledge necessary to be a counselor, what vocabulary they need to be familiar with, the standards they must uphold, and the current challenges they face, all create a picture of what I looked for in my research; the necessary support school counselors need in



order to fulfill all of their roles, and uphold all of the standards they are assigned, all while keeping their wellness at peak levels in order to have adequate job performance each day.

### **Methodology**

In my investigation and research regarding school counselors' job performance, I am conducting a systematized review using qualitative and quantitative approaches. This systematized review includes 8-10 research and studies that adhere to the following criteria:

**Population:** School Counselors K-12 (public AND/OR private)

**Intervention:** Support Systems (any)

**Comparison:** Any/none (not limiting)

**Outcome:** Job performance (all encompassing)

**Study type:** Any empirical study

After identifying the criteria for which studies I included in my systematized review, I then used my research question asking what support systems most impact school counselors job performance, and identified the main concepts that will be involved in the study. I have identified the main concepts as School Counselors, Support Systems, and Job Performance. Using these main concepts, I found the best databases that will give me the most relevant information on my main concepts, and these are ERIC (from EBSCO), Social Services Abstract (from Proquest), and PsycINFO (from EBSCO). After my outline of who and what I am researching, what sorts of studies I can include in my research, and where I can find said studies, I then filled out a concept table. This concept table identifies keywords I associate with each of the main concepts, as well as controlled vocabulary and subject headings from each set of databases for each main concept. Due to the extensive amount of terms used in my concept table, I have created an appendix for ease of reading and understanding.

After revising my concept table three times, I then moved onto the research portion of my systematized review where I created boolean search strings under keywords and controlled vocabulary for each of my main concepts: “School Counselor,” “Support Systems,” and “Job Performance.” Each of these search strings were individually searched in each database using abstract (AB) for keywords, and descriptors exact (DE) for controlled vocabulary. The search strings were combined with “OR” to find the most relevant articles regarding the words in the search string. For example, using my keywords for “School Counselor” in the ERIC database, and the controlled vocabulary for “School Counselor” from ERIC, I searched AB ("school counselor" OR "guidance counselor" OR "career counselor" OR "college and career counselor") DE ("School Counselors" OR "College and Career Counselor" OR "School Guidance Counselor" OR "College Counselors" OR "Elementary School Counselors" OR "Secondary School Counselors"). I did this for each main concept and then combined the individual main concept searches together. Attached is an example of my database search in ERIC:

3/3/23, 10:15 AM EBSCOhost Print Search History: EBSCOhost Friday, March 03, 2023 6:14:25 PM				
#	Query	Limiters/Expanders	Last Run Via	Results
S6	S3 AND S4	Limiters - Peer Reviewed; Language: English Expanders - Apply equivalent subjects Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - ERIC	202
S5	S3 AND S4	Expanders - Apply equivalent subjects Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - ERIC	352
S4	AB ( "job performance" OR competence OR capability OR "ethical standards" OR "administrative standards" OR "school standards" ) OR DE ( Success OR "Ability and Achievement" OR Competence OR "Counseling Effectiveness" OR "Counselor Performance" OR "Role Perception" OR "Well Being" OR "Wellness" OR "Job Satisfaction" )	Expanders - Apply equivalent subjects Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - ERIC	96,291
S3	S1 AND S2	Expanders - Apply equivalent subjects Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - ERIC	2,027

3/3/23, 10:15 AM EBSCOhost Print Search History: EBSCOhost				
S2	AB ( "support systems" OR "caseload size" OR "colleague support" OR "student support" OR "teacher support" OR "administrative support" OR "community support" OR "school funding" OR "community funding" OR training OR "personal therapy opportunities" OR "mental health opportunities" OR "time off" OR benefits ) OR DE ( "Counselor Training" OR "Cultural Awareness" OR "Work Environment" OR Burnout OR "Role Conflict" OR "Social Support Systems" OR "Decision Support Systems" OR "Community Support" )	Expanders - Apply equivalent subjects Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - ERIC	271,642
S1	AB ( "school counselor" OR "guidance counselor" OR "career counselor" OR "college and career counselor" ) OR DE ( "School Counselors" OR "College and Career Counselor" OR "School Guidance Counselor" OR "College Counselors" OR "Elementary School Counselors" OR "Secondary School Counselors" )	Expanders - Apply equivalent subjects Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - ERIC	6,964

Once search strings were obtained, I finalized the search string set with filters on language (English only) and filters on the type of peer-reviewed journal only. With each set of sources from each database, I then moved on to my search and screening process to delve into even more specific criteria-fitting sources for my research. Using the web-tool Rayyan, a free search and specified abstract screening tool designed to help researchers with systematic reviews and other synthesis projects, I screened the abstracts of the sources from the initial search to identify sources that met my eligibility criteria. I uploaded each research information (RIS) file for the search history of each database into Rayyan and deleted any duplicate articles Rayyan found via abstracts. After this, I went through each year of publication, starting with the most recent articles, and read through each abstract to confirm they adhered to my original PICOS criteria. Once I had 10 articles selected in “Include” I screened these 10 articles fully by reading over the text, specifically looking to make sure each article contained my PICOS requirements: **Population:** School Counselors K-12 (public AND/OR private), **Intervention:** Support Systems (any), **Comparison:** Any/none (not limiting), **Outcome:** Job performance (all encompassing), **Study type:** Any empirical study. In order to confirm these articles met my requirements, I took notes on who and what they were studying, how they performed their research, and if the article explained some form of outcome regarding the job performance of school counselors. If not, I excluded the sources and minimized my list again, ending up with 8 studies as my dataset.

Lastly, using the final set of articles that met my criteria, I created a coding and synthesis table to display all of the information the articles gave me regarding my topic. I decided on four main characteristics from the articles I believed to be the most relevant to my research: Location, Participants, Methods, and Measurements of Study. Once the information from each source was collected according to the category, I created a synthesis table to display connections among the

sources that could answer my research question. These included: a **call for better faculty relationships** (sources that identified relationships between counselors and associates, teachers, admin, etc. are key to improving job performance), a **call for more wellness** (sources that identified wellness issues being present and undealt with a key to resulting job performance), **institutional/systemic issues** (sources that identified issues within working such as caseload, duties given, timeoff, personal factors, etc. are key to improving job performance), and **call for more training** (sources that identified a need for training or change in training before and after becoming a counselor are key to improving job performance).

### Results

There were eight sources that met the criteria established for the research question: “What are the most effective support systems that impact the job performance of school counselors as they fulfill their roles?” These final research articles came from a total of 292 sources, of which 202 originated from the database ERIC, 68 from PsycINFO, and 23 from Social Services Abstracts. There were no other records identified from other sources, and after duplicates were removed from the total sources gathered, the sum total came to 264 sources for an initial screening. The next set of limitations applied was the date. The most recent research studies were screened and, if they met the criteria, they were selected. From 2023-2020, 14 articles were accepted through the first screening. Other reasons besides the date limitations for exclusion of sources included articles with the wrong population, wrong location, wrong outcome, or wrong focus (the directive was not geared towards school counselors job performance). The 14 final sources were then processed through a second final screening where the full text was read and ensured that the purpose of the research aligned with the research

criteria and questions. From this final screening, eight sources made the cut for analysis and coding of characteristics, as well as a synthesis of findings.

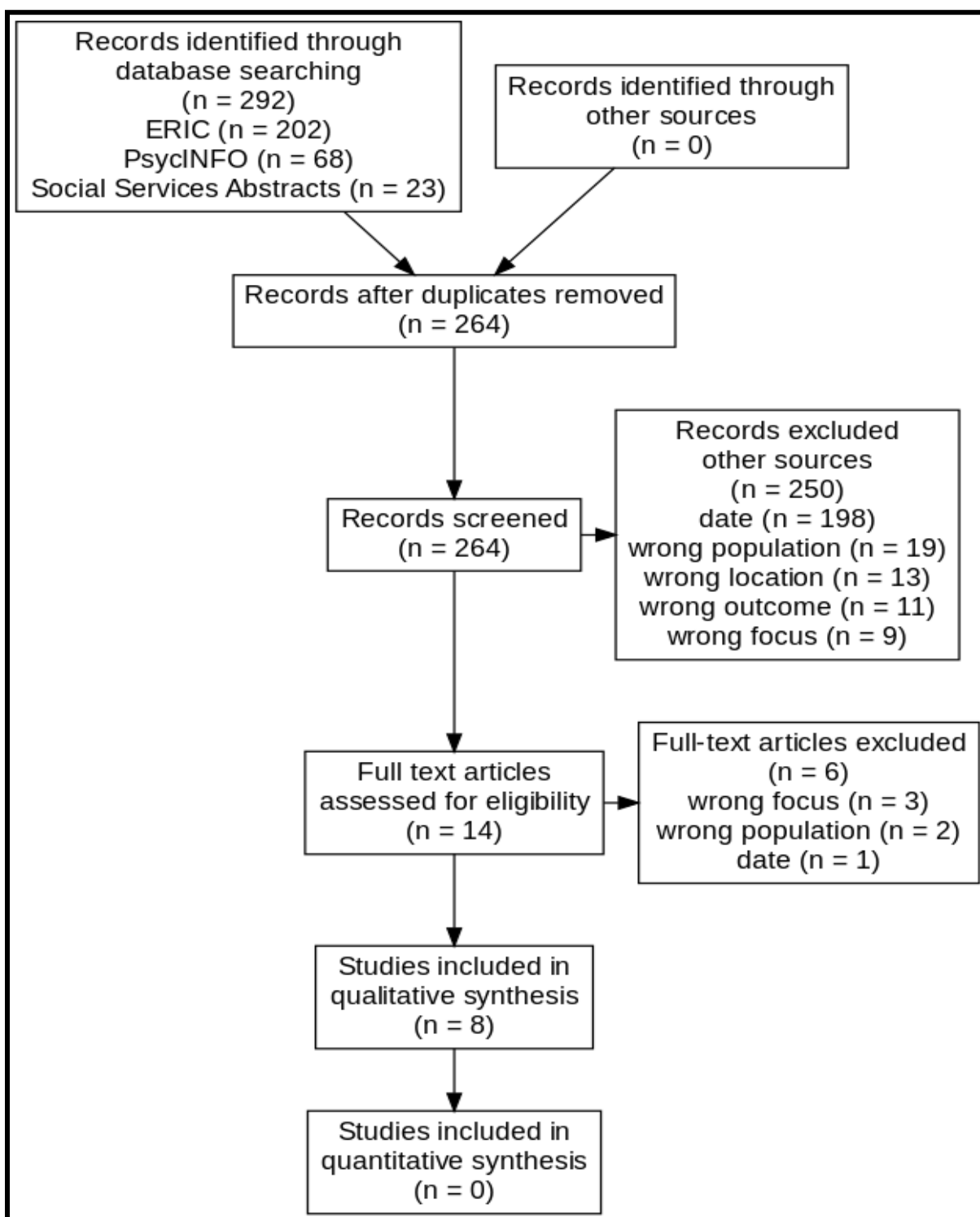


Figure 1: PRISMA Flow Diagram - HollyHartman (Shiny Apps)

Using the eight sources from the screening tests, I created a table to code the characteristics of each source. Using Location, Participants, Methods, Measurements and Focus of Study, I found that every source used participants in the United States, specifically the Northeast and Southeast regions of the US. In addition, each source had an overwhelming population source who were women, and of white ethnicity, with each study having participants be made up of 70% or more of each (women, white). Another trend found amongst each source was that the school counselors used in each study worked in suburban high schools, with most ranging from 10-16 years of experience. The methods I charted from each study also bordered similar trends, with most being surveys and questionnaires, or cross sectional studies. In order to participate, almost every study used invitations sent via email from the public list of members on the ASCA website. Measurements and Focus of Study for each of the sources varied, the table describes each source measuring items such as: socioeconomic status, professional development, intra/inter personal factors, school climate, leadership, multicultural competence, psychological empowerment, burnout, stress levels, job stress, altruistic behavior and motivation, job satisfaction, attitudes, and various levels of wellness. Depending on what was measured, the source's Focus of Study was to either find the relationship between burnout and stress to job satisfaction, or wellness and job satisfaction, or how work related rumination and ecological factors impact job satisfaction and competence. Knowing all of these factors of the sources used in my research, I can see if there is discrepancy and or bias in the studies done before mine, such as the fact that having mostly white women as respondents could create a gap in experience and history of one's life and therefore how that person handles prejudice, multicultural competence, and socioeconomic stress of students at an understanding level.

Table 1: Coding Table of Characteristics - Google Sheets

Research Question:	What are the most effective support systems that impact the job performance of school counselors as they fulfill their roles?				
Study	Location	Participants	Methods	Measurements	Focus of Study
<a href="#">Hilts, D. &amp; Liu, Y. (2023).</a>	United States - Precovid had Northeast: 40.1%, South US: 25.3%, Midwest: 9.8%, West: 14.4%, 0.4% chose not to disclose. Current covid had Northeast: 38.0%, South: 32.1%, Midwest: 13.7%, West: 16.1%, and 0.2% chose not to disclose.	total 1048, 506 pre covid participants with majority white (85%), between 20-30 years old, 84% cisgender female, 3-8 years of experience, suburban schools served at high school age. 544 current covid participants with majority white (80%), between 31-50 years old, 82% cisgender female, 3-8 years of experience, suburban schools served at high school age.	used <b>surveys</b> sent via ASCA forum/finding public accounts of counselors, randomly chose participants for <b>pre-COVID-19</b> condition, asked to consider their retrospective experiences within the specified timeframe of September 2019 to March 2020, and <b>current covid</b> where survey was active for participants from November 2021 to December 2021	measured within survey: <b>school climate</b> (collegial leadership, professional teacher behavior, achievement press, and institutional vulnerability), <b>school counseling leadership</b> (interpersonal influence, resourceful problem-solving, systemic collaboration, social justice advocacy, and professional efficacy), <b>psychological empowerment</b> (meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact), <b>multicultural competence</b> (assessment of school environment, reflection on personal culture, interpersonal relationships, and collaboration)	examine differences in school counselors' perceptions of their school climate, practice of leadership, multicultural competence, and psychological empowerment before and during the COVID-19.
<a href="#">Hilts, D., Liu, Y., Li, D., &amp; Luke, M. (2022)</a>	United States - Northeast 36.5%; South 29.5%, Midwest 16.4%, and West 15.0%; 2.7% did not disclose this information	total 647, majority white (79%), 81% cisgender female, between 36-50 years old, serving majority high school level at suburban schools	used <b>questionnaire</b> sent via link on ASCA open forum and publically listed school counselors	measured within questionnaire: childhood SES and current CES (socioeconomic statuses at different times), <b>professional development</b> (leadership experience, leadership training, mentorship received, supervision), <b>Intra/Inter personal factors</b> (leadership self-efficacy, multicultural competence, psychological empowerment), <b>school climate</b> , <b>school leadership practices</b>	current study aims to "examine ecological factors that predict the leadership practices of school counselors... school counselors should think and act systemically and to understand students' multilayered contexts... better understand how ecological contexts influence school counselors' engagement in leadership would be prudent"
<a href="#">Mullen, P. R., Chae, N., Backer, A., &amp; Niles, J. (2021).</a>	United States - no specifics	total 327, majority white (84%), majority female (90%), suburban schools majority 44%, high school majority 31%	used <b>qualtrics survey</b> sent via emails of ASCA members on membership directory	measured: <b>burnout</b> (hopeless, tired, and worthless/like a failure), <b>job stress</b> (demanding, hectic, calm, work pressure and threat), and <b>job satisfaction</b>	"overarching objective of this study is to explore how school counselors' job stress, burnout, and job satisfaction differ based on their caseload of students."
<a href="#">Sanders, C. B. (2021).</a>	one public school division in the southern region of the United States	total 26 participants, elementary, middle, and high school counselors	practitioner <b>research study</b> , school counselors invited via school district actual schedule of retreat was about talking about experiences: "These experiences included large- and small-group discussions of the work of school counselors, talking about how they take care of themselves as helping professionals, a mindfulness session, lunch, a movement session, a drumming session, many opportunities for community building throughout the day, and a final closing	measured with a questionnaire: "usefulness, time worthiness, applicability to their personal self-care, and the likelihood they would recommend this type of retreat to other school counselors" and a second questionnaire post retreat asking about their connection with their <b>space, self, purpose, body, nature and to the other participants</b>	"Creating space and an opportunity for school counselors to have time for personal and professional renewal was the intention of this project. This study focuses on the outcomes of a retreat designed for and delivered to school counselors to promote wellness."
<a href="#">Beasley, J. J., &amp; Norris, E. K. (2021)</a>	one school district in the Southeastern United States	total 55 participants, majority white (76%), majority female (87%), mostly serving high school level with years of experience averaging 9.2 years	cross-sectional <b>research</b> investigation, with a survey and questionnaire, compared answers between previous research study on this district	<b>School Counseling Activity Rating Scale</b> (SCARS), meant to measure "counseling activities; consultation activities; management, evaluation, and implementation counseling interventions and programs; Curriculum activities; facilitation of classroom lessons; and Other Activities-performance of non-counseling services and activities." <b>Professional quality of life</b> , <i>Measurement satisfaction and commitment</i>	"The purpose of this study was to illuminate which demographic factors and school counseling activities impact the STS levels of school counselors within this particular school district after controlling for BO and years of experience"
<a href="#">Limberg, D., Cook, C. A., Gonzales, S., McCartney, E., &amp; Romagnolo, S. (2021).</a>	national, across the united states	total 437 participants, majority white (88%), majority female (87%), mean age of 44, 87% had obtained a masters, mean years of experience 12, most serving high school and elementary, in suburban public schools	various <b>surveys</b> were used in the study, school counselors were contacted via email	measurements of study included the Heintzelman Inventory: measure <b>altruistic motivation</b> , 12 the Self-Report Altruism Scale (ISRA-Scale); Rushton et al., 1981) to measure <b>altruistic behavior</b> ; the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educator Survey (MBI-ES); Maslach et al., 1996) to measure levels of <b>burnout</b> , and a survey of Likert scale items to measure <b>wellness</b> .	"Therefore, our current study is an exploratory examination of the relationship amongst wellness, altruism, and burnout, which is lacking in the counseling literature (Young & Lambie, 2006), specifically with regard to school counseling."
<a href="#">Fye, H. J., Cook, R. M., Baltrinic, E. R., &amp; Baylin, A. (2020).</a>	united states, not specified	total 227 participants, majority female (73%), majority white (81.5%), mean age of 46, with 77% having a masters in counseling, mean of 14 years of experience, with most working in suburban elementary schools	20% of school counselors from all 50 states and district of columbia, who were also members of the ASCA online directory were chosen, they were sent a link to a <b>qualtrics survey</b> for the research.	measured age, sex, race and ethnicity, degree, and years of experience, and their work environment (e.g., school district, grade level), as well as the PSS perceived stress scale to measure <b>stress</b> , the Brief COPE scale to measure <b>how school counselors cope</b> as either problem-focused, active-emotional, and avoidant-emotional, <b>job satisfaction and attitude</b> via Pay, Promotion, Supervision, Fringe Benefits, Continuent Rewards	"What is the relationship between individual (i.e., perceived job stress, problem-focused coping, avoidant-emotional coping, and activeemotional coping) and organizational (i.e., perceived job satisfaction, role incongruity, role conflict, and role ambiguity) factors after controlling for years of experience and school district, with the subscales of school counselor burnout: (1) Exhaustion (2) "Does school counselors' work-related rumination predict their job satisfaction, work engagement, burnout, and turnover intentions?" basically does repeatedly worrying about the event (working) cause them to feel differently and work differently about their job
<a href="#">Mullen, P. R., Backer, A., Chae, N., &amp; Li, H. (2020).</a>	across the united states, not specified	total 288 participants, majority female (82%), majority white (77%), mean years of experience (12), with most serving high school students in suburban areas, the average caseload amongst them was 405 students...	methods were a cross sectional research design including a <b>qualtrics survey</b> sent to participants.	work related rumination, burnout, turnover intentions, job satisfaction, work and well-being,	

The final step to complete this research study was to create a synthesis table of my sources. I gathered each aspect of interest from each source and categorized it into: interest in better faculty relationships, wellness, institutional/systemic issues, or more training. Every single source landed on some aspect of systemic or institutional issues as the main catalyst for school counselor stress, burnout, or lack of job satisfaction, and therefore general job performance. In addition, most sources cited a call for more wellness opportunities to be a solution and general need for school counselors to enjoy and fulfill their roles more. This synthesis also lacked calls for more training for school counselors to better improve their job performance.



Table 2: Table of Synthesis - Google Sheets

Research Question:	What are the most effective support systems that impact the job performance of school counselors as they fulfill their roles?			
	Call for better faculty relationships	Call for more wellness	Institutional/Systemic Issues	Call for more training
Hilts, D., & Liu, Y. (2023).	- counselors must <b>advocate</b> to be included in school leadership; <b>some admini dont have accurate understanding of school counselors' training backgrounds and scope of practice</b> ; in addition, the extra work administrators and other faculty had to do during covid pushed for better school climates, <b>more people pulling their weight</b> .	- pandemic psuhed school counselors who are required to demonstrate resiliency and dedication to their students and school community, to further being more passionate, even if resources didnt allow	- found that school counselors' reported challenges during the pandemic... <b>effectively meeting the needs of historically marginalized students</b> and students with <b>special needs</b> ...limited help-seeking behavior from the most vulnerable families...school counselors have had limited access to students, traversed challenges with student engagement and motivation, and barriers to familial engagement such as technological issues and access to internet...	
Hilts, D., Liu, Y., Li, D., & Luke, M. (2022)	- supervisors of school counselors could do layered <b>interventions</b> to help speak on school counselors' dispositions about an <b>active orientation</b> toward their work role	- more <b>empowerment</b> =more likely to <b>engage in leadership practices</b> ; psychological empowerment is a strong motivator and influences an individual's performance; school counselors can engage in <b>critical reflection</b> according to article regarding what brought them into this profession and how it evolved	- age, race/ethnicity, and current SES predict the leadership practices of school counselors; those who are older tend to push for more practices and tasks to be done due to experience; school counselors of color had more multicultural competence and better recognize and are driven to address school policies and practices that further disenfranchise students of color and their families	multicultural competence, school counselors not of color are not as driven to change the system/know how to advocate for different cultures, calls for more training in this, also mentoned <b>EXPERIENCE</b> over training created better leadership practices
Mullen, P. R., Chae, N., Backer, A., & Niles, J. (2021).	- <b>principals</b> need to understand that <b>reduced caseload sizes can make systemic impacts beyond academics, including student and environmental factors</b> ; counselors handle many important academic-related tasks; admin can support school counselors by providing resources and supports and reducing their clerical and administrative noncounseling duties; consider contextual factors of school counselors' caseloads (e.g., numbers of students with disabilities, students who are undercredited, students experiencing <i>stressors and traumatic events, and other needs</i> ); when		- school counselors with <b>lower ratios or caseloads of students reported experiencing lower levels of burnout and job stress and higher levels of job satisfaction</b> ; those with lower job stress and higher job satisfaction within the lowest ratio group when compared with the other groups; for school counselors who had caseload sizes of less than 250 students, these participants experienced less job stress and higher levels of job satisfaction compared with school counselors with higher caseloads	
Sanders, C. B. (2021).	- there was time to connect to other counselors [specifically] ones from other schools that they don't see often; another person reflected on the value of "time for personal reflection and growth that I do not make in my daily life."as for time; several respondents also mentioned connection and valuing being able to connect with counselor professionals; others and having a chance for self-care all with those who understand the demands of this work	- based on the retreat, allowing time to one's self, talking to other school counselors, mindfulness, and movement activities, admin can see how school counselors' overall wellness is impacted by their work; if school counselors experience roadblocks to wellness such as burnout, vicarious traumatization, compassion fatigue, and impairment, occupational time for wellness can offset this	- District leaders, counselor educators, and professional associations need to collaborate to promote wellness of school counselors via opportunities for them to refresh and renew so they can be effective in their work with clients	
Beasley, J. J., & Norris, E. K. (2021)		- study indicated that the most (76%) of participants fell into the low range of STS; no participants reported a high score in STS; there are contradictions in the literature of reported levels of STS as experienced by school counselors (small study group)	- having school counselors who are performing <b>non-counseling activities significantly impacted their secondary traumatic stress</b> in trying to control burnout, this was <b>offset by coordination and collaboration of activities</b> , meaning when proper roles are followed school counselors can avoid stress and burnout	
Limberg, D., Cook, C. A., Gonzales, S., McCartney, E., & Romagnolo, S. (2021).	- practice advocacy for their position and appropriate duties; advocating to principals and other administrative staff for appropriate role assignments has positive influence on the school counselor not only as a professional, but as an individual	- participants with more <b>occupational wellness and spiritual wellness = lower levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, and stress at work</b> ; emotional, spiritual, and occupational wellness are positively associated with <b>personal accomplishment</b> , and when participants completed a wellness activity...social self-care had a negative correlation with emotional exhaustion and depersonalization but was positively correlated with personal accomplishment	- place emphasis on the relationship that school counselors have with the roles that they are assigned or required to do; when viewing roles or activities that they partake in can positively or negatively impact their levels of burnout and their perspective on their ability to partake in altruistic tasks; most are over 1: 250 ratio; higher caseloads limit ability to engage in altruistic tasks due to the increased responsibility to serve a larger number of student's social/emotional, academic, and career development	
Eye, H. J., Cook, R. M., Baltrinic, E. R., & Baylin, A. (2020).	- advocacy includes <b>open communication</b> regarding the adequacy of <b>funding, resources, materials, and staff available to school counselors</b> ; if inadequate, school counselors may use the opportunity to advocate for increased support from supervisors and administrators	- school counselor participants experiencing incompetence were also engaging in increased avoidant-emotional coping; discovered school counselor participants' problem-focused coping was negatively related to Devaluing Clients; school counselor participants who changed this could maintain high levels of positive regard and empathy for students; problem-focused coping ios key to their engagement in student care	- <b>stress created Exhaustion and Deterioration in Personal Life dimensions of burnout</b> ; also found the stress-related variable of engagement in non-counseling duties was significantly related to Exhaustion and Deterioration in Personal Life; when school counselors' <b>roles are increasingly unclear, they are experiencing higher levels of burnout and specifically Incompetence</b> ; enjoying ones was negatively related to Negative Work Environment, this suggests organizational factors (i.e., administrative and clerical duties contributing to role stress) are strongly correlated with Negative Work Environment	
Mullen, P. R., Backer, A., Chae, N., & Li, H. (2020).		- school counselors who think about the emotional elements of their job more often while thinking about problem-solving strategies less had higher rates of burnout; those who engaged in affective rumination at higher rates and also thought of ways to solve problems at lower rates had higher rates of turnover intentions; findings indicated that lower affective rumination and higher problem-solving pondering predicted higher job satisfaction; AKA less time thinking about quitting/bad elements in work and higher problem-solving thinking predicted better job performance	- due to systemic issues, school counselors thinking about their job too much and unable to detach are more likely to have lower job satisfaction and more likely to have turnover intentions	- supervisors and counselor educators can also support positive reflection among school counselor trainees by tasking supervisees or students to think about the positive aspects of their clinical experiences

## Discussion

The results of this systematized review have brought forth very important notions in regards to my research question: What are the most effective support systems that impact the job performance of school counselors as they fulfill their roles? The idea that most school counselors have over the recommended caseload size ratio of school counselors to students as 1:250 by the ASCA (Bowers & Hatch, 2003), is a key element to understanding the need for better support systems. With 351-470 students for a caseload, school counselors reported high levels of burnout and job stress and lower levels of job satisfaction, whereas school counselors with lower ratios of caseloads claimed they experienced lower levels of burnout and job stress and higher levels of job satisfaction (Mullen et al., 2021). This trend is similar to other studies, where caseload impacts how well a counselor feels about their job and how well they can perform their designated roles (Limberg et al., 2021). This touches on the topic of adhering to ASCA and ACA ethics and guidelines, where school counselors are obligated to follow at a legal and personal level. With caseloads charting in at overwhelming levels, school counselors are feeling more stressed and more likely to burnout, impairing them from doing ASCA and ACA obligational tasks such as helping interpret student records, career planning, school counselor-related events, and exploring the psycho-social development of each student (Bowers & Hatch, 2003; Fye et al., 2017; Reiner & Pérusse, 2009). The concept of school counselors having exceeded caseloads and therefore being unable to perform their appropriate tasks leads directly into the idea that, from my research results, completing non-counseling activities is also an indicator of how well a school counselor can perform their job. The research reflected that school counselors who are performing non-counseling activities significantly increased their secondary traumatic stress (STS) in trying to control burnout, indicating that school counselors who follow their

determined, appropriate roles are less likely to experience STS and burnout (Beasley et al., 2021). Similarly, Fye et al. (2020) also found that engagement in non-counseling duties was significantly related to Exhaustion and Deterioration in Personal Life in their research. These trends within the cases I used in my research suggest that systemic and institutional issues such as caseload size and non-counseling activities indicate school counselors being unable to perform their jobs at peak efficiency and peak wellness (Bowers & Hatch, 2003; Fye et al., 2017;). As far as support systems go, the educational system itself is not supportive as it impacts how school counselors can do their job. School counselors are being forced to work in conditions they are not supposed to be in due to the rules set by the ASCA and ACA ethical and moral guidelines, but are tied down by the educational system and moral code to do right by all students they are assigned regardless of the standards set by the ASCA, leading school counselors to perform their jobs at a lower level of efficiency than they could.

Trends of needing more wellness opportunities for school counselors is also present in my research findings, suggesting that even if the systemic factors are creating issues for school counselors, there are still not enough opportunities for improving one's wellness to offset these issues. Some sources demonstrated that social self-care created less emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and allowed an increased correlation with personal accomplishment. These results align with other literature regarding school counselors who engage in self-care (social and essential) and have decreased emotional exhaustion and depersonalization with an increase in personal accomplishment (Limberg et al., 2021). Similarly, other sources referenced the idea of psychological empowerment regarding belief and confidence in the ability to do one's job, altruistic motivation, problem solving and problem-focused coping, also create better student care and maintaining professional vitality in continuing to uphold job performance (Fye et al.,

2020; Hilts et al., 2022; Mullen et al., 2020). Discovering this trend was slim amongst counselors who participated in these studies, and it can be said that having the opportunity to learn about and engage in acts that produce a better level of wellness for a counselor, inherently allows the students they tend to receive better care and help in all aspects. In addition, knowing school counselors who are given inappropriate roles cannot perform the job duties well, it can also be said that having faculty and staff who are understanding of what roles are appropriate will create higher rates of successful program implementation by school counselors, and therefore students with higher rates of academic success and moral (Fye et al., 2017; Geesa et al., 2019; Hamelin et al., 2022; Reiner & Pérusse, 2009). School counselors must therefore advocate for themselves to be given the opportunity to engage in wellness activities. Such as stated by Sanders, (2021), school counselors who are able to devote time to one's self, talk to other school counselors, and engage in mindfulness and movement activities such as within the retreat program, overall felt better about their job performance and purpose of their role after treatment. The retreat can allow professional association leaders to see how school counselors' overall wellness positively impacts their work. From these studies, it is clear that the opportunities for wellness are a vital support system that allows school counselors to perform their job at peak capacity.

The intersectionality of what is required of school counselors and what school counselors actually deal with, shows how each piece of a school counselor's professional and personal life impacts their ability to do their job. The intersectionality of systemic issues such as a lack of understanding of roles, tasking inappropriate roles, lack of faculty support, lack of wellness opportunities, all intersect to create barriers for school counselors to perform their jobs. These factors alone, while impactful, are even more impactful when combining the idea that school counselors must intersect personal factors such as financial situations, family values, cultural

values, experiences, gender disparities, and emotional-social implications while tending to the same personal factors of students as they impact their academic ability (Chan et al., 2018; Hurless & Kong, 2021). The overall intersectionality of each aspect of school counselors work and personal life has a clear impact on their job performance. Systemic and wellness opportunity factors, however, are shown to be the most frequent factors impacting job performance.

### **Conclusion**

School counselors are an integral part of what schools demonstrate as an entity: a place where children can learn about themselves and the world, and become the best people they can socially, emotionally, and academically. The role of school counselors has been clearly established by the ASCA and the ethics and morals they must follow as guides for children hold high importance. In order to make sure these children can have the best experience in school and therefore the future, school counselors need to have prominent and efficient support systems to back them when fulfilling their roles. My research initially aimed to interview school counselors in focus groups in hopes of getting their opinion on support systems and experience with, or lack of, said systems. However, due to a lack of participants, I instead used a systematized review method in which I looked over eight specified studies that matched the criteria I was looking for when trying to answer the question: What are the most effective support systems that impact the job performance of school counselors as they fulfill their roles?

As demonstrated in previous studies, wellness opportunities, caseload size and appropriate/inappropriate roles, are key to positively impacting school counselors' job performances. These results come from very specific sources which come to a similar conclusion that while various factors impact school counselor performance, being able to perform appropriate duties as a school counselor, with the appropriate caseload, and being given the

opportunity to learn and engage in wellness activities are what lead school counselors to perform their jobs at peak efficiency. It must be stated that these results lie under bias due to the region of where most respondents in each source came from (South/Northeastern US), ethnicity of school counselors being majority White, and the fact that there was a statistically significant amount of women participants from each study. This suggests more research must be done into more ethnically diverse groups of school counselors who are men and work in different regions of the United States besides the South/Northeast.

Regardless of the results and analysis of said results, this research suggests schools need to implicate wellness procedures for their school counselors and ensure they are given appropriate roles so they may increase their personal and professional wellness and efficiency. In addition, this research has brought attention to how internal and external factors are impactful of school counselors' job performances and therefore impact on students' lives. Future research should study how having school counselors who are prepared mentally and are given the tools to be fully well, will ultimately create a better program and environment for students to thrive in. In addition, the deep systemic issues of school counselors performing inappropriate activities suggest that schools must renew the roles of counselors to all faculty and staff. Lastly, caseload sizes must be lessened or more school counselors must be hired in order to offset the likelihood of burnout amongst counselors and therefore poorer job performance. In conclusion, the support systems most impactful on job performance of school counselors are institutional/systemic factors, and wellness opportunities. Future efforts therefore should be aimed at changing the current internal system school counselors rely on in school, whether this means hiring more staff, reducing caseloads, allowing more time off, or giving opportunities to better overall wellness. Changing this will allow all school counselors, and therefore students, to thrive at a better rate.

## References

- American School Counselor Association (ASCA)*. (n.d.). <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/>
- Acosta, D., Fujii, Y., Joyce-Beaulieu, D., Jacobs, K. D., Maurelli, A. T., Nelson, E. J., & McKune, S. L. (2021). Psychosocial health of k-12 students engaged in emergency remote education and in-person schooling: A cross-sectional study. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(16), 8564. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18168564>
- Beasley, J. J., & Norris, E. K. (2021). An Investigation of Factors Contributing to Secondary Traumatic Stress in School Counselors: A Pilot Study. *Journal of School Counseling*, 19(49).
- Bowers, J. & Hatch, T. (2003). *The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs*. American School Counselor Association
- Camp, A., Foxx, S. P., & Flowers, C. (2018). Examining the relationship between the multicultural self-efficacy, empathy, and training of school counselors and their knowledge and skills supporting students experiencing homelessness. *Professional School Counseling*, 22(1), <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X19867332>
- Chan, C. D., Cor, D. N., & Band, M. P. (2018). Privilege and oppression in counselor education: An intersectionality framework. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, 46(1), 58–73. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jmcd.1209>
- Felling, C. (2013). Hungry kids: The solvable crisis. *Educational Leadership*, 70(8), 56-60
- Retrieved October 11, 2022, from <https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/hungry-kids-the-solvable-crisis>

- Fye, H. J., Cook, R. M., Baltrinic, E. R., & Baylin, A. (2020). Examining individual and organizational factors of school counselor burnout. *The Professional Counselor, 10*(2), 235–250. <https://doi.org/10.15241/hjf.10.2.235>
- Fye, H. J., Miller, L. G., & Rainey, J. S. (2017). Predicting school counselors' supports and challenges when implementing the asca national model. *Professional School Counseling, 21*(1), <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X18777671>
- Gagnon, C., LeBlanc, L., Robert-Mazaye, C., Maïano, C., & Aimé, A. (2022). Intention to intervene in weight-related bullying in elementary school: A qualitative study of the perspectives of teachers and school counselors. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 118*, 103805. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2022.103805>
- Gay, J. L., & Swank, J. M. (2021a). School counselor educators' experiences navigating practicum and internship during covid-19. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 60*(4), 291–305. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ceas.12217>
- Gay, J. L., & Swank, J. M. (2021b). School counselors' use of the asca closing-the-gap action plan template to address educational disparities. *Professional School Counseling, 25*(1), <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X211058669>
- Geesa, R. L., Elam, N. P., Mayes, R. D., McConnell, K. R., & McDonald, K. M. (2019). School leaders' perceptions on comprehensive school counseling (CSC) evaluation processes: Adherence and implementation of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model. *Journal of Educational Leadership, Policy and Practice, 34*(1), 25–43. <https://doi.org/10.21307/jelpp-2019-002>



- Hamelin, G., Viviers, S., Litalien, D., & Boulet, J. (2022). Bringing light to school counselors' burnout: The role of occupational identity suffering. *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10775-022-09534-2>
- Havlik, S., Ciarletta, M., & Crawford, E. (2018). "If we don't define our roles, someone else will": Professional advocacy in school counseling. *Professional School Counseling*, 22(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X19848331>
- Hilts, D., & Liu, Y. (2023). School counselors' perceived school climate, leadership practice, psychological empowerment, and multicultural competence before and during COVID-19. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 101(2), 193–203. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12464>
- Hilts, D., Liu, Y., Li, D., & Luke, M. (2022). Examining ecological factors that predict school counselors' engagement in leadership practices. *Professional School Counseling*, 26(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X221118042>
- Hong, J. S., Choi, J., Espelage, D. L., Wu, C.-F., Boraggina-Ballard, L., & Fisher, B. W. (2021). Are children of welfare recipients at a heightened risk of bullying and peer victimization? *Child & Youth Care Forum*, 50(3), 547–568. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10566-020-09587-w>
- Hurless, N., & Kong, N. Y. (2021). Trauma-informed strategies for culturally diverse students diagnosed with emotional and behavioral disorders. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 57(1), 56–61. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1053451221994814>
- Larrier, Y., Kijai, J., Bakerson, M. A., Walker, L., Linton, J., Woolford-Hunt, C., Sallinen, B. J., & Woolford, S. J. (2012). School counselors perspectives of the barriers and facilitators associated with their involvement in the childhood obesity epidemic: A national k-12

survey. *American Journal of Health Education*, 43(4), 218–225.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/19325037.2012.10599238>

Limberg, D., Cook, C. A., Gonzales, S., McCartnery, E., & Romagnolo, S. (2021). Examining School Counselors' Wellness and Its Contribution to Their Levels of Altruism and Burnout. *Journal of School Counseling*, 19(24).

McShane, M. Q. (2019). Supporting students outside the classroom: Can wraparound services improve academic performance? *Education Next*, 19(3), 38–46.

Mullen, P. R., Backer, A., Chae, N., & Li, H. (2020). School counselors' work-related rumination as a predictor of burnout, turnover intentions, job satisfaction, and work engagement. *Professional School Counseling*, 24(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X20957253>

Mullen, P. R., Chae, N., Backer, A., & Niles, J. (2021). School counselor burnout, job stress, and job satisfaction by student caseload. *NASSP Bulletin*, 105(1), 25–42.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0192636521999828>

Palmieri, L. E., & La Salle, T. P. (2017). Supporting students in foster care. *Psychology in the Schools*, 54(2), 117–126. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/pits.21990>

Pincus, R., Hannor-Walker, T., Wright, L., & Justice, J. (2020). Covid-19's effect on students: How school counselors rise to the rescue. *NASSP Bulletin*, 104(4), 241–256.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0192636520975866>

Reiner, S., Colbert, R., & Pérusse, R. (2009). Teacher perceptions of the professional school counselor role: A national study. *Professional School Counseling*, 12(5), 324–332.  
<https://doi.org/10.5330/PSC.n.2010-12.324>

- Sanders, C. B. (2021). Renewal Retreats for School Counselors: Design, Delivery, and Outcomes. *Professional School Counseling*, 25(1).  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/2156759X211006641>
- Sanetti, L. M. H. (2017). Increasing equitable care for youth through coordinated school health. *Psychology in the Schools*, 54(10), 1312–1318. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/pits.22081>
- Wright, G. G., & Chan, C. D. (2022). Applications of intersectionality theory to enhance career development interventions in response to covid-19. *Professional School Counseling*, 26(1b), 2156759X2211068. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X221106807>
- Zyromski, B., Baker E., Betters-Bubon, J., T. Dollarhide. J., & Antonides, J. (2020). Adverse Childhood Experiences: A 20-year content analysis of American Counseling Association and American School Counselor Association Journals. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 98(4), 351-362. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/jcad.12338>

## Appendix

### ERIC Boolean Search Strings:

- **S1:** [AB "school counselor" OR "guidance counselor" OR "career counselor" OR "college and career counselor" OR DE "School Counselors" OR "College and Career Counselor" OR "School Guidance Counselor" OR "College Counselors" OR "Elementary School Counselors" OR "Secondary School Counselors"]
- **S2:** [AB "support systems" OR "caseload size" OR "colleague support" OR "student support" OR "teacher support" OR "administrative support" OR "community support" OR "school funding" OR "community funding" OR training OR "personal therapy opportunities" OR "mental health opportunities" OR "time off" OR benefits OR DE "Counselor Training" OR "Cultural Awareness" OR "Work Environment" OR Burnout

OR "Role Conflict" OR "Social Support Systems" OR "Decision Support Systems" OR "Community Support"]

- **S3:** S1 AND S2
- **S4:** [AB "job performance" OR competence OR capability OR "ethical standards" OR "administrative standards" OR "school standards" OR DE Success OR "Ability and Achievement" OR Competence OR "Counseling Effectiveness" OR "Counselor Performance" OR "Role Perception" OR "Well Being" OR "Wellness" OR "Job Satisfaction"]
- **S5:** S3 AND S4 (with “english” and “peer-reviewed” limitations)

#### **PsychINFO Search Strings:**

- **S1:** [AB "school counselor" OR "guidance counselor" OR "career counselor" OR "college and career counselor" OR DE "School Counselors" OR "School Counseling" OR "Vocational School Counselors"]
- **S2:** [AB "support systems" OR "caseload size" OR "colleague support" OR "student support" OR "teacher support" OR "administrative support" OR "community support" OR "school funding" OR "community funding" OR training OR "personal therapy opportunities" OR "mental health opportunities" OR "time off" OR benefits OR DE "Perceived social support" OR "Perceived organizational support" OR "Working Conditions" OR "school counselor training"]
- **S3:** S1 AND S2

- **S4:** AB ( "job performance" OR competence OR capability OR "ethical standards" OR "administrative standards" OR "school standards" ) OR DE ( "Job Performance" OR "Organizational Commitment" OR "Professional Competence" )
- **S5:** S3 AND S4 (with “english” and “peer-reviewed” limitations)

### **Social Services Abstract Search Strings:**

- **Name:** ((abstract("school counselor" OR "guidance counselor" OR "career counselor" OR "college and career counselor") OR mainsubject("School Counselors" OR "Edit name
- **Searched For:** ((abstract("school counselor" OR "guidance counselor" OR "career counselor" OR "college and career counselor") OR mainsubject("School Counselors" OR "School Counseling" OR "Counseling Services" OR "School Counselor Training")) AND (abstract("support systems" OR "caseload size" OR "colleague support" OR "student support" OR "teacher support" OR "administrative support" OR "community support" OR "school funding" OR "community funding" OR training OR "personal therapy opportunities" OR "mental health opportunities" OR "time off" OR benefits) OR mainsubject(Counseling OR Training OR "Counselor education" OR "Financial Support" OR "Public Support" OR "Social Support" OR Sponsorship))) AND (abstract("job performance" OR competence OR capability OR "ethical standards" OR "administrative standards" OR "school standards") OR mainsubject(Effectiveness OR Failure OR Success OR "Task Performance" OR "Job Satisfaction" OR "Role Completion" OR "Role Fulfillment"))) AND PEER(yes)
- **Databases:** Social Services Abstracts