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An exploration of school counselors' self-efficacy for advocacy of gifted students

SaDohl Kisha Goldsmith
University of Iowa

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AN EXPLORATION OF SCHOOL COUNSELORS' SELF-EFFICACY FOR
ADVOCACY OF GIFTED STUDENTS

by

SaDohl Kisha Goldsmith

An Abstract

Of a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in
Rehabilitation and Counselor Education
in the Graduate College of The University of Iowa

December 2011

Thesis Supervisors: Associate Professor Tarrell Awe Agahe Portman
Assistant Professor Susannah M. Wood

ABSTRACT

Current research suggests that gifted students possess a unique set of characteristics that require unique skills and knowledge to address properly. School counselors are in a position to address the unique needs of gifted students provided they have the knowledge required for effective interaction. School counselors are called to provide multiple services for all students in the school setting; among those services are to advocate for student needs as well as to maintain a level of knowledge that will facilitate effective advocacy. Although the current literature suggests that school counselors possess the unique skills to address the needs of gifted students, literature is limited in the area of school counselor advocacy for gifted students, and no studies have addressed school counselor self-efficacy for advocacy of gifted students.

The purpose of this study was to investigate how self-efficacy, knowledge of gifted issues, and understanding of professional advocacy competencies relate to school counselors' advocacy activities with gifted students. Quantitative methodology was used to answer the research questions. Professional school counselors completed a series of four instruments that comprised the survey for this study. Participants completed the survey either online or on paper between the months of January and June 2011. SPSS Version 19.0 for Windows was used to complete the statistical analyses for this study, which included descriptive statistics, factor analysis, and regression. The results of this study indicated that knowledge of giftedness, self-efficacy, and building level, significantly predicted school counselors' advocacy competency and activity with gifted students. However, training program and years of experience were not significant predictors of school counselors' advocacy activity with gifted students.

Implications for school counselors are increased knowledge of gifted needs and increased advocacy activity for gifted students. In order for school counselors to provide appropriate services to gifted students, it is important to increase their knowledge of the population. This increased knowledge will help school counselors to be more inclusive of

gifted students and their needs when developing comprehensive school counseling programs. In addition, this increased knowledge may assist school counselors with becoming active participants in services for gifted students within the school environment.

Future research should further explore the level of advocacy activity of school counselors with gifted students and the importance of self-efficacy for school counselors.

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

PH.D. THESIS

This is to certify that the Ph.D. thesis of

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To Tony, who loved and supported me unconditionally through this journey. To my Parents, who taught me that anything worth having is worth fighting for. And to my dear friend, Dr. LaShawn C. Bacon, whose friendship and love will undoubtedly keep me focused.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Approximately 6% of school-age children in the United States are identified as gifted (U.S. Department of Education [DOE], 2008). These children constitute such a small segment of the population, and have such unique characteristics and needs; they can be considered a special population. According to Robinson (2002), gifted students may be challenged in the following ways: asynchronous development, psychological concerns, and other special needs (e.g., learning disability, ADHD). Gifted students also can experience concerns with identification (or lack thereof), underachievement, perfectionism, frequent inappropriate placement in classes, and a lack of challenging curricula.

Given the risk of personal-social and academic issues associated with giftedness, gifted students need an educational professional who can advocate for them. The professional school counselor can be one such person. School counselors are called to address the personal-social, career, and academic concerns of gifted students in accordance with the American School Counseling Association (ASCA) position statement on gifted students (ASCA, 2007). Society risks the loss of important contributions by individuals who have the possibility to impact the future of our country and the way we live. In addition, school counselors are situated uniquely to serve as student advocates in the areas of academic achievement, degree completion, and post-secondary or job placement. The concept of advocacy is not new to the field of school counseling; it is considered a key role that all counselors, regardless of training, must fulfill in their service to their clients. Our future leaders may not be identified due to falling victim to underachievement and possible educational termination or dropping out of school. School counselors are in a position to help prevent this from happening. This is an important part of the role of school counselors as outlined in the position statement specific to gifted students. Although research on counseling, school counseling, and

giftedness has emphasized the importance of school counselor advocacy and some scholars have spoken directly regarding the use of advocacy with gifted students, the field is still lacking in knowledge of how school counselors can best advocate for gifted students. Specifically, what activities do school counselors use to advocate for gifted students? How do school counselors implement their advocacy activities? And are school counselors' advocacy activities effective for gifted students?

One way to understand how school counselors can better advocate for gifted students is to understand how gifted student are defined in the literature as well as some common characteristics of gifted students. This section will highlight definitions of gifted students and characteristics frequently used when discussing this population.

Gifted Students

Definitions

Several definitions of giftedness have been proposed by multiple federal agencies. Three primary definitions that guide the current development of programming and planning for gifted education in the United States were provided by the Marland Report (Marland, 1972), No Child Left Behind (2002), and The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC, 2007)

In 1972, the first federal definition of giftedness was described in the Marland Report, which encouraged schools to define giftedness broadly. This definition included academic and intellectual talent such as leadership ability, ability in visual and performing arts, creative or productive thinking, and psychomotor ability. The intent of the Marland Report and the subsequent formal definition of gifted was to improve the development of gifted education by identifying deficiencies in educational planning and programming for gifted students (Colangelo & Davis, 2003). This definition of gifted became the foundation for how giftedness was viewed on federal and state levels (NAGC, 2007; Passow & Rudnitski, 1993).

Another federal definition of giftedness was developed during the era of educational accountability and reform based on the No Child Left Behind Act (2002). During implementation of this reform, giftedness was redefined as students, children, or youth (a) who give evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields; and (b) who need services and activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities (NAGC, 2007). On an organizational level, NAGC, which is the national organization for gifted children, families, educators, and researchers; defined giftedness as showing or having the potential to show an exceptional level of performance in one or more areas of expression, such as academic, creative, or leadership abilities (2007). For the purpose of this study, the author used the following as an operational definition of giftedness: students who show potential for a high level of intellectual, creative, artistic, and leadership abilities, and who require unique services and activities by educational professionals for effective development. These unique services and activities provided in the educational environment stem from the needs of gifted students. These needs are rooted in their unique characteristics and development.

Common Characteristics of Gifted Children

Common characteristics of gifted children have been thoroughly discussed by authors such as Lovecky (1992) and Silverman (1997, 2000) for many years. These authors have essentially identified five common characteristics to describe gifted children. The first characteristic is divergent thinking, which is described as the ability of gifted students to “think outside of the box.” Students displaying this trait will have a thoughts or responses that are completely different from their developmental peers. Additionally, these students may appear to be somewhat challenging or disrespectful to those in authority. Gifted children are also eager to learn and have new experiences, which describe the second characteristic of excitability identified by Lovecky (1992).

These children also possess a high emotional reaction to situations and what is considered a heightened arousal of the nervous system.

Third on the list of common characteristics of gifted children is sensitivity, a trait that provides intense passion and empathy for people and things. Children with this trait may have difficulty with interpersonal boundaries and become attached to other peoples' issues without regard for self (Silverman, 2000). Perceptiveness and entelechy are the last two characteristics used to describe gifted children (Lovecky, 1992). Perceptiveness addresses the clear sense of honesty and dishonesty possessed by gifted children; furthermore, these children are in touch with the intentions of others around them. However, as Silverman (2000) pointed out, these children may also have difficulty understanding why others do not have the same clear perception they have. Lastly, entelechy refers to the high self-determination and motivation of gifted children. While gifted children are highly self motivated, they are also considered to be single minded and focused on their goals, and sometimes not aware of the goals of others (Lovecky, 1992; Silverman, 2000). It is important to point out that the five characteristics outlined above are not mutually exclusive or completely exhaustive (Silverman, 2000).

Another common trait that many gifted students share is asynchronous development. Asynchronous development refers to the incongruence of gifted students' cognitive ability with that of their same-age peers (Columbus Group, 1991; Silverman, 1997). In this case, the cognitive abilities of the student far outpace their social and emotional development and even their physical development. Hence, asynchronous development may place the gifted student at a disadvantage in peer interactions, may cause isolation, and may lead to inappropriate social skill development

Underachievement and the Gifted Student

The underachievement of gifted students is a major educational concern. Underachievement describes the academic performance of students who are not working at their full academic potential (Rimm, 2002) and may result from lack of rigor or

perceived peer expectations (Robinson, 2002). According to Whitmore (1986), gifted underachievement has been a puzzling trend for parents and educators alike. One of the major challenges with studying underachievement is defining the term. The most common definition of underachievement as it relates to gifted education is based on the discrepancy between students' potential ability and their observed achievement (Baum, Renzulli, & Hebert, 1995; Dowdall & Colangelo, 1992; Emerick, 1992; Whitmore, 1986). Baum et al. (1995) suggested that underachievement can result from the "lack of appropriate curriculum and academic challenge," a common concern for gifted students (p. 229). These authors reported the students' perceptions that teaching styles and instructional content were not challenging, which interfered with their ability to perform at their best; therefore, the students underachieved. One student in the Baum (1995) study disapproved of his academic placement because of what he called "a crowding situation" (p. 229), implying that there were too many students and not enough resources to adequately meet their academic needs. Inappropriate placement of students who are identified as gifted can be a major issue in their personal/social and academic development (Reis, 2004).

As one way to decrease the difficulties of gifted students, Carlson (2004) recommended increased involvement of school counselors in the identification of gifted students, which might result in more thorough identification procedures, better understanding of test results, and more appropriate placement and programming. With these measures in place, it may be possible to avoid gifted students' underachievement and other negative outcomes and to facilitate services and positive academic and social outcomes.

School Counseling and Gifted Students

Roles and Responsibilities

The ASCA first adopted a position statement on gifted and talented student programs in 1988. The most recent revision of this position statement was published in

2007 and states that the school counselor is an integral part of the educational team that meets the needs of gifted students. The school counselor's roles include the following: to assist in identification and to promote understanding of gifted students, to provide individual and group counseling, to develop a comprehensive school counseling program to meet the needs of all students including those identified as gifted and talented, and to advocate for the needs of identified gifted and talented students.

According to the ASCA position statement for the gifted, there are specific roles for school counselors (ASCA, 2007). Among school counselors' specific roles in gifted programming is first to assist in the identification of gifted and talented students (ASCA, 2007). This is accomplished through the use of a multiple-criteria system that includes intellectual ability; academic performance; visual and performing arts ability; practical arts ability; creative thinking ability; leadership potential; parent, teacher, and peer nomination; and expert evaluation (ASCA). For school counselors, this role requires tapping into their acquired counseling skills of consultation and collaboration with other stakeholders to ensure an appropriate identification process.

A second responsibility of school counselors in gifted programs that goes beyond identification is to advocate for the inclusion of identified gifted and talented students in activities that address their personal/social and academic needs. Field and Baker (2004) asserted that advocacy is "an integral component to effective school counseling" (p. 56). As mentioned previously, the ASCA National Model and other educational researchers have confirmed that advocacy is important to the personal/social and academic success of all students and that school counselors are in a position to effect change in that area (ASCA, 2005; Bailey, Getch, & Chen-Hayes, 2003; Field & Baker, 2004; House & Hayes, 2002). One way this change can be accomplished is by embracing the foundational roles of school counselors such as the role of consultant (Baker, Robichaud, Westforth Dietrich, Wells, & Schreck, 2009); this may include working with the gifted coordinators or gifted teachers on programming and services for gifted students. Bemak

and Chung (2005) emphasized advocacy by school counselors for all students using the three “Cs”: counseling, consultation, and collaboration. These authors suggested school counselors adapt their counseling techniques to meet the needs of the students in their building (e.g., group counseling instead of individual counseling to meet the students’ social/personal needs). Second, the authors recommended consulting with other counseling professionals as well as with teachers in the decision-making process and needs assessment of the student population. Finally, Bemak and Chung (2005) proposed that school counselors collaborate with community agencies, legislators, and key stakeholders to promote and emphasize the “social and academic equality” of all students (p. 200).

A third responsibility of school counselors in gifted programs is to promote awareness of the unique characteristics of students who are identified as gifted and talented. As discussed in this chapter, gifted students possess unique characteristics that can be addressed by school counselors using individual, group, and psycho-educational counseling (Peterson, 2006). In addition, school counselors can increase their own knowledge and awareness and that of their professional peers regarding the needs of gifted students. This can be accomplished by attending trainings and partnering with other educational professionals who can contribute their knowledge of the needs of gifted and talented students (Baker et al., 2009; Bemak & Chung, 2005)

ASCA suggests that school counselors recommend resources and engage in professional development opportunities to ensure their continued knowledge and awareness of the gifted and talented population. For school counselors, this responsibility consists of collaborating with other educational professionals, participating in workshops and continuing education opportunities to stay current with the empirical research and findings in the school counseling and gifted education fields, and consulting with teachers and parents to share such information with them. The position statement

provided by ASCA speaks directly to school counselors' roles and responsibilities with gifted students, but these are also relevant as it relates to the general student population.

The ASCA National Model is very clear regarding the roles, responsibilities, and training of school counselors. Most important, school counselors are charged with the responsibility to work with and provide effective services to all students, including gifted students. Fulfilling the role of advocating for gifted students begins with how school counselors are trained to work with this population.

Advocacy and the School Counselor

ASCA's National Model (2005) addresses the role of advocacy for school counselors. The ASCA National Model is the framework outlining the roles and responsibilities of school counselors. The intention of the national model is to create a standard that professional school counselors can and should use to ensure a solid school counseling foundation, delivery system, management, and accountability. The ASCA National Model states that the role of advocacy is paramount for school counselors to be effective leaders in educational settings. School counselors are to advocate for students' educational needs and proactively work with students to remove systematic barriers to learning.

The 2005 ASCA's National Model guidelines for school counselor advocacy were extensions of the American Counseling Association's (ACA) Advocacy Competencies as developed by Lewis, Arnold, House, and Toporek (2003). The ACA Advocacy Competencies state that counselors are expected to assist students/clients with self-advocacy skills, action plan development, and action plan implementation. Counselors are also expected to assist in the negotiation of relevant services and educational programs on behalf of clients/students. In their article regarding how school counselors can advocate for their students, Ratts, DeKruyf, and Chen-Hayes (2007) used the example of "a career specialist steering an academically gifted female student interested in becoming a doctor towards becoming a nurse" (pp. 92) Another example was "data

show that a student population is 40% Latino, but the population in advanced-placement calculus is only 10% Latino” (pp. 93). It is interesting that both examples are calls for advocacy action by school counselors specifically on behalf of gifted students, which is different from much of the literature on school counselor advocacy as it generally relates to at-risk students, not typically gifted students. Research in the gifted literature has addressed advocacy in gifted education in the areas of local and state advocacy (Delcourt, 2003; Irvine, 1991; Robinson & Moon, 2003); advocacy for district and policy change (Hertzog, 2003); and programming advocacy (Dettmer, 1991; Renzulli & Reis, 1991), but not necessarily advocacy on behalf of individual gifted students.

School Counselor Preparation and Training

Professional development for counselors begins in their training and preparation programs. Curricula and learning opportunities within national accredited programs are guided by the Council of Accreditation for Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP). This body develops a set of standards that provides the foundation for an accredited university preparation program. CACREP specifically addresses the role of advocacy for all counselors. Counselors are trained and expected to have skills in the areas of foundations, counseling prevention and intervention, assessment, research and evaluation, academic development, collaboration and consultation, leadership and diversity, understanding exceptional abilities, and advocacy (CACREP, 2009). For school counselors, CACREP (2009) requires several different skill sets including understanding the effects of atypical growth and development; understanding ability level; provision of ethical practice in individual, group, and classroom guidance; intervention; designing and implementing programs; developing prevention and intervention strategies and assessing their outcomes; and fluency in testing measurements and assessments (CACREP, 2009). Although some standards changed between 2001 and 2009, standards for the role of advocacy of school counselors are clear. The standards state that school counselors should “advocate for the learning and academic experience necessary to promote the

academic, career, and personal/social development of students” (p. 42). School counselors are also expected to collaborate, consult, and act as leaders and advocates. Specifically, these last two areas mean understanding the needs of the student population and taking active steps to ensure that all needs are met equally. As leaders, school counselors are also expected to be visible in the school setting through participation and implementation in “school related educational programs” (p. 46). Finally, school counselors are expected to possess the skills to advocate for the academic and personal/social needs of all students as well as updating policies and services that promote a positive school climate.

In 2010, Peterson and Wachter-Morris conducted a study on accredited school counselor preparation programs and found that many programs included some form of gifted education in their preparation; however, the level of knowledge of the faculty did not correlate. Peterson and Wachter-Morris believed that this incongruence affects the type of preparation school counselors receive with gifted students. This implies that although preparation programs are attempting to include gifted education in the school counseling preparation curricula, the level of interest in developing that component has not been sufficient.

Hence, not much is known about how school counselors are trained to advocate for gifted students. In her 2004 dissertation, Carlson found that the pre-requisite knowledge of gifted students had an impact on school counselor advocacy for gifted students and those school counselors who reported “training in gifted and talented programming had a higher knowledge of and involvement with gifted and talented students” (p. 178). This included increased advocacy on the behalf of gifted students by school counselors. Carlson noted that the training element is significant when there is a gifted program in the school where the school counselor is located. In 2005, Dockery discussed in her dissertation research the importance of knowledge of gifted student

needs in order to improve the level of appropriate involvement and development of services by school counselors.

Advocacy for Gifted Students

Advocacy has been noted as an integral role for school counselors (Baker et al., 2009; Bemak & Chung, 2005; Field & Baker, 2004; Galassi & Akos, 2004; House & Sears, 2002). In 2005, the ASCA National Model focused on the importance of advocacy skills for school counselors to benefit the students they serve. Advocacy has been defined by researchers in many ways (Earle, 1990; Robinson, 2002; Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1998). A common thread in the definitions of advocacy in the school counseling literature is the professional behavior of going above and beyond the basic “in office” duties to ensure equity for all students.

School counseling literature on advocacy has typically focused on one of two areas, one being programmatic advocacy and the other being professional advocacy (Dodson, 2009; Eriksen, 1999). In addition to serving at-risk populations or programs for which academic equivalency is a concern, these advocacy efforts could include gifted students. Hence, the school counseling literature focusing on individual student advocacy is limited despite the need.

Research in gifted education has emphasized the importance of advocacy at local and state levels (Delcourt, 2003; Irvine, 1991; Robinson & Moon, 2003), including advocacy for district and policy change (Hertzog, 2003) and programmatic advocacy (Dettmer, 1991; Renzulli & Reis, 1991; Shaklee, Padak, Barton, & Johnson, 1991). These areas account for about 85% of the research on advocacy in the gifted literature. The literature does not address advocacy for individual gifted students, or how school counselors’ roles and responsibilities as advocates can be used to effect change with individual gifted students. Yet some literature does exist that can provide linkage between the fields in order to give a picture of how school counselors can advocate for gifted students.

First, in their 2007 article, Ratts et al. outlined a framework for advocacy by school counselors using the American Counseling Association (ACA) Advocacy Competencies. The authors pointed out the importance of school counselors' "moral and ethical" responsibility to advocate for individual students. In this article, the authors used advocating for career equity and curriculum rigor for gifted students as an example of ways school counselors can implement the advocacy competencies to work with individual students. Second, Collison et al. (1998) outlined six questions school counselors can ask when deciding how to advocate for their students:

1. System: Am I inside or outside of the affected system?
2. Social group: Am I part of the privileged or the socially oppressed group?
3. Style: Will I intervene indirectly or confront directly?
4. Self-review: Do I see myself as personally effective or ineffective?
5. Information: Do I know a lot or a little? How accurate is what I know?
6. Consequences: Will the personal and organizational consequences of the action be major or minor?

Collison et al. (1998) also noted that using these questions as a guide to advocacy implementation is an effective way to close the achievement gap within the educational system. Advocacy is an important part of the role of school counselors, and gifted students' individual needs as well as their programmatic needs should be addressed in those advocacy efforts.

School Counselor Self-efficacy for Advocacy

School counselors' belief in their ability to be advocates is evident in their self-view and style as outlined by Collison et al. (1998). First, the self-efficacy of school counselors allows them to develop a realistic view of their abilities and limitations. Positive self-view helps school counselors use their skills to advocate on behalf of students as well as to increase their knowledge in the areas needed to more effectively advocate for students in the future. The style of advocacy is also important because it

allows the school counselor to use multiple advocacy approaches to address a given area of concern. It also allows school counselors to collaborate with other educators to assist with advocacy efforts.

Self-efficacy is an important variable in work productivity and satisfaction according to social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1994). Bandura defined self-efficacy as individuals' beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives. Self-efficacy beliefs determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves, and behave. Such beliefs produce these diverse effects through four major processes: cognitive, motivational, affective, and selection. Bandura (1994) asserted that individuals with a positive belief about their ability have a better view of their ability to carry out a specific task. Strong self-efficacy assists individuals with setting goals and completing tasks. In theory, strong self-efficacy pertaining to advocacy helps school counselors to act as advocates for their students, including their gifted students.

Understanding school counselors' self-efficacy is vital to understanding their confidence in their ability to carry out the duties outlined by the ASCA National Model (Bodenhorn, 2001), specifically the role of advocacy. School counselors' self-efficacy for advocacy should be reflected in their advocacy activity or involvement on the behalf of something or someone. Thus, school counselors' advocacy activity with gifted students is built upon three important factors: their knowledge of gifted students including their developmental needs, their knowledge of advocacy competencies as they pertain to school counseling, and their advocacy self-efficacy. These areas should be reflected in school counselors' ability to be involved with the gifted students they serve and ensuring that the students' academic and personal/social needs are met in order to increase their students' success.

Statement of the Problem

School counselors play an important role in the academic and personal/social development of all students, including gifted students. Gifted students bring with them a unique set of characteristics that require attention, and school counselors are in a position to meet the needs of gifted students through counseling, collaboration/consultation, leadership, and advocacy (ASCA, 2005). One factor in school counselors' service to their gifted students is their understanding of gifted characteristics and developmental needs. Other factors are school counselors' understanding of advocacy competencies and school counselors' belief in their ability to perform as an advocate. Although some research has examined school counselors' perception of and involvement with gifted students (Carlson, 2004) and gifted students' experience with school counselors (Wood, 2009), the advocacy activity of school counselors with gifted students has not been addressed.

Hence, the purpose of this study was to investigate how self-efficacy, knowledge of gifted issues, and understanding of professional advocacy competencies relate to school counselors' advocacy activity with gifted students. The research questions guiding this study were:

1. Is there a relationship between school counselor advocacy activity and school counselor characteristics (self-efficacy, knowledge of gifted issues, and advocacy competencies)?
2. Is there a difference in how professional school counselors understand advocacy competencies based on type of training program (CACREP or non-CACREP)?
3. Is there a difference in professional school counselors' knowledge of gifted issues based on building level?
4. Is there a difference in school counselors' advocacy activities based on years of experience?

Significance of the Study

The goal of this study was to extend the literature pertaining to advocacy activity to gifted and talented students by professional school counselors by examining how knowledge of gifted issues, advocacy competencies, and school counselor advocacy efficacy impact the actual advocacy work of school counselors. The current study provides pertinent information for counselor educators regarding professional school counselors and provides possibilities for the professional development of practicing school counselors who work with gifted students.

Definition of Terms

1. *Advocate*: someone who pleads the case of another, defends or maintains a cause, or supports or promotes the interest of another (Merriam-Webster, 2008).
2. *Advocacy Competencies*: “a useful tool for school counselors because they provide a framework for conceptualizing micro level and macro level advocacy strategies” (Ratts et al., 2007).
3. *Advocacy Activity*: refers to school counselors’ participation in activities prescribed by the professional literature pertaining to gifted and talented students, including advocating for equitable identification procedures for students from diverse backgrounds, such as ethnic, racial, disadvantaged, disabled, and cultural minorities (Carlson, 2004).
4. *Efficacy*: The power to produce an effect (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2011).
5. *Gifted*: A person who shows, or has the potential for showing, an exceptional level of performance in one or more areas of expression (NAGC, 2007). For the purposes of this study, gifted students are defined as those who show potential for a high level of intellectual, creative, artistic, and leadership

abilities and who require unique services and activities by educational professionals for effective development.

6. *Knowledge*: “School counselors’ familiarity with topics that may influence school counselors’ interactions” (Cole, 2006 p. 16), particularly with gifted students. This includes knowledge about identification characteristics; possible presenting counseling needs; counseling intervention strategies; and issues concerning academic, psychosocial, and career development needs that identify gifted students.
7. *Professional School Counselor*: An individual who possesses professional skills in current counseling techniques focusing on students’ academic, career, and personal/social needs; skills in the development, implementation, and evaluation of professional school counseling programs; and the ability to work in collaboration and consultation with others in the school and community (ASCA, 2005).
8. *School Counseling*: “The provision of services to students, parents, school staff, and the community” (ASCA, 2005). For the purposes of this study, the focus of school counseling is on gifted students in elementary, middle/junior high, and high school. “Professional educators with a mental health perspective who understand and respond to the challenges presented by the diverse student population, they provide proactive leadership which engages all stakeholders in delivering programs and services to help students achieve success in school” (ASCA, 2005).
9. *Self-efficacy*: The belief in one’s ability to successfully perform a given behavior (Bandura, 1994).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A thorough review of the existing literature was conducted by examining journal articles and books dedicated to gifted education, special education, and school counseling. This literature review provided a framework for examining current thinking on school counseling, gifted education, and advocacy. This chapter examines the historical foundations and current trends of ability levels, counseling in educational settings, and the role of advocacy in school counseling and gifted education.

Historical Foundation of Gifted Education

Education environments serve the purpose of educating the masses in the U.S. typically by ‘teaching to the middle’ (Reid, Clunies-Ross, Goacher, & Vile, 1981). Teaching to the middle, however, leaves many children either scrambling to understand or coping with boredom because the difficulty level of instruction is either too high or too low. Students in the latter group can be identified as individuals who are gifted. To understand this group of gifted individuals, it is necessary to understand the historical foundation of gifted education.

Educating gifted children has been of interest to many societies. In the United States, the interest in services available for gifted children increased between 1870 and 1922 (Colangelo & Davis, 2003). Sir Francis Galton was credited for providing early significant research on intelligence and intelligence testing in 1896 (Colangelo & Davis, 2003; Coleman & Cross, 2005; NAGC, 2007). In 1905, Binet and Simon developed a test of intelligence named Binet-Simon to identify “dull children who would not benefit from regular classes and therefore required special training” (Colangelo & Davis, 2003, p. 6). This test was the springboard for current identification methods of giftedness.

In 1916, Stanford psychologist Lewis Terman, the “father” of the gifted education movement, supervised the modifications of the Binet-Simon Intelligence test and produced what is now known as the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale, which was revised

in 1937, 1970, and 1986 (Davis, 2006; Stanley, 1976). Throughout the early 1920s, Terman began what is still known as the longest running longitudinal study of the nature of gifted children (Colangelo & Davis, 2003; NAGC, 2007; Passow, 1981). In what can be considered the earliest form of advocating for gifted students, Terman conducted and designed a study to investigate the physical, mental, and personality traits and characteristics of gifted children, and to discover what type of adults gifted children become (e.g., productive/successful vs. nonproductive/non-successful; Colangelo & Davis; NAGC; Passow). Terman concluded in his *Genetic Studies of Genius* in 1925 that

...gifted students were qualitatively different in school, slightly better physically and emotionally in comparison to typical students, superior in academic subjects in comparison to the average students, emotionally stable, most successful when education and family values were held at a high regard by the family, and infinitely variable in combination with the number of traits exhibited in the study. (as cited in Colangelo & Davis, 2003, p. 19)

Although Terman believed that gifted students were emotionally stable in comparison to normal students, Leta Stetter Hollingworth (1926) believed that gifted students, especially highly gifted students, faced emotional problems and had significant school counseling needs (Colangelo & Davis, 2003; Terman & Oden, 1947). As such, she began advocating for counseling for gifted students as a vital service. Hollingworth has been described by Stanley (1976) as the nurturing mother of the gifted education movement. Hollingworth (1926) argued that the greater the gift, the greater the need for emotional education. Colangelo and Davis (2003) credited her as a pioneer in the efforts supporting gifted education and gifted students in the New York area. Hollingworth is also known for her introduction of the special opportunity class at P. S. 165 in New York. This class was developed specifically for gifted students, shaped many research articles and books, and was the blueprint for the development of P. S. 500, the Speyer School, in New York in 1936, specifically for gifted children ages 7 through 9 (NAGC, 2007). Hollingworth also contributed the publication of *Gifted Child: Their Nature and Nurture*, considered the first textbook on gifted education (Colangelo & Davis, 2003).

Terman and Hollingworth could be considered early pioneers in advocacy for gifted students. Through his longitudinal studies, Terman began advocating for the importance of intellectual development for gifted students (Passow, 1981). Terman dedicated his professional work to understanding the connection between gifted children and gifted adults and the “superior general and mental health of gifted individuals” (p. 7). Likewise, Hollingworth dedicated the last two decades of her personal and professional life to bringing attention to the mental health concerns of gifted students and advocating for the counseling needs of the gifted (Colangelo & Davis, 2003). Together, their teaching, research, and service for gifted students and education as a whole laid the foundation for future advocacy efforts for gifted students.

The 1950s proved to be a decade of significance for gifted education with the National Science Foundation Act (which provided federal support for research and education in mathematics, physical science, and engineering); *Brown vs. Board of Education*, a monumental Supreme Court decision that ended “separate but equal” education laws in 1954 (NAGC, 2007); and in 1957, the Soviet Union’s launch of Sputnik (Colangelo & Davis, 2003; NAGC, 2007). These events brought national attention to American education, especially to gifted education (Colangelo & Davis, 2003). These events facilitated the reexamination of human capital and the quality of schools especially in the areas of mathematics and science (NAGC, 2007) and resulted in increased funding for the identification of the brightest and most talented students who would best benefit from math, science, and technology programming (Colangelo & Davis; NAGC). Hence, when the National Defense Education Act (NDEA, 1958) was passed, it was the first large-scale effort by the federal government in the area of gifted education (NAGC, 2007; Tannenbaum, 1979). Many of the services now currently utilized with gifted students were implemented, such as acceleration, grouping, and identification for minority students. Colangelo and Davis (2003) stated that the current

interest in gifted education began with the publication of three reports, which can be considered the first systematic advocacy efforts for gifted education.

Beginning in 1972, the first report was entitled “Education of the Gifted and Talented,” also known as the Marland Report. The report stated three concerns: (a) that the most gifted students were not having their educational needs met, (b) that differential education for the gifted was a low national priority, and (c) that gifted students who were not provided with an appropriate education could suffer impairment of their abilities (Colangelo & Davis, 2003). This report produced two significant outcomes. The federal government (a) increased its role in promoting and financially supporting gifted and talented programs and (b) provided a federal definition of giftedness (Colangelo & Davis, 2003). During 1974, the Office of the Gifted and Talented was housed within the U.S. Office of Education, providing giftedness with official status (NAGC, 2007). However, in 1975, Public Law 94-142, The Education for all Handicapped Children Act, was established with a federal mandate to serve all children with special needs, but it did not include children with gifts and talents (NAGC, 2007). This appeared to strike a chord concerning how gifted education was viewed in America.

In 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education advocated for gifted education through a report titled, “A Nation at Risk,” revealing what they perceived as the three main issues concerning U.S. education: “(a) the nation’s low educational standards; (b) loss of academic focus; and (c) losing ground to other nations in educating the youth of the nation” (Colangelo & Davis, 2003, p. 5). According to Colangelo and Davis, while this report focused positive attention on gifted education, the attention was short lived.

During the development of the final national report, the National Centers on Gifted and Talented were established in 1990. Advocacy for gifted education in the area of identification and services was at the top of the agenda for the centers, giving the highest priority to identifying and serving high potential students who might not have

been identified through traditional assessment criteria. Individuals of limited English proficiency, individuals with disabilities, and individuals from economically disadvantaged groups were included (NAGC, 2007). Today these centers support the same agenda and are considered advocacy front runners in gifted education research.

In 1993, the third report concerning gifted education was titled, “National Excellence: A Case for Developing America’s Talent.” This report brought attention to the national crisis in educating talented youth. Among the issues described in the report were social/emotional issues, rural and urban concerns, and identification of culturally diverse students (Colangelo & Davis, 2003; NAGC, 2007; Renzulli & Reis, 2004). Similar to the Marland Report (1972), the National Excellence Report (1993) highlighted the need for the federal government to play a more prominent role in the development of gifted education (Colangelo & Davis; NAGC; Renzulli & Reis). The three federal reports impacted public education policy pertaining to gifted students’ needs and provided a foundation for advocacy in gifted education. These policies subsequently led to the creation of definitions, established gifted and talented development centers, and helped identify areas of improvement in gifted education. Researchers began to develop models and theories for assisting gifted students, thus contributing to the advocacy of gifted education.

Theories and Models of Giftedness

There have been many definition, theories, and models of giftedness. As discussed previously, early research on gifted children focused on their cognitive functions and psychosocial functioning (Keiley, 2002). Terman (1930) and Hollingworth (1926) contributed to some of the initial research on the social and emotional development of gifted students and advocated for differentiated services (Rimm, 2002; Terman & Oden, 1947). Terman reported that students with an IQ of 170 were more likely to have difficult social adjustment, while Hollingworth defined socially optimum giftedness as having an IQ of 125-155, stating children within this range were able to

balance self-confidence with their intellectual ability (Rimm, 2002). The work of both Terman and Hollingworth can be considered the ground work for future research on gifted students.

Early theorists focused more on the general intellectual ability of students, with little attention to creativity and the possibility of other areas of gifted abilities. Gifted researchers such as Renzulli (1977) and Tannenbaum (1997) began to include creativity in their definition and models of giftedness. Renzulli developed what is known as the three ring model of giftedness, which conceptualizes giftedness as three-dimensional. The three components of giftedness outlined in this model are creativity, above-average ability, and task commitment. According to Renzulli, who suggested the concept of social capital which he described as an “intangible asset” (Renzulli, 2003), this concept of giftedness focused more on social than on economic or intellectual gain in reference to gifted students’ potential (Renzulli, 2003). This model of giftedness advocated for looking at students’ potential ability, creativity, and commitment (Davis, 2006). Attention was given to social talent as a characteristic in the definition of giftedness; this definition proposed that giftedness be marked by “consistent, high performances in a socially valued activity, acknowledging that social forces play a role in the development of abilities” (p. 9).

Tannenbaum (1997) developed a model of giftedness based on the concept of “who, what, and how.” The premise of this model was that giftedness is not completely developed in children and should not be based solely on the general intelligence of an individual. His model focused on high intelligence as well as creativity in adults. Both Renzulli and Tannenbaum advocated for gifted students by developing definitions and models of giftedness that were different from the norm and by proposing models that provided a broader view of who should be considered gifted. This led to a distinction between gifted and talented and became of interest to theorists such as Gagné (1985), Gardner (1983), and Sternberg (1985) in the field of gifted education in the 1980s.

Moving further into talent development, the theory of multiple intelligences (MI) by Gardner (1983) also acknowledged social and cultural influences in defining intelligence. Gardner's model included at least seven intelligences considered separate from one another: logical-mathematical, linguistic, musical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interspatial, and intrapersonal (Gardner, 1983). Gardner later added a naturalist intelligence. Gardner suggested that individuals may have strength in one area or several areas and that an individual can excel in one category and have no remarkable abilities in others. In addition, Gardner recognized that traditional IQ tests may not adequately identify giftedness (1983).

Sternberg (1985) developed a triarchic model of intelligence. This model, revised in 2003, described three kinds of giftedness: analytic, synthetic, and practical. According to Sternberg, analytic refers to the ability to deconstruct problems and understand the parts; synthetic refers to unusual creativity and insight; and practical refers to the ability to apply analytic and synthetic abilities to everyday situations. While both models agreed that traditional IQ methods of identification were not appropriate, the distinction between these particular models is that Gardner's model can be applied to school-age children whereas Sternberg's model is better observed in adults (Coleman & Cross, 2005) much like the concept developed by Tannenbaum (1979).

As models of intelligence continued to develop, so did the way gifted education was viewed. The Differentiated Model of Gifted and Talent (DMGT) was proposed by Gagné initially in 1985 and then was revised in 1995 and 2003. This model differentiated between giftedness, which Gagné described as natural abilities, and talent, which he defined as systematically developed skills. His model examined the developmental relationship between gifts and talents, focusing on the role of learning and practice in transforming abilities into developed skills (Gagné, 1995). This theory suggested a developmental view of giftedness with the inclusion of talents. All of the definitions, models, and theories discussed in this section were dedicated to advocating for a broader

scope of how educators view and serve gifted students. These models currently assist teachers, counselors, and gifted programs in providing programming and services for gifted students. The goal of gifted programming has been to provide a service of inclusion rather than exclusion. According to Dettmer (1991), this focus has positively impacted the advocacy efforts of gifted programs. Gifted and talented programs have increased over the last few decades and can be found in most schools in the U.S.

The needs of gifted students have been addressed in many ways. Initially, the main interest was the academic and career development needs of the students. As previously discussed, the objective in the 1950s was to identify the brightest students and “nurture” their potential so that they could then benefit society (Coleman & Cross, 2005). As the research on gifted students began to grow, attention shifted to the additional programming needs of gifted students, such as addressing their social/emotional development (Behring & Spagna, 2004). Research findings increased the ways gifted programming could include the social/emotional development of gifted students (Behring & Spagna, 2004; Davis, 2006; Gross, 2002; Korinek & Prillaman, 1992; Landrum & Tankersley, 2000; Renzulli & Reis, 2004).

According to Davis (2006), gifted programs have good economic standing that prevents budget cuts from greatly affecting programming, state mandates for programming, and support of programming by primary educational stakeholders. Davis also pointed out what gifted programs have failed to do that may cause the “death” of gifted programs (p. 194), such as ineffective curriculum, inadequate/challenging programming, unnecessary pressure on students, inability to distinguish the need for different programming for gifted students, and alienation from general education students and programs. The issues that might lead to the “termination of gifted and talented programs” can be eliminated, according to Davis (2006), if programs would follow the gifted program model outline. These factors all contribute to the advocacy of gifted

programming and to ensuring that service providers for gifted programs have the tools needed to be successful.

Teachers and gifted programs are widely considered the main service providers for gifted students. Teachers are important players in gifted identification and can also be key advocates for gifted students and gifted education as a whole (Davis, 2006). Many gifted curriculum models outline educational goals for teachers in gifted programs. Renzulli's Enrichment Triad Model, NAGC's Parallel Curriculum Model, George Betts' Autonomous Learner Model, Joyce VanTassel-Baska's Integrated Curriculum Model, and the Pyramid Model all were developed to assist teachers in meeting the diverse needs of gifted students, thus advocating for effective curricula that would be challenging for gifted students (Davis, 2006).

Although there are models and programs in place to assist educators in providing services to gifted students, there could be an increase in training of educators on the unique needs of gifted students and how the use of the models discussed in this section would assist in advocating for gifted students. Likewise there is little research on advocacy for the individual gifted student; however, increased emphasis has been placed on the systematic advocacy of gifted education in the literature. There are models of counseling to assist counselors in the area of advocacy for gifted students such as comprehensive guidance models (i.e., individual, group, and family) and therapy models (i.e., individual and family; Moon, 2007), which have directly addressed advocacy of gifted students. The advocacy efforts of counselors can be hindered due to a lack of training and perhaps lack of understanding of the needs of individual gifted students.

Advocacy

The Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary defines advocacy as "the act of supporting a cause." Johnson and Johnson (1991) defined advocacy as "presenting a position and providing reasons why others should adopt it" (p. 278). In a 2003 article on advocacy in gifted education, Robinson and Moon cited the following as definitions of

advocacy: "standing up or speaking up" (Corbell, 2000, p. 1), or "giving active support to a cause, putting out a call to take a position on an issue, and acting to see that it is resolved in a particular way" (Dettmer, 1995, p. 389). Specific to gifted education, Gallagher (1983) defined advocacy for gifted education as "a set of activities designed to change the allocation of resources to improve opportunities for the education of gifted and talented students" (p. 1).

Gifted program advocacy refers to the efforts made by stakeholders to improve, increase, and/or sustain gifted programming. As previously discussed, gifted programs are vital to meeting gifted and talented students' academic needs. In a 1991 article, Dettmer discussed the importance of promoting and sustaining gifted programs through what she called the "bandwagon approach." At that time, gifted program advocacy was limited and there were no real solid programmatic supports (Dettmer, 1991). Dettmer outlined ways to improve program advocacy and gain the support of vital stakeholders through clearly defined programmatic goals, clear needs assessment of high-ability students, inclusion of general education benefits, inclusion of diverse group involvement, documentation, and consistent verbal/written advocacy outside of the gifted arena. That same year, Irvine discussed the importance of mandates to effectively advocate for gifted programs. According to Irvine (1991), gifted programs could operate without mandates; however, to ensure proper identification, teacher training, funding, and fair inclusion of gifted programs in remote or underserved areas, mandates are essential. Advocacy efforts are also effective when advocates are knowledgeable about local, state, and federal policies (Gallagher, 2003). Knowledge assists advocates in communicating needs to key educational stakeholders (Gallagher, 2003).

Differentiation for gifted students ensures that the students' unique needs are met. Differentiation in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment are important because they are "crucial to the development of gifted students" (VanTassel-Baska, 2005, p. 97). Curriculum differentiation involves developing materials for advanced learners

coupled with differentiated instruction that allows students the opportunity to learn from multiple methods that challenge their intellect and cater to their learning style (VanTassel-Baska, 2005). In addition, the differentiated assessment methods used for gifted students should mirror the ability level of the gifted students. Understanding what differentiation means in gifted education is the first step in meeting gifted students' needs. Advocates for gifted students should continuously review the current provisions for curriculum and instruction. Lack of adjustment to curriculum and instruction may facilitate gifted underachievement or development of additional social-emotional concerns. Social-emotional concerns stemming from improper placement include adjustment problems, perfectionism, isolation, and other needs that may require differentiated counseling (Colangelo, 2003; Peterson, 2006; Wood, 2009, 2010).

Hence, there are areas of advocacy concern that highlight the need for differentiated counseling services. Research suggests that many gifted students have social/emotional concerns as well as developmental concerns that would be better addressed through counseling services (Colangelo, 2003; Moon, 2004, 2007; Wood, 2009, 2010). Counseling services in the school setting can resemble those in a clinical setting; however, it is important that the service provider understand the needs of the gifted population. Wood (2009) conducted a study focused on the counseling needs of gifted students and the role that school counselors play in meeting those needs. Wood found that gifted students have limited interaction with school counselors and that the training of school counselors could be improved to include understanding and meeting the needs of gifted students as part of the role of school counselors outlined by the ASCA National Model (2005). The role of advocacy for gifted students begins with understanding their needs and how to meet those needs. School counselors are in an ideal situation to be advocates for gifted students and gifted programming. This advocacy effort can be facilitated by adapting to the framework of social justice. Holcomb-McCoy (2007) defined social justice as "the way in which human rights are manifested in the

everyday lives of people at every level of society” (p. 17). Social justice can provide school counselors with the framework needed to challenge policies. As advocates for gifted students, school counselors may employ this framework to meet the needs of gifted students.

Social justice advocacy addresses educational inequities (Ratts et al., 2007). Educational inequities are described by Holcomb-McCoy (2007) as “unequal application of the same rule to unequal groups” (p. 18). Ratts et al. (2007) noted that advocacy is an important part of any counselor’s role no matter what the setting, and school counselors have a unique ability to do more with their position than “wish their students well, from their offices” (p. 91). Including social justice in the role of advocacy, according to Ratts et al., is a way to “right injustices, increase access, and improve educational outcomes for all students” (p. 91). Specifically, advocacy efforts improve academic preparation and broaden the educational experience of students (Musheno & Talbert, 2002). Gifted educators can ensure differential education and effective additional services to meet the needs of gifted students, which take multiple forms such as programming and services (VanTassel-Baska, 2005).

Advocacy is a not a destination, but a journey. Advocates have to increase knowledge of policies, understand the goals of the advocacy plan, and improve relationships with key stakeholders. In the case of gifted students, advocacy requires an in-depth understanding of the gifted program, identification methods, curriculum, and counseling needs of the population. This takes time; however, the end result is the realized potential of the gifted students. One way of improving advocacy efforts for gifted students is to increase the self-efficacy of the professionals, such as school counselors, who provide services to the gifted students.

Self-Efficacy

Understanding self-efficacy is linked to an understanding of social cognitive theory (Bodenhorn, 2001). Bandura (1986) advanced a view of human functioning that

ascribes a central role to cognitive, explicit, self-regulatory, and self-reflective processes in human adaptation and change. Individuals are viewed as self-organizing, proactive, self-reflecting, and self-regulating rather than as reactive organisms shaped by environmental forces or driven by hidden inner impulses. From this theoretical perspective, human functioning is viewed as the result of an active relationship of personal, behavioral, and environmental influences. Social cognitive theory is rooted in a view of human agency in which individuals are agents proactively engaged in their own development who can make things happen by their actions. Key to this sense of agency is the fact that, among other personal factors, individuals possess self-beliefs that enable them to exercise a measure of control over their thoughts, feelings, and actions; hence, “what people think, believe, and feel affects how they behave” (Bandura, 1986, p. 25). Bandura provided a view of human behavior in which the beliefs that people have about themselves are critical elements in the use of control and personal agency. Thus, individuals are viewed both as products and as producers of their own environments and social systems. Self-efficacy is a key component of career performance and preparation as outlined by social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977).

Self-efficacy has been defined as “peoples’ judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances” (Bandura, 1977, p. 191). Bandura proposed that “efficacy is the foundation for human agency” (2001 p. 10). He believed self-efficacy to be the regulation for an individual’s belief system. Self-efficacy beliefs are described as providing the foundation for human motivation, well-being, and personal accomplishment. Bandera suggested that self-efficacy beliefs in human functioning mean that “people’s level of motivation, affective states, and actions are based more on what they believe than on what is objectively true” (2001, p. 12). He argued that individuals’ ability to be pessimistic or optimistic toward a goal and/or outcome was based on their efficacy belief. Therefore, individuals’ behavior can be predicted by the beliefs they hold about their

capabilities rather than by what they are actually capable of accomplishing. Hence, self-efficacy beliefs help determine what individuals do with the knowledge and skills they possess. The development of self-efficacy can occur in multiple ways; however, Bandura noted that the most common development of self-efficacy occurs through previous success. Bandura stated that if an individual has success in a particular area, then future success is expected. Likewise, if an individual experiences defeat in a particular area, then defeat is expected; typically, that task will not be attempted in the future. According to Bandura, modeling is another way that self-efficacy can develop. If an individual has witnessed success in an area by another person, specifically someone in an authoritative role, belief in success in that area also increases for the individual. Verbal persuasion and emotional arousal are other ways in which efficacy can occur (Bandura, 1986). Verbal persuasion is viewed as somewhat of a helpmate to modeling, while emotional arousal connects feelings of ability to efficacy. Similarly, counseling self-efficacy is affected by the beliefs of counselors that they can perform their duties satisfactorily.

Self-efficacy as it relates to counseling has been researched in the areas of individual and career counseling (Bodenhorn, 2001). There is limited research in the area of self-efficacy and performance as well as school counselor self-efficacy. Bodenhorn (2001) found that whereas counselor self-efficacy was becoming a growing topic in the counseling literature, school counselor self-efficacy was not. To fill the void in the literature, Bodenhorn (2001) developed the School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale (SCSE). Bodenhorn noted there were no scales specific to the roles and responsibilities of school counselors and thus there was a need for the SCSE scale. This scale could be used to assess current school counselors' confidence in their abilities as well as that of school counselors in training, and was intended to provide vital information on school counselors' beliefs about their ability to perform the duties outlined in the ASCA National Model.

Professional School Counselors

The roles of school counselors have changed over the past century. Originally, they focused more on vocational guidance, with the primary goal of assisting high school students with vocational selection (Snyder & Daly, 1993). Frank Parsons is associated with this vocational movement of the early 1900s because of his focus on the transition of young men from school to the appropriate vocational placement (Lambie & Williamson, 2004). As the country changed, so did the role of school counselors. The cognitive development era began with Dewey's (1986) emphasis on the need of schools to address the cognitive, personal, social, and moral development of students. Over time, there was an expansion of the concept of addressing students' social and emotional needs in the schools by professionals now known as school counselors. A counseling-centered approach to school counseling was adopted in the 1930s and progressed, through the influence of Carl Rogers, to the client-centered approach of empathizing and addressing the needs of students. Lambie and Williamson (2004) noted that the number of school counselors in the first half of the 20th century was minimal; however the establishment of the American School Counseling Association in 1952 increased the number of school counselors serving the nation's students.

As new mandates were enacted, such as the Educational Act for All Handicapped Children of 1975, the role of schools began to expand and so did the role of school counselors (Gysbers, 2004). School counselors began to be charged with the responsibility of providing special educational services to students in addition to their administrative and consultation duties (Lambie & Williamson, 2004). Through the next half century, school counselors underwent a role transformation that included an identity change from guidance counselor to school counselor. This identity change was intended to advocate for a shift in roles and responsibilities to include meeting the academic, career, and social/emotional needs of all students (Gysbers, 2004) and becoming more of an integral part of the school culture. The role of school counselors was outlined by the

ASCA National Model, which ensured clear training, identity, and role development for school counselors.

The ASCA National Model (2005) emphasized four focus areas for school counselors to include in the development of a comprehensive school counseling program in individual school settings. Creating a foundation for the program is the first step. According to the ASCA National Model, the school counseling program should be “grounded” in the general population of students (p. 27). The foundation consists of philosophy and mission statements, and both statements should be designed to convey the beliefs and purposes of the school counseling program. The school counselor should consider all students and the role of counselors to “advocate for equity, access and success for all students” (p. 30). This is accomplished by what the model calls “closing the gap” (p. 52); school counselors have the skills and responsibility to advocate for all students through challenging school policies and partnering with stakeholders and administrative decision makers to ensure academic achievement for all student populations. In addition, each school counseling program should be aimed at the broad domain areas of academic, personal/social, and career development (ASCA, 2005). This foundation is intended to create a springboard for the “delivery method” as described in the second focus area of delivery systems for students and school counseling programs (p. 39).

The delivery system of the 2005 ASCA National Model consists of “activities, interaction and implementation of the school counseling program” (p. 42). The first component of the delivery system is the school guidance curriculum. The goal of the school guidance curriculum is to “facilitate the systematic delivery of guidance lessons or activities to every student, promote knowledge, attitudes, and skills through instruction,” and includes “planning, designing, implementing and evaluating of the school counseling curriculum by the school counselor” (p. 40). Second, within the delivery system is individual student planning, which is intended to help students transition from school to

their next step (e.g., lateral school transition, higher education, career or job training).

The school counselor coordinates consistent activities designated to help students develop personal goals and future plans. Responsive services, which is the third component of delivery system, provides immediate activities and services to students. School counselors are called to use the three “Cs” (i.e., counseling, consultation, and collaboration) in which they are trained to meet the needs of all students. These services range from “early intervention to crisis response” (p. 42). The school counselor is expected to provide individual and/or group counseling to meet students’ needs in addition to consulting with parents, teachers, and administrators when developing strategies to assist students. Finally, the delivery system of the 2005 ASCA National Model serves as a systems support. Through systems support, school counselors “manage activities that establish, maintain, and enhance the total school counseling program” (p. 43). School counselors accomplish systematic change by contributing to professional development, teaming, and professional management through application of leadership and advocacy skills (ASCA, 2005).

When school counselors have developed the delivery system, there must be a method of management, which is the third element of the 2005 ASCA National Model. The management system for school counseling programs outlines the multilevel organizational process and tools needed to manage a school counseling program (ASCA, 2005). The parts of the management system consist of the action plan, which indicates how the school counselor “intends to accomplish the desired results, through planned guidance curriculum and closing the gap activities” (p. 52), and the use of data, which allows school counselors to prove that each activity in the school counseling program was developed based on the “analysis of students needs and achievements” (p. 49). Finally, school counselors must consider the management agreement and the advisory council, which “ensures the effective implementation of the activities outlined in the delivery system of the school counseling program” (p. 46). The advisory council provides

the authority for the implementation of the school counseling program, ensuring that the program goals, competencies, and results meet the needs of all students (ASCA, 2005).

The final element of the 2005 ASCA National Model, the accountability system, is essential to the effective continuation of the school counseling program (p. 59). The accountability system provides school counselors with measurable outcomes of the services provided by the school counseling program, which helps to make the connection between the school counseling program and the academic success of the students being served (ASCA, 2005). Results' reporting is one way school counselors can account for the change in student behavior and achievement, while collecting demographics, graduation rates, discipline information, and other data can provide an indication of the effectiveness of the school counseling program over time (ASCA).

The elements outlined by the ASCA National Model are intended to provide school counselors with a model of operation and continuity for school counseling programs. This model, combined with the 2007 ASCA position statement, provides school counselors with a structural foundation that outlines their roles and responsibilities for the general student population as well as for gifted students. However, even though these roles are outlined, school counselors may not have the skills or training necessary to fulfill them.

Training in Multicultural Education/Counseling

According to the ASCA National Model as well as the CACREP standards, school counselors are expected to be trained to provide multicultural counseling. Multicultural counseling competence has been identified as the ability to effectively incorporate knowledge, awareness, and skill when working with individuals from different cultures (Ponterotto & Casas, 1987; Sue et al., 1992). Knowledge, awareness, and skills were outlined by Sue et al. (1992). Knowledge refers to the understanding and acceptance by counselors of their clients' viewpoint. Awareness refers to counselors' clarity and understanding of their worldview and possible biases. And lastly, skills refer

to counselors' ability to use learned behavior to address the needs of their clients in an appropriate manner. These three areas are considered the basis for training as a multiculturally competent counselor. In their original development, multicultural competences focused more on racial and cultural differences but now have been extended to education. Multicultural education, which began with the works of such researchers as Grant and Sleeter (1998), builds on the ideas of Sue et al. (1992) and extends them to include gender, sexual orientation, age, and physical and mental ability (Ford & Harris, 1999; Hayes & Erford, 2010). Multicultural education is intended to assist in the development of curriculum, effect policies and programs, evaluate recruitment practices, and influence the training of educators. In the area of education, gifted students may be considered a population that requires knowledge awareness and skills to ensure appropriate attention and services. Hence, Levy and Plucker (2009) developed a model that extended the original multicultural counseling competencies to include gifted students and viewed gifted students as a subculture. The authors asserted that for educators, specifically school counselors, to work effectively with this population, specific skills and considerations are required (Levy & Plucker, 2009).

Training in Gifted Education

Historically, the training that school counselors received on the gifted population was limited if not absent and only became popular about half a century ago (Colangelo, 2003). According to Ford and Harris (1999), there are limited studies that focus on school counselors' awareness and training in the area of gifted education; they reported that "findings indicate that school counselors lack formal preparation to work with gifted students" (p. 127). In an effort to answer the call for increased training and research on school counseling in gifted education, Milsom and Peterson (2006) noted an increase in school counselor and gifted interaction. This increase can be attributed to the standards set by the ASCA National Model, which includes services for gifted students. The ASCA

professional statement on gifted education is clear regarding school counselors' active participation in the identification, counseling needs, and advocacy of gifted students.

It is clear from the literature that gifted students possess a unique set of needs that require strategic training and that school counselors are in a significant position to provide these services if they have the tools to do so. Wood (2010) outlined "best practices" for counseling gifted students that include but are not limited to developing the counseling relationship; understanding the skill set of gifted students; developing awareness of the population; and providing programs, services, and interventions that effectively address those concerns. As a result of implementing these best practices, school counselors can provide much needed attention to the counseling needs of gifted students. Among those needs is advocacy, as outlined by the ASCA National Standards and professional statement for gifted education.

Training in Advocacy

The role of advocacy is an essential component of school counseling (Field & Baker, 2004). Bemak and Chung (2005) maintained that in order for school counselors to be viewed as integral members of the school system, their roles needed to change from reactive to proactive so they serve as "change agents leaders and advocates" (p. 196). For school counselors to become advocates, there needs to be a change in the way they are trained (Bemak & Chung). School counselors are called to be advocates for the profession as well as for the students they serve, including gifted students. There is little research on advocacy for individual gifted students; rather the advocacy focus has been on systematic policy change in gifted education. As noted throughout this chapter, advocacy is more effective when the needs of the population are understood. According to Ford and Harris (1999), school counselors are in the infancy stages of understanding the needs of gifted students. Due to this lack of understanding, professional school counselors may be reluctant to advocate for gifted students, which may decrease their self-efficacy regarding this role. This study was intended to provide further empirical

research in the area of school counseling and gifted advocacy, with the goal of increasing school counselor advocacy efforts on behalf of gifted students.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to investigate how self-efficacy, knowledge of gifted issues, and an understanding of professional advocacy competencies relate to school counselors' advocacy activities with gifted students. School counselors' advocacy for gifted students increases the quality of services for that population. This chapter presents a description of the design, participants, instruments, procedures, data analysis, limitations, and significance of the study.

Research Design

This was an investigative study of how self-efficacy, knowledge of gifted issues, and the understanding of professional advocacy competencies relate to school counselors' advocacy activities with gifted students. In this study, the research questions dictated the use of a quantitative research methodology. A quantitative approach allows researchers to use numbers to establish relationships and compare variables across such relationships (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003). The research questions for this investigation were:

1. Is there a relationship between school counselor advocacy activity and school counselor characteristics (self-efficacy, knowledge of gifted issues, and advocacy competencies)?
2. Is there a difference in how professional school counselors understand advocacy competencies based on training programs (CACREP or non-CACREP)?
3. Is there a difference in professional school counselors' knowledge of gifted issues based on building level?
4. Is there a difference in school counselors' advocacy activities based on years of experience?

Participants

The target population for this study included all K-12 school counselors in the nation. Participants were selected randomly from the American School Counselors Association (ASCA) group list, ASCA SCENE, to obtain a sample of 600 school counselors from various building levels across the United States. In 2006, Cole conducted a study with school counselors with a response rate of 28.1%. The goal for the participant sample in the current study was a minimum of 600 participants to increase the probability of a significant response rate. To conduct a statistical analysis, Cohen (1988) suggested that the number of surveys be twice the number of participants needed, thus assuming a 50% response. Although Alreck and Settle (1995) reported that response rates over 30% are rare, the researcher hoped that sending the survey to 600 participants would yield at least 180 usable surveys. This would result in a power of greater than .75 for moderate effect sizes (Cohen, 1988) and a successful analysis. The intended participants for this study came from multiple regions in the United States and represented all building levels and types of training programs.

Approximately 44,000 school counselors are members of the American School Counseling Association (ASCA). Of that number, approximately 14,000 members were participating in the ASCA SCENE group site at the time of the study. Electronic recruitment emails were sent to all 14,000 participants of the SCENE networking site in January 2011, and 20 surveys were completed and returned. This response rate did not meet the intended power for the study. Therefore, an additional 200 paper surveys were distributed at the American School Counseling Association Conference in June 2011; of that number, 65 were completed and returned. In total, 85 respondents completed the survey for this study. Although the intended power was not achieved there was a significant amount of power to make the analysis successful. Of the 85 respondents, 71 (84%) were female and 13 (15%) were male. Fifty-two (61%) of the respondents indicated that their graduate program was CACREP accredited, and 19 (22%) reported

not attending a CACREP accredited graduate program. Twenty-three (27%) of the respondents indicated that they practiced school counseling at the elementary level, 30 (35%) indicated practicing at the high school level, 16 (19%) indicated working at the middle school level, 3 (4%) indicated practicing at the junior high school level, and 13 (15%) of the respondents indicated practicing at other building levels (i.e., alternative schools).

Instruments

Demographic Information Sheet

The demographic information sheet consisted of 15 items designed to obtain school counselors' demographic information. The following demographic information was collected from participants: gender, years as a school counselor, building level (elementary, middle, junior high or high school), student enrollment, number of students currently enrolled in gifted program, highest academic degree received, CACREP accredited training program, and training regarding giftedness (seminars, workshops, literature, etc). Demographic categories included the following: (a) gender was categorized as male and female; (b) years as a school counselor was grouped as 0 to 5, 6 to 10, 11 to 15, 16 to 20, and 21+; building type was categorized by elementary school, middle/junior high school, and high school; (c) number of students enrolled; (d) number of students currently enrolled in gifted program; (e) highest academic degree received was categorized to reflect the highest level of education, such as doctorate, educational specialist, master's, or bachelor's degrees.

The demographic data provided information on the characteristics of the participants. These factors facilitated an investigation of how the participants' background affected their self-efficacy, knowledge of gifted and advocacy competencies, and advocacy activity for gifted students. The next section explores this further.

Knowledge of Gifted Students Scale

Carlson (2004) developed a subscale for knowledge of gifted students for her dissertation research, and, with permission, the current researcher utilized that subscale to determine school counselors' knowledge of gifted issues. The subscale consists of 24 items based on the professional literature. Topics include general gifted knowledge, academic and social-emotional issues, and career development issues (Carlson, 2004). Carlson (2004) reported a "high internal consistency" among the items of this subscale (p. 116). Moreover, Carlson reported a coefficient alpha of .98 and inter-item correlations from .49 to .88 with the majority above .60. "Item to scale correlations ranged from .67 to .88" (p. 120). This report indicated that the subscale has acceptable reliability and validity coefficients.

School Counselor Advocacy Competency Survey

Brown and Trusty (2005) developed advocacy competencies for professional school counselors based on the advocacy competencies proposed by Lewis et al. (2003) for the American Counseling Association (ACA). The advocacy competencies for professional school counselors consisted of three areas: disposition, knowledge, and skills of advocacy. With permission, the current researcher used the advocacy competencies described by Brown and Trusty (2005) to develop a School Counselor Advocacy Survey. The survey consists of three sections totaling 21 items based on Brown and Trusty's suggested competencies (2005). The first section is disposition on advocacy and consists of six items, the second section is knowledge of advocacy and consists of seven items, and the last section is advocacy skills and consists of eight items. The survey was developed to measure school counselors' level of advocacy and how the skills of advocacy are applied. This study was the pilot for this survey.

School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale

In 2001, Bodenhorn developed the School Counselor Self-Efficacy (SCSE) scale for her dissertation research. The original purpose was to develop a scale that would measure school counselor self-efficacy, with the intention that the scale could be used in

future research to “improve and impact the profession of school counseling and increase the understanding of self-efficacy” (Bodenhorn, p. 4). In an article about the development of the SCSE scale, Bodenhorn and Skaggs (2005) described the initial development as consisting of four separate inquiries. First, item development was intended to determine what items would be best suited for school counselors (Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005). This was achieved through document review as well as expert panels. The second inquiry was the item analysis with practicing school counselors. The purpose of this inquiry was to “analyze responses from current practicing school counselors for reliability, omission, discrimination, and group difference” (p. 16). The third inquiry was validity studies with school counselors. The purpose of this inquiry was to “obtain validity information by comparing responses on the scales with other existing instruments” (p. 18). The final inquiry combined the data obtained for factor analysis with the purpose of “determining the factor structure for the item response” (p. 22).

With permission, the current researcher reviewed the original scale and chose seven items from one factor of the SCSE scale (Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005). The seven items selected relate directly to school counselor self-efficacy in the area of advocacy. To validate these items for the current study, the researcher sent the seven factor items to four experts in school counseling and advocacy research (see Appendix F) who comprised the expert panel. The panelists were asked to review the seven factor items for relevance to school counselor advocacy. Upon review, the panelists provided feedback on each item’s validity for the current inquiry.

Expert Panelists

The expert panelists chosen for item validation of the SCSE scale were four counselor educators with research expertise in school counseling and advocacy. Each panelist had conducted research, contributed to the field of school counseling, and possessed knowledge of school counselor training and the role of school counselors (see Appendix F).

The panelists' responses. After reviewing the seven items chosen by the researcher from the SCSE scale, each panelist provided vital feedback on the wording, clarity, and relevance of the items as they related to school counselors' self-efficacy of advocacy. Overall, the panelists agreed that advocacy is an integral part of school counselors' roles and responsibilities. In addition, it was the consensus of the panelists that advocacy as a whole has evolved to include social justice, as indicated in the literature review. The items' clarity and validity were agreed upon for the time the scale was developed (Bodenhorn, 2001), and references to the ACA and ASCA advocacy competencies were suggested. These items have been included in the instruments for the current study.

Advocacy Activity Scale

In addition to the knowledge of gifted subscale, Carlson (2004) developed a subscale to determine the level of involvement of school counselors with gifted students. The involvement subscale consisted of "17 items intended to assess school counselor involvement with gifted and talented students" (p. 132). With permission, the current researcher selected the Carlson involvement subscale to measure school counselor advocacy activity with gifted students.

Procedures

Approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of The University of Iowa was obtained before conducting the study. Through the American School Counselor Association group website, ASCA SCENE, participants were contacted via email for voluntary participation in the study. The sample included all K-12 school counselors in the United States who accessed the ASCA SCENE website; all levels of school counseling were considered. Each intended participant received an email (Appendix H) that included an invitation letter and a web link to access WebSurveyor in order to complete the study. Accessing the web link and completion of the demographic information sheet and the subsequent instruments served as the informed consent for this

study. A follow-up reminder email was sent using the ASCA SCENE website for participants who had not returned surveys 2 weeks from the initial email request. After 2 weeks, the follow-up email was sent, and there was still a very low response rate. The study was open to participants for 4 months online with a low response rate, approximately 10% of the intended response. Therefore, an IRB modification was successfully obtained to permit additional recruitment in paper-pencil format at the American School Counseling Association Annual Conference. Permission was received from the conference coordinator and space was made available for participant recruitment. The researcher made survey packets that included a cover page outlining the study and providing consent information, the demographic information sheet, and all survey instruments. To ensure confidentiality, all data were stored in a locked office in a locked file cabinet.

Data Analysis

Research Question One

The first research question was, is there a relationship between school counselor advocacy activity and school counselor characteristics (self-efficacy, knowledge of gifted issues, and advocacy competencies)? Research Question One investigated school counselor characteristics of self-efficacy, knowledge of giftedness, and advocacy competency. This question was measured using multiple regression. The dependent variable was advocacy activity and the independent variables were self-efficacy, knowledge of gifted issues, and advocacy competency.

Research Question Two

The second research questions was, is there a difference in how professional school counselors understand advocacy competencies based on training programs (CACREP or non-CACREP)? Research Question Two investigated possible differences in school counselors' understanding of advocacy competencies based on their training program accreditation. This question was measured using a one-factor analysis of

variance. The independent variable was program type (CACREP or non-CACREP) and the dependent variable was advocacy competency.

Research Question Three

The third research question was, is there a difference in professional school counselors' knowledge of gifted issues based on building level? The third research question investigated the building level of professional school counselors and how it relates to knowledge of gifted issues. This question was measured using analysis of variance. The independent variable was building level and the dependent variable was knowledge of gifted issues.

Research Question Four

The fourth research question was, is there a difference in school counselors' advocacy activities based on years of experience? The last research question investigated school counselors' advocacy activity based on years of experience. This question was measured using analysis of variance. The dependent variable was advocacy activity and the independent variable was years of experience.

Limitations

The first limitation of this study was the representation of the participant pool. The researcher used a listserv that limited the control of cross sectional sampling. In addition, the participants may have responded in a manner that they felt was desired by the researcher and by the field in general. This might have altered the responses received. Also, the length of the instruments might have prevented some participants from completing the study. There were four instruments and a demographic information sheet that each participant was required to complete for full participation in the study. With a total of 85 items to complete, participants might have opted not to complete the study due to time constraints.

Lastly, the initial recruitment for the study was conducted solely online via the ASCA SCENE listserv. This was a major limitation for this study because the response rate was extremely low, only 20 respondents. Having a multimethod (online and paper simultaneously) for data collection would have been a better recruitment method and may

have increased the overall response rate for the study. The web-only survey was a limitation for this study; it provided limited control over response and attention to the study by participants. Therefore, the researcher added a paper-pencil version of the survey midway through the data collection, which may have also affected the response rate.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate how self-efficacy, knowledge of gifted issues, and understanding of professional advocacy competencies relate to school counselors' advocacy activities with gifted students. This chapter will review the research questions under investigation, summarize operational definitions, and report the results of the statistical analysis. The analysis included descriptive statistics, factor analysis, and regression. SPSS Version 19.0 for Windows was used to complete the statistical analysis for this study.

Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations of Advocacy Competency for the Accreditation Group

Dependent Variable	CACREP N=52	Non-CACREP N=19	Don't Know N=14	F	P
Advocacy Competency				.51	.61
M	4.14	4.17	4.30		
SD	.60	.49	.30		

Table 2. Means and Standard Deviations of Knowledge of Giftedness by Grade Level

Dependent Variable	Elementary n=23	Middle n=16	Junior High n=3	High School n=30	Other n=13	F	P
Knowledge of Gifted						4.46	.00*
M	3.36	3.02	2.64	2.52	3.60		
SD	.78	1.07	.42	.98	.90		

Note:*= Significant at.05 level

Table 3. Means and Standard Deviations of Advocacy Competency by Years of Experience

Dependent Variable	Less than 1 year n=5	1-5 years n=27	6-10 years n=20	11-15 years n=11	16-20 years n=6	20+ years n=16	F	P
Advocacy Competency							1.21	.31
M	4.16	4.02	4.37	4.10	4.10	4.27		
SD	.25	.61	.41	.69	.33	.52		

Table 4. Correlations Among Measures

Measures/Variables	1	2	3	4
1. Advocacy Activity	1.00	.03	-.14	.01
2. Self-efficacy	.03	1.00	.06	.00
3. Knowledge of Giftedness	-.14	.064	1.00	.05
4. Advocacy Competency	.01	.00	.05	1.00

Note: Correlation is significant at the .05 level (1-tailed).

The above tables outline descriptive statistics for the variables of interest in this study. Two measures were used to analyze the four research questions for this study. Research question one was addressed using multiple regression while analysis of variance were used for research questions two, three and four. The values in the tables are typical for this type of study. The means in Table 1 show there is very little differences between the variables and there is little impact on advocacy competency. The means in Table 2 show that there is a difference in building level and how it relates to knowledge of giftedness. While the means reported in Table 3 show little change and no significance difference in the variables. Table 4 reports the correlation of the variables from the study and shows a correlation between Advocacy Activity, Self-efficacy and Knowledge of Giftedness. The next section describes each research question and how it was analyzed.

Research Questions

The research questions used to investigate school counselor advocacy with gifted students included the following:

1. Is there a relationship between school counselor advocacy activity and school counselor characteristics (self-efficacy, knowledge of gifted issues, and advocacy competencies)?
2. Is there a difference in how professional school counselors understand advocacy competencies based on training programs (CACREP or non-CACREP)?
3. Is there a difference in professional school counselors' knowledge of gifted issues based on building level?
4. Is there a difference in school counselors' advocacy activities based on years of experience?

Research Study Question Results

Research Question One

The first research question was, is there a relationship between school counselor advocacy activity and school counselor characteristics (self-efficacy, knowledge of gifted issues, and advocacy competencies)? The first research question investigated school counselor characteristics of self-efficacy, knowledge of giftedness, and advocacy competency.

Table 5. Multiple Regression Evaluating the Relationship of Self Efficacy, Knowledge and Competency with Advocacy Activity

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Squared	B	Beta	p
1. (Constant)	.69	.48	.46	-1.07		.26
Self Efficacy				.56	.27	.01*
Knowledge				.53	.52	.00*
Competency				-.05	-.03	.76

Multiple regression was used to determine the relationship of self efficacy, knowledge, and competency with advocacy activity. The dependent variable was advocacy activity and the independent variables were self-efficacy, knowledge of giftedness, and advocacy competency. The results indicated that knowledge of giftedness and self efficacy were both predictors of advocacy activity (see Table 5), whereas advocacy competency was not a strong predictor of advocacy activity. Therefore, school counselors who reported having an increased knowledge of gifted students and self-efficacy also reported increased advocacy activity with gifted students. In sum, there was a positive relationship between knowledge of giftedness and self-efficacy as it relates to advocacy activity among school counselors working with gifted students.

Research Question Two

The second research question was, is there a difference in how professional school counselors understand advocacy competencies based on training programs (CACREP or non-CACREP)? The second research question investigated possible differences in school counselors' understanding of advocacy competencies based on their training program accreditation. This question was analyzed using analysis of variance. The independent variable was program type (CACREP or non-CACREP) and the dependent variable was advocacy competency. The results showed no significant differences in school counselors' understanding of advocacy competencies based on their training program accreditation ($p > .01$). The means indicated minimal difference between school counselors who reported graduating from a CACREP program ($n=52$; $M=4.14$) and those school counselors who reported graduating from a non-CACREP program ($n=19$; $M=4.17$). In sum, there was not a positive relationship between CACREP training programs and school counselor advocacy competency. (See Table 1).

Research Question Three

The third research question was, is there a difference in professional school counselors' knowledge of gifted issues based on building level? This research question investigated the building level of professional school counselors and how it relates to knowledge of gifted issues. This question was analyzed using analysis of variance. The independent variable was building level and the dependent variable was knowledge of gifted issues. The results indicated that the differences in the building level of professional school counselors and knowledge of giftedness were highly significant ($p < .00$), (see Table 2). High school counselors ($n=30$) reported the lowest knowledge of giftedness with a mean of 2.52, followed by junior high ($n=3$) and middle school ($n=16$) counselors. Respondents who identified their building level as "other" (i.e. alternative schools) ($n=13$) had a mean score of 3.60, the highest knowledge of giftedness followed by elementary school counselors ($n=23$; $M=3.36$).

To determine specific areas of statistically significant differences between knowledge of giftedness and building level, Tukey follow-up tests were conducted. The mean difference between elementary school counselors' knowledge of giftedness compared to middle school counselors' knowledge of giftedness was statistically significant ($p < .01$), with elementary school counselors having a higher mean ($M=3.36$). The mean difference between elementary school counselors' knowledge of giftedness and high school counselors' knowledge of giftedness was significant at the .05 level ($p < .001$), with elementary school counselors having a higher mean ($M=3.36$). The mean difference between middle school counselors' knowledge of giftedness compared to high school counselors' knowledge of giftedness was significantly significant at the .05 level ($p < .001$), with middle school counselors having a higher mean ($M=3.02$). The mean difference between junior high school counselors' knowledge of giftedness compared to participants indicating "other" as their building level was significant at the .05 level ($p < .001$) with "other" having the higher mean ($M=3.60$). Lastly, the mean difference

between high school counselors' knowledge of giftedness compared to participants indicating "other" as their building level was significant at .05 level ($p < .001$), with "other" having the higher mean ($M = 3.60$).

In sum, the post-hoc test demonstrated statistically significant results between the means of elementary school counselors' knowledge of giftedness and middle school counselors' knowledge of giftedness; the means of elementary school counselors' knowledge of giftedness and high school counselors' knowledge; the means of middle school counselors' knowledge of giftedness and high school counselors' knowledge of giftedness; and respondents' knowledge of giftedness who identified their building level as "other."

Research Question Four

The last research question queried if there was a difference in school counselors' advocacy activity based on years of experience. This research question investigated school counselors' advocacy activity based on years of experience. This question was analyzed using analysis of variance. The dependent variable was advocacy activity and the independent variable was years of experience. Eighty-five school counselors completed and returned the survey. Five (6%) had less than 1 year of experience as a school counselor, 27 (32%) had 1-5 years experience, 20 (24%) had 6-10 years experience, 11 (13%) had 11-15 years of experience, 6 (7%) had 16-20 years experience, and 16 (19%) had more than 20 years of experience as a school counselor. The results indicated no significant difference between groups ($p > .00$) in school counselors' advocacy activity and years of experience. Those school counselors reporting 21 plus years of experience ($n = 16$) reported the highest level of advocacy competency with a mean score of 4.27 (see Table 3).

Conclusion

The findings from this study indicated that knowledge of giftedness and self-efficacy significantly predicted school counselors' advocacy competency and activity

with gifted students. There was also a significant difference in building level as it related to knowledge of gifted issues and advocacy competency.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present study was to investigate how self-efficacy, knowledge of gifted issues, and understanding of professional advocacy competencies relate to school counselors' advocacy activity with gifted students. The results presented in Chapter IV suggested that there was a relationship between knowledge of giftedness, training program accreditation, school counselors' advocacy competency, and activity with gifted students. Chapter 5 provides (a) a review of the study, (b) discussion of the findings, (c) the limitations of the study, (d) implications, and (e) suggestions for future research.

Review of the Study

Gifted students make up a small percentage of school-age children (DOE, 2008). In addition, they have unique needs and characteristics that require educators have specific skills to meet (Levy & Plucker, 2009). School counselors are in a unique position to address those needs based on their training and preparation. While the unique needs of gifted students have been studied, there has been little research on school counselor advocacy self-efficacy as it relates to gifted students. The current study investigated the efficacy of school counselor advocacy and found significance in the level of school counselors' advocacy competency and activity based on knowledge of giftedness, self-efficacy, and building level.

The current study examined the relationship between school counselor self-efficacy and advocacy activities with gifted students. The study examined demographic variables that have not been previously considered with school counselors and gifted students such as building level (elementary, middle, junior high and high school) and years of experience (less than 1 year- 20+ years). A total of 85 school counselor participated in this study over a 6-month period in 2010. The participants identified as professional school counselors from across the United States. In the overall sample, the

majority of participants identified as female with 1 to 5 years of experience working in a high school setting. Participants responded to a Demographic Information Sheet, a Knowledge of Gifted Students Scale, a School Counselor Advocacy Competency Survey, and an Advocacy Activity Scale. The research questions guiding this study were:

1. Is there a relationship between school counselor advocacy activity and school counselor characteristics (self-efficacy, knowledge of gifted issues, and advocacy competencies)?
2. Is there a difference in how professional school counselors understand advocacy competencies based on type of training program (CACREP or non-CACREP)?
3. Is there a difference in professional school counselors' knowledge of gifted issues based on building level?
4. Is there a difference in school counselors' advocacy activities based on years of experience?

The next section will discuss the population sample, the findings associated with each research question, and how these findings compare with the existing literature.

Major Findings for Research Question One

The first research question sought to measure the relationship between school counselor characteristics (self-efficacy, knowledge of giftedness, and advocacy) and advocacy activity. In this research question, multiple regression was used to explore the relationship between the variables. As presented in Chapter IV, the results indicated that the knowledge of giftedness ($p < .00$) and counselor self-efficacy ($p < .01$) are significant predictors of advocacy activity. The results suggest that school counselors who have acquired knowledge of gifted issues and possess self-efficacy will also have a greater level of advocacy activity with gifted students. The other characteristic, advocacy competency ($p > .00$), was not a statistically significant predictor of advocacy activity.

The findings between school counselor characteristics and advocacy activity support previous research that has indicated the need for increased knowledge of giftedness in order to provide services to this population (Ford & Harris, 1999; Levy & Plucker, 2008; Peterson, 2006) as well as the importance of school counselor self-efficacy in counselor advocacy (Bodenhorn, 2005). Additionally, the current study is consistent with literature suggested that in school counselors' interaction with understanding gifted students and their needs increases their service provision (Carlson, 2004).

No difference was found between counselor characteristic, advocacy competency ($p > .00$). These results reveal that an increased advocacy competency did not influence advocacy activity in school counselors. These findings are inconsistent with the advocacy literature which states that increased advocacy competency will improve advocacy services among school counselors (Carlson, 2004; Lewis et al., 2003; Trusty & Brown, 2005). Although advocacy competency was not statistically significant in predicting school counselor advocacy activity, it is possible that this variable has some influence on school counselors' behavior with gifted students. Further research is needed in this area to ascertain the degree to which advocacy competency is related to school counselor service to gifted students.

Major Findings for Research Question Two

The second research question sought to measure whether there was a difference in how professional school counselors understood advocacy competency based on their training program. For this research question, an ANOVA test was conducted to explore the differences between the variables. As presented in Chapter IV, the results indicated no significant difference in school counselors' understanding of advocacy competencies based on their training program accreditation ($p > .00$). The mean scores indicated that school counselors who reported graduating from a CACREP program ($n=52$; $M=4.14$)

and those school counselors who reported graduating from a non-CACREP program ($n=19$; $M=4.17$) did not report an increased knowledge of advocacy competency. Thus, these results did not indicate a positive relationship between CACREP training programs and school counselors' understanding of advocacy competency.

Although there was not a statistically significant difference between the knowledge of advocacy competence between participants who graduated from a CACREP program and those who did not, it is important to highlight the recent influence of CACREP standards, 2009, particularly in relation to advocacy and the influences of CACREP standards on training programs which may not be seen in practice for at least five years. As stated, advocacy competency is important for school counselors, which has been emphasized by many researchers (Bemak & Chung, 2005; Field & Baker, 2004; Ford & Harris, 1999) in order to increase advocacy activity. This impact may take longer to show itself in school counseling practice.

Major Findings for Research Question Three

The third research question sought to measure whether there was a difference between school counselors' knowledge of giftedness based on building level. For this research question, an ANOVA test was conducted to assess whether a difference existed. As reported in Chapter IV, the results indicated there was a highly significant difference between knowledge of giftedness and school counseling building level ($p<.00$). Specifically, respondents who identified their building level as "other" ($n=13$) had a mean score of 3.60, the highest knowledge of giftedness, followed by elementary school counselors ($n=23$; $M=3.36$). High school counselors ($n=30$) reported the lowest knowledge of giftedness with a mean of 2.52, followed by junior high ($n=3$) and middle school ($n=16$) counselors. Therefore, these results indicated a relationship between building level and knowledge of gifted issues.

The difference in the knowledge of giftedness may be due to the accessibility of school counselors as well as the responsibilities of school counselors based on their

building level. Many of the respondents who identified their building level as “other” also indicated, through qualitative response, district level or higher education as their work environment. Likewise, school counselors who indicated “elementary school” as their building level had the second highest knowledge of giftedness. It is important to note that the elementary level is often the entry level for gifted and talented services, uses the gifted language more frequently (i.e. gifted vs. advance placement), and may have a higher level of parental involvement, which may have an impact on the reported knowledge of giftedness. Lastly, the results from the current study imply that school counselors who are in 7th through 12th grade settings are not able to gain an increased knowledge of giftedness, which may be because they are busy with the demands of building commitments. Those who do not work in the K-12 setting may be provided more opportunity to attend gifted training or stay abreast of the current trends in counseling as it relates to gifted education. Although an increase in gifted knowledge has been explored in previous research, there has been limited exploration of how building level may impact the gifted knowledge of school counselors. The current study provided some empirical data that could be used to support the need for an increase in gifted education at all building levels.

Major Findings for Research Question Four

The fourth research question sought to measure whether there was a difference in school counselor advocacy activity based on years of experience. The results indicated no significant difference ($p > .00$) in school counselors' advocacy activity and years of experience. As the years of experience increased, advocacy activity reported by school counselors did not. Those school counselors reporting 21 plus years of experience ($n=16$) reported the highest level of advocacy activity with a mean score of 4.27. However, the findings indicated that there was not a positive relationship between years of experience and advocacy competency. Given that there is very limited research on school counselor advocacy activity based on years of experience, the results from this study will bring

attention to the need for advocacy activity for school counseling professionals, specifically in the area of student advocacy.

Summary of the Findings

Overall, the results from this study show that school counselor knowledge of gifted issues and self-efficacy are indicators of their advocacy activity with gifted students. Additionally, school counselor training programs do not significantly influence professional school counselors' understanding of advocacy competences and school counselors' building level influence knowledge of gifted issues, and school counselors' years of experience do not influence their understanding of advocacy activity. As previously noted, some of these findings are consistent with the literature and some are not consistent with the literature on the importance of training programs in improving school counselors' knowledge of gifted issues (Wood, 2009), knowledge of gifted issues increases advocacy activity (Gallagher, 2003), influence of self-efficacy on school counselor behavior (Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005) and understanding advocacy competency is influenced by training program (Bemak & Chung, 2005). Additionally, the results of this study further support Ford and Harris's (1999) claims that school counselors should increase their knowledge of gifted issues in order to facilitate these students' overall development.

Previous research has highlighted the increase in knowledge of gifted issues (Colangelo, 2003, Moon, 2004, 2007; Peterson & Wachter-Morris, 2010; Wood, 2009, 2010) and self-efficacy (Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005) as significant factors in school counselors' behavior, which were also supported by the results of the current study. Although advocacy competency was not found to be significant in school counselor advocacy activity with gifted students based on the multiple regression model used in this study, research has stated that it is important for advocacy activity (Trusty & Brown, 2005).

This study adds to the growing literature on school counselor self-efficacy, advocacy, and gifted education in three ways. First, the importance of self-efficacy on school counselor advocacy activity, advocacy, knowledge of giftedness, and the overall development of gifted students seems quite distinct based on this study's results. Previous research has generally explored school counselors' role in working with gifted students (Colangelo, 2003; Wood, 2009, 2010). However, these previous studies have not addressed how professional school counseling standards (i.e., the ASCA National Model, 2005, and the school counselor training standards (outlined by CACREP, 2001 and 2009) have the potential to shape professional school counselors' knowledge of giftedness, understanding of advocacy competency, and advocacy activities with gifted students. Finding from this study has highlighted those possibilities suggests that the role of professional school counselors in meeting the gifted students' overall developmental needs has been overlooked by educational professionals, perhaps even by professional school counselors themselves.

Second, the finding that building level influences school counselors' knowledge of gifted issues offers insight into how building responsibilities may shape counselors' interactions with gifted students. Although ASCA and CACREP standards have consistently maintained that professional school counselors are prepared to work with students across the K-12 curriculum, this finding suggests that despite these organizations' efforts, the demands of professional practice and responsibilities at different building levels may not lead to an equal amount of gifted knowledge regarding gifted issues for some school counselors.

Findings also support previous research that school counselor self-efficacy is an important factor of interest in school counseling. Research that provides empirical support for school counselor self-efficacy and its effect on counseling practice is needed to ultimately provide positive outcomes for student services.

Implications for Practice and Future Research

Implications for School Counselors and Gifted Students

The role of school counselors is to provide services to all students (ASCA, 2005); therefore, their knowledge, training, and self-efficacy are inherent to their role in the school setting. Of the many factors this study highlights for current school counselors, one important factor is the counselors' knowledge level of gifted students. In order for school counselors to provide appropriate services to gifted students, they need to increase their knowledge of the population. Developing delivery system activities that meet the needs of gifted students and that reflect differentiated instructional activities across the K-12 curriculum, along with responsive services that fully consider the cognitive and emotional development of gifted students despite other achievements, provide a meaningful program that gifted students can utilize. Management of the program's aspects for gifted students can include input from these students, their parents, and gifted teachers.

Finally, accountability of the program in meeting the needs of gifted students can be related to school goals and program objectives. In-service training that includes a "whole student" perspective and not just gifted students' academic achievement will be beneficial to professional school counselors. This increase in knowledge will help school counselors to be more inclusive regarding gifted students and their needs when developing comprehensive school counseling programs. In addition, this increased knowledge may assist school counselors with becoming active participants in services for gifted students within the school environment

Implications for Counselor Educators

The results of this study indicated that self-efficacy was significant in relation to advocacy competency of school counselors, while training program accreditation was not significant in relation to the competencies of school counselors. Therefore, counselor educators also have a significant role in helping school counselors develop their self-efficacy for practice within the program by providing an increased access to advocacy

and the gifted population during the counseling training program. This may include collaboration with colleagues in teacher education and school psychology programs who specialize in gifted education and meeting the needs of gifted students. Cross discipline training and collaboration may help school counselors in training develop their self-efficacy which will have an effect on the advocacy activity for gifted student. As the CACREP standards are revised, school counselor educators can be proactive by ensuring that advocacy for gifted students is addressed by the new training expectations.

Multicultural education is another influence on counseling self-efficacy. As stated in the literature review, gifted students may be a population that requires specific knowledge, awareness, and skills in order to receive the best services. Levy and Pluckers' (2009) development of a multicultural counseling competency model specifically for gifted students as a subculture speaks to the increased focus on school counselors' training and the impact it may have on knowledge, this may also effect self-efficacy development. In this study, the level of self-efficacy has influenced the school counselor's advocacy activity.

Suggestions for Future Research

This study has contributed vital empirical data to the literature on school counselor self-efficacy, advocacy competency, advocacy activity, and knowledge of giftedness. Based on the results of this study, it is clear that school counselor and self-efficacy are predictors of advocacy activity and building level influences knowledge of giftedness. Future research could further explore the level of advocacy activity of school counselors with gifted students and the importance of self-efficacy with school counselors. Another area for future research could explore the relationship between building level and advocacy awareness. Gaining this information can inform counselor training and professional development practices by state and national school counseling organizations and contribute to improved advocacy of counselors across the K-12 curriculum. Revisiting the impact CACREP training has had on current practice and if

that has made a difference in school counselor advocacy competency would also be a area for future research. Additionally, follow up research could look at the specific significance difference between building level and what impacts those differences on school counselors' advocacy activity with gifted students. Lastly, future research could continue the exploration of school counselor self-efficacy and its impact on school counselor practice with gifted students.

Limitations of the Study

There were limitations to this study, as there are with all studies. The most notable limitations were (a) a low response rate, (b) the recruitment modality, and (c) a homogeneous sample. The first limitation was a low response rate. Despite multiple methods of data collection, the response rate was very low in relation to the number of possible participants. The second limitation was the recruitment modality. Participants were recruited using a professional organization, which may indicate their commitment to the profession. Furthermore, some of the potential participants may have been overloaded with recruitment solicitation for the study, which may have affected the response rate. The third limitation was the homogeneous population sample. The homogeneity of the sample (limited male responses) and the lack of specific demographic information, such as race or socioeconomic level and geographic location (urban, rural, etc.), may have impacted the results of the study.

Significance of the Study

The importance of advocacy in the academic success of all students is outlined in the ASCA National Model as well as in the ASCA position statement for gifted students. "Despite the need for student advocacy, literature within the school counseling profession is sparse when it comes to identifying and measuring essential advocate behaviors of the school counselor" (Field & Baker, 2004, p. 57). This fact is equally accurate for the gifted education literature. In her 2004 dissertation, Carlson called for future research that "focuses on the advocacy role of school counselors with gifted and talented students" (p.

172). This study was intended to add to the school counselor, gifted, and counselor education literature by providing information for training, practice, and increased knowledge of school counselors' advocacy role with gifted students.

Conclusion

This study was intended to provide further empirical research in the area of school counseling and advocacy of gifted students, with the possibility of increasing school counselors' advocacy efforts on behalf of gifted students. The results of this study indicated the impact of knowledge of giftedness and self-efficacy on school counselor advocacy of gifted students. In addition, the significance of years of experience and building level was also reported. This study has opened the door for continued research on the advocacy activity of school counselors with gifted students. CACREP and ASCA have a large influence on the preparation of school counselors; the inclusion or even the focus of advocating as it relates to gifted issues will increase the advocacy activity of professional school counselors with gifted students. School counselors are making strides in meeting the needs of gifted students, and this study offers new ways to understand their advocacy efforts and to shape the path of the profession in meeting the overall developmental needs of gifted students.

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APPENDIX A

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SHEET

Instructions: Please answer the following background questions by checking the most appropriate response.

- 1) Please indicate your gender.
(a) Female (b) Male (c) Other
- 2) Please indicate the number of years as a school counselor.
(a) Less than 1 year
(b) 1-5 years
(c) 6-10 years
(d) 11-15 years
(e) 16-20 years
(f) 21+ years
- 3) Please indicate current building type.
(a) Elementary
(b) Middle
(c) Junior High
(d) High
(e) Other
- 4) Please provide an estimate of the number /percentage of students enrolled in your school

- 5) Please provide an estimate of the number/percentage of students enrolled in gifted programming in your school.

- 6) What is your highest academic degree?
(a) Associate's degree (AA)
(b) Bachelor's degree (BA, BS)
(c) Master's degree (MA, MS)
(d) Educational Specialist's degree (EDS)
(e) Doctorate degree (PhD, EdD)
- 7) Was your training program CACREP accredited?
(a) Yes (b) No (C) Don't Know
- 8) Have you ever received training regarding gifted education?
(a) Yes (b) No

9) Which choice best describes how you have obtained information about gifted education? (Check all that apply).

- (a) Graduate Training Program
- (b) Practicum/Internship
- (c) On the job training
- (d) Workshops or Seminars
- (e) Literature and/or Internet
- (f) Other

10) How much gifted training have you received?

11) Is there a gifted coordinator/specialist in your school?

- (a) Yes
- (b) No

12) Is there a gifted program in your school?

- (a) Yes
- (b) No

13) Have you ever been a gifted education coordinator or teacher?

- (a) Yes
- (b) No

14) Please list the three most important issues in counseling gifted students in your school.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

APPENDIX B
SCALE 1: KNOWLEDGE OF GIFTED

YOUR KNOWLEDGE CONCERNING GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS AND THEIR PROGRAMS

No Knowledge, Little Knowledge, Some Knowledge, Knowledgeable, Very Knowledgeable

I am knowledgeable about:

1.	The most widely used definitions of GT.
2.	The historical context of counseling GT students.
3.	The differentiated personality characteristics of GT students from the rest of the population in general.
4.	Effective intervention strategies for personal issues of GT students.
5.	Myths about GT students.
6.	Research concerning the counseling needs of GT students.
7.	The range of individual differences among GT students.
8.	The process for identifying GT students in my district.
9.	How one determines if a particular student has been identified as GT.
10.	Developmental counseling approaches when counseling GT students.
11.	Remedial counseling approaches when counseling GT students.
12.	The unique academic counseling needs of GT students.
13.	The impact of perfectionism on academic choices of GT students.
14.	The impact of multipotentiality on academic choices of GT students.
15.	The remedial reading needs experienced by some GT students.
16.	The remedial study skills needs experienced by some GT students.
17.	Possible underlying causes for underachievement of GT students.
18.	The unique social-emotional counseling needs of GT students.
19.	The impact of perfectionism on the self-esteem of GT students.
20.	The impact of others' expectations on the choices of GT students.
21.	The behaviors of GT students in a heterogeneous classroom.
22.	The "negative" feelings experienced by many GT students.
23.	The impact of heightened sensitivity on the emotional development of GT students.
24.	The unique career development needs of GT students.
25.	The impact of multipotentiality on the career choices of GT students.
26.	The impact of perfectionism on the career choices of GT students.

APPENDIX C

SCALE 2: ADVOCACY COMPETENCY SCALE

SCHOOL COUNSELOR ADVOCACY SURVEY
(from Brown & Trusty, 2005)

Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree

Disposition:

1.	I believe in taking risks to help individual students and groups of students meet their needs.
2.	I believe parents-guardians are the best advocates for their children.
3.	I believe collaborating with parents to advocate for their children is empowering to family growth and adaptation.
4.	I believe in advocating for students and families to eliminate inequities and barriers affecting all people.
5.	I believe in advocating for my profession on behalf of my students.
6.	I believe that when dealing with advocacy dilemmas, an analysis of ethical principles and laws is necessary for effective problem solving.

Knowledge:

1.	I have knowledge of a wide range of resources that can be used in the advocacy process.
2.	I have knowledge of school policies.
3.	I have knowledge of the legal rights of individual and families.
4.	I have knowledge of my professional scope of practice to help students and their families.
5.	I have knowledge of mediation and conflict resolution strategies for working toward successful resolution of disputes.
6.	I have knowledge of various models to increase my flexibility to various advocacy situations.
7.	I have knowledge of systems perspective to understand the systems and subsystems inherent in schools and society.

Skills:

1.	I can effectively communicate problems and possible solutions to others.
2.	I can form and maintain positive relationships with professionals and parents.
3.	I can be open and sensitive to the ideas of others.
4.	I can assess and define problems.
5.	I can effectively bring resources to bear on problems.
6.	I can use counseling theories and models as a framework for decisions, goals, and actions.
7.	I can systematically manage the advocacy process.
8.	I can develop coping skills to avoid burnout.

APPENDIX D
SCALE 3: SELF-EFFICACY

**SELECTED FACTOR ITEMS FROM THE SCHOOL COUNSELOR
SELF-EFFICACY SCALE**

(from Bodenhorn, 2001)

Never, Rarely, Occasionally, Fairly Often, Frequently

1.	I advocate for integration of student academic career and personal development into the mission of the school.
2.	I advocate for myself as a professional school counselor and articulate the purpose of the goals of school counseling.
3.	I provide resources and guidance to the school population in times of crisis.
4.	I communicate in writing with staff, parents, and the external community.
5.	I consult with external agencies that provide support services for our students.
6.	I understand the viewpoints and experiences of students and parents who are from a cultural background different from mine.
7.	I can find some way of communicating with any student in my school.

APPENDIX E

SCALE 4: ADVOCACY ACTIVITY SCALE

YOUR LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT WITH GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

Never, Rarely, Occasionally, Fairly Often, Frequently

1.	Assisting in the identification of GT students.
2.	Advocating for GT students by assisting with their individual progress through appropriate school experiences.
3.	Working with teachers, principals, and other staff to foster a better school climate for GT students.
4.	Consulting with other school professionals regarding problems and needs of individual GT students.
5.	Providing individual counseling for GT students, as warranted, based on the understanding of their unique needs.
6.	Encouraging GT students to take rigorous and challenging classes commensurate with their ability level.
7.	Referring GT students for academic support, as needed.
8.	Referring GT students for emotional support, as needed.
9.	Conducting workshops for GT students concerning such topics as time management and test anxiety.
10	Providing group counseling for GT students, as warranted, based on an understanding of their unique needs.
11	Providing family counseling for GT students and their families, as warranted, based on an understanding of their unique needs.
12	Consulting, as needed, with parents of the gifted
13	Establishing parent education services that focus on the needs of GT children, such as information sessions and group discussions
14	Engaging in professional development activities through which knowledge and skills in the area of programming for the needs of GT students are regularly upgraded.
15	Providing leadership in the establishment of training and awareness programs concerning GT students to administrators and staff
16	Providing an information clearinghouse for outside resources that could benefit GT students, including human resources (role models and mentors) and material resources (libraries and universities)
17	Evaluating and assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the school counseling program for GT students

APPENDIX F
EXPERT PANELISTS' CREDENTIALS

Dr. Vivian Lee is the Director of Counselor Advocacy at the National Office for School Counselor Advocacy (NOSCA) of the College Board. Provides training for school counselors to become culturally responsive practitioners who can engage in the systemic change necessary to meet the needs of all student populations. She is also an adjunct professor at the University of Maryland, College Park, and has authored and co-authored articles and book chapters on developing school counseling programs, conflict resolution and violence, and group counseling.

Dr. Jean Peterson is a Professor in the Department of Educational Studies at Purdue University. She is a recognized scholar in the area of school counseling, with a dual emphasis on school-counselor preparation and counseling gifted students. Dr. Peterson is also on the Editorial Review Board of the *Gifted Child Quarterly*, the Board of Directors for National Association for Gifted Children Editorial, and the Review Board for the *Roeper Review*.

Dr. Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy is a Professor and Chair in the Department of Counseling and Human Services at the Johns Hopkins University with a research emphasis on multicultural self-efficacy of school counselors, multicultural counseling training, and social justice-based school counseling. Dr. Holcomb-McCoy also provides educational and research consultation for school counselors, other school-related personnel, and school districts. Dr. Holcomb-McCoy is the author of *School Counseling to Close the Achievement Gap: A Social Justice Framework for Success*.

Dr. Carol Dahir is an associate professor and coordinator of School Counselor Education at the New York Institute of Technology. Dr. Dahir works extensively with state departments of education, school systems, school counselor associations, and national organizations on developing, implementing, and evaluating comprehensive school counseling programs. She served as the project director for both the American School Counselor Association's National Standards development, is a past president of the New York State School Counselor Association, and served on the governing board for the American School Counselor Association.

APPENDIX G
EMAIL TO PANELISTS

Dear School Counseling Expert,

You have been identified as a leading expert in school counseling who might choose to help with an expert panel. My name is SaDohl K. Goldsmith; I am a doctoral candidate in Counselor Education and Supervision at the University of Iowa. My dissertation co-chairs are Tarrell Awe Agahe Portman, Ph.D, and Susannah M. Wood, Ph.D. I am currently conducting research about school counselors' self-efficacy for advocacy activity for gifted students and to determine if knowledge of gifted concerns relates to their advocacy activity with gifted students. My study will also explore whether there are demographic differences among school counselors that may influence their advocacy activity with gifted students. Throughout my literature search, you have been cited or identified as an expert in the areas of school counseling, advocacy, or gifted education.

For these reasons, I am inviting you to contribute your feedback regarding a few items I have selected from the School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale to help determine school counselor self-efficacy for advocacy in my study. Upon your agreement to serve as an expert panelist, I will email you 7 items from the School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale (Bodenhorn, 2001), and I ask that you review the items for relevance to school counselor self-efficacy for advocacy. Your suggestions and opinions will be helpful for revision purposes in the area of appropriate wording, clarity, and relevance. Your contribution will be acknowledged in my study with a brief description of your area(s) of expertise.

For the purposes of this study, "gifted student" is defined as students who show potential for a high level of intellectual, creative, artistic, and leadership abilities and require unique services and activities by educational professionals for effective development. "Advocacy activity" refers to school counselors' participation in activities prescribed by the professional literature pertaining to gifted and talented students, including advocating for equitable identification procedures for students from diverse backgrounds, such as ethnic, racial, disadvantaged, disabled, and cultural minorities.

Please feel free to contact me, sadohl-goldsmith@uiowa.edu, Dr. Tarrell Awe Agahe Portman, tarrell-portman@uiowa.edu, or Dr. Susannah M. Wood, susannah-wood@uiowa.edu with questions regarding my study and/or the items in question. Should you decide not to provide feedback, please disregard this email.

Thank you in advance for your assistance with my dissertation research.

Respectfully,

SaDohl K. Goldsmith
Doctoral Candidate
The University of Iowa

APPENDIX H
EMAIL TO SCHOOL COUNSELORS

Dear Professional School Counselor,

My name is SaDohl Goldsmith and I am a doctoral candidate in the Department of Counseling, Rehabilitation and Student Development at the University of Iowa. I am currently conducting research about school counselors' self-efficacy for advocacy activity for gifted students and to determine if knowledge of gifted concerns relates to school counselor advocacy activity with gifted students. My study will also explore whether there are demographic differences among school counselors that may influence their advocacy activity with gifted students. I invite you to participate in this study because you are a school counselor who may offer information that may be useful in the school counseling field.

If you agree to participate in this study, I invite you to complete the on-line survey about school counselor self-efficacy, advocacy competency, and advocacy activity using the following link:

The survey takes approximately 30-45 minutes to complete. At the end of the survey, I welcome your comments or feedback regarding any information concerning this study that you feel is relevant.

Completing the survey and submitting it will be considered consent to use your responses in the study. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study. There are no personal benefits for participating in this study. However, it is anticipated that the information provided will contribute to the knowledge base in the field of school counseling. There will be no cost for participating in this research project, and you will not be compensated for participation.

Do not put your name or any identifying information on the survey. The website is secured and can only be accessed through a password protected file. The website will not collect any identifying information. To ensure confidentiality, information obtained from this study will be kept in a secure storage area accessible only by me and my supervising chair. In the event of any report of publication from this study, your identity will not be disclosed.

Results will be reported as group data and in such a way that you cannot be identified. Taking part in this research study is voluntary. If you do not wish to participate in this study, do not click the hyperlink connecting to the survey. If you agree to participate in this study, please submit the completed survey online within five days. I will send a reminder email in one week.

If you have any questions about this study, please contact: SaDohl Goldsmith, (319)-335-5275, sadohl-goldsmith@uiowa.edu or my supervising faculty members, Dr. Tarrell Awe Agahe Portman, (319)-335-5985, tarrell-portman@uiowa.edu and Dr. Susannah Wood, 319-335-5050, susannah-wood@uiowa.edu.

If you have any questions about participating in a research study, please contact the Human Subjects Office, 340 College of Medicine Administration Building, The University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, 52242-1101, (319) 335- 7310, or email:irb@uiowa.edu.
To access the survey, click on the following link:

Sincerely,

SaDohl Goldsmith, ABD
Doctoral Candidate-University of Iowa
Department of Rehabilitation and Counselor Education
Lindquist Center N338
Iowa City, Iowa 52242
(319) 335-5275

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