



6-2004

Counselors' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Career Education Programs in Assisting High School Students when Making Career Decisions

Sandra L. Roberts Standish
Western Michigan University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/dissertations>



Part of the Student Counseling and Personnel Services Commons

Recommended Citation

Roberts Standish, Sandra L., "Counselors' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Career Education Programs in Assisting High School Students when Making Career Decisions" (2004). *Dissertations*. 1142.

<https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/dissertations/1142>

This Dissertation-Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate College at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu.



**COUNSELORS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF
CAREER EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN ASSISTING
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHEN MAKING
CAREER DECISIONS**

by

Sandra L. Roberts Standish

**A Dissertation
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Education
Department of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership**

**Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
June 2004**

**COUNSELORS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF
CAREER EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN ASSISTING
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHEN MAKING
CAREER DECISIONS**

Sandra L. Roberts Standish, Ed.D.

Western Michigan University, 2004

In 1997, the Michigan Department of Career Development unveiled the Michigan Career Preparation System, which provided guidelines and funds for school districts to offer career education opportunities for students. Since high school counselors are oftentimes viewed as the primary provider of career information to students, this study examined their perceptions of Michigan's Career Preparation System and the impact this initiative has had on students and educators. To gather this information, a 13-question survey was designed and distributed to a randomly selected group of high school counselors. The research also provided a framework for understanding all of the components of both the Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program and Michigan's Career Preparation System.

The findings indicated that counselors perceive the two primary initiatives, Career Pathways and Education Development Plans (EDPs), as being "somewhat important" to "important" overall in helping students make future career plans. Michigan counselors also perceived their level of involvement (100% "somewhat involved to highly involved") in career preparation as being higher than that of

principals and teachers. Although this high level of involvement for counselors was not surprising, it was discovered through related research that students viewed parents as having the most influence over them when making career decisions. Thus, one of the conclusions was that for Career Preparation to have the greatest impact, counselors should develop programs for parents to assist them when working with their children in career preparation.

In 2002, Neumark and Allen conducted a study of Michigan's Career Preparation System and concluded that the system was quite positive overall, although they also indicated that additional research would be necessary as there is no comparable data. This research mirrors their findings in that counselors do perceive the Career Preparation System as having a positive impact, but also echoes the statement that additional research in this area would be beneficial.

NOTE TO USERS

This reproduction is the best copy available.

UMI[®]

UMI Number: 3130614

INFORMATION TO USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleed-through, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

UMI[®]

UMI Microform 3130614

Copyright 2004 by ProQuest Information and Learning Company.

All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

ProQuest Information and Learning Company
300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

**Copyright by
Sandra L. Roberts Standish
2004**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It is with heartfelt gratitude that I acknowledge the important role my family, friends, and colleagues had in helping me become the person that I am today. I am very blessed to have brothers and sisters who provide unending love and support. My sister Deb has been especially supportive during the writing of my dissertation. She was a wonderful sounding board and her passion for education is matched only by my own.

I must also extend appreciation to my three committee members, Dr. Van Cooley, Dr. Carl Woloszyk, and Dr. Robert Hamet. Carl planted the seed that earning a doctorate was within my reach. Although at times I questioned the wisdom of this decision, I thank him for showing me the way. Van's sense of humor and willingness to put me in my place provided me with ample opportunity for reflection. Through this process, he has become a dear friend. And, of course, Bob's influence on my life is immeasurable. He has served as a role model to me for over 25 years, and my admiration for him cannot be put into words.

I would also be remiss if I did not mention the support that I received from Brenda Clark, Dave Gaunt, and Brian Pyles. If not for them, this entire journey would not have been manageable. They made me laugh until I cried; and when I cried, they made me laugh. They will forever hold a special place in my heart.

Acknowledgments—Continued

I also wish to express my love and admiration to my three children, Jaime, David, and Kalie. They serve as my inspiration to live life with passion and compassion. They are a blessing to me each and every day.

Last, but certainly not least, I must thank my husband Dave. He provides me with love and laughter every single day. Life is a journey that should be fun! I'm having a great time!

Sandra L. Roberts Standish

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	ii
LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem	5
Conceptual Framework	6
Purpose of the Study	8
Research Questions	8
Importance of the Study	9
Definitions	10
Limitations of the Study	13
Summary	13
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	15
History and Foundation of Career Education	19
Components of Career Education	20
Michigan's Career Preparation System	31
History of Michigan's Career Preparation System	32
Career Pathway Requirements	35

Table of Contents—Continued

CHAPTER

Education Development Plan (EDP) Requirements	36
Career Pathways in Michigan Schools: A Success Story.....	37
Michigan's Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program.....	39
Historical Perspective.....	41
Components of Michigan's Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program	44
Summary	50
III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	51
Research Methods.....	52
Participants	55
Data Collection	55
Data Analysis.....	56
Summary	57
IV. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA.....	58
Research Questions.....	60
Participant Information	60
Career Preparation Initiatives	65
Michigan's Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program.....	77
Research Question 1.....	79
Research Question 2.....	81

Table of Contents—Continued

CHAPTER

Research Question 3.....	82
Research Question 4.....	84
Summary	87
V. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION	89
Restatement of Research Problem and Methodology	89
Results	90
Implications	94
Recommendations.....	98
Recommendation 1.....	99
Recommendation 2.....	99
Recommendation 3.....	102
Recommendation 4.....	103
Recommendation 5.....	104
Recommendation 6.....	104
APPENDICES	
A. Human Subjects Institutional Review Board Letter of Approval	106
B. Survey Questionnaire.....	108
C. Administrator Letter	113
D. Letter to Counselors.....	115
BIBLIOGRAPHY	117

LIST OF TABLES

1. Years of Experience ($N = 187$).....	62
2. Size of District ($N = 181$).....	62
3. Secondary Teaching Major ($N = 187$)	63
4. Teaching Experience in Major ($N = 182$)	64
5. Questions Pertaining to Question 7: Career Pathway Implementation.....	67
6. Questions Pertaining to Education Development Plans (EDPs)	68
7. Level of Involvement of Principals, Teachers, and Counselors in Implementing Michigan's Career Preparation System	69
8. Perception of Impact of Michigan's Career Pathways Component in Helping Students Make Future Career Plans	70
9. Difference of Perceptions in Participants' Years of Experience and Impact of Career Pathways in Helping Students Make Future Career Plans.....	71
10. Comparison of Teachable Major and Perception of Impact in Students' Career Plans	72
11. Difference of Perceptions in Participants' Backgrounds and Impact of Career Pathways in Helping Students Make Future Career Plans.....	73
12. Participants' Perception of the Importance of the Education Development Plan Component for Students	74
13. Difference of Perceptions in Participants' Years of Experience and Importance of EDPs for Students.....	75
14. Difference in Perceptions of Participants' Backgrounds and Importance of Education Development Plans for Students	76

List of Tables—Continued

15. Distribution of Time Spent in Five Counseling Components Identified in Study in Comparison to the MCGCP Guidelines	78
---	-----------

LIST OF FIGURES

1. Conceptual Framework.....	7
-------------------------------------	----------

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

When the School-to-Work Opportunities Act passed in 1994, a renewed interest to provide career information for students was generated in the educational community. Counselors emerged as leaders in this movement as they were typically viewed as the source for assisting students in identifying future career plans. The degree to which counselors embraced this role as a primary provider of career information, however, was open to speculation as career counseling was one more task added to an overflowing list of responsibilities counselors deal with on a daily basis.

Counselors' roles and responsibilities are quite varied. They support students in their efforts to learn, assist them in their emotional and social growth, and guide them in their transition from high school to careers. Small and large group sessions in decision making, problem solving, anger management, conflict resolution, etc., are all areas that counselors address (Gibson, 1997). In addition, high school counselors are also involved in scheduling, testing, personal and crisis counseling, and often serve as a liaison between outside agencies and the schools (Finch & Ryan, 2002). They also must deal with a number of difficult social issues, such as an increased number of unsupervised children, single-parent homes, teenage parents, drugs and alcohol abuse, violent behavior, poverty, and homelessness. Schools are also experiencing an

increase in the number of non-English speaking students, children with symptoms of boredom, low self-esteem and lack of motivation, and an increase in the number of sexual abuse cases being revealed (Ballbe ter Maat, 2000). Although these responsibilities are typical of the average counselor, additional tasks may also surface depending on the counselor/student ratio, the size of the district, and the administrative support provided. Although student/counselor ratios vary widely across the country, the national ratio as reported by Dunn (2001) was 490 students to 1 counselor. However, in September 1999, the American Counseling Association (ACA) announced that the new counselor caseload grew to 560 students, a 9.3% increase from their reported average student-to-counselor ratio of 513:1. The maximum recommended caseload is 250:1. Michigan, along with nine other states, leads the nation with counselor/student ratios exceeding 600:1 (ACA, 1999).

Since the early 1990s, two programs emerged that provided a framework for offering career information to students, both of which had an impact on the counseling profession. The first program was spearheaded by the Michigan School Counselors Association (MSCA). The MSCA developed a comprehensive structure for K-12 counseling departments to use when organizing the services provided to students. Based on a similar program originally developed in Missouri, counselors had the option to adopt Michigan's Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program (MCGCP) to be used as a model to restructure counseling departments (MSCA, 1997). The three major components of the model include: content, structural, and programmatic. The content area specifically addresses the need for career planning

and exploration; the programmatic component focuses on individual planning, which includes advisement, assessment, and placement and follow-up services.

Coincidentally, this renewed focus on counselors providing career information for students started around the same time that the federal and state governments began putting an emphasis on career development. In 1994, Congress again brought career education to the forefront by passing the School-to-Work Opportunities Act, which provided both a philosophical framework and an infusion of federal funds to bolster initiatives in states and local communities (Steinberg, 1999). The School-to-Work Opportunities Act provided more than \$1.5 billion nationwide; Michigan received more than \$50 million between 1994 to 2001 (Neumark & Allen, 2002). The impetus for the school-to-work movement was generated by a growing sense of public alarm about the large number of young people who were floundering both during and after high school (Steinberg, 1999). This legislation was intended to facilitate the education and career preparation of young people during their formative secondary school years, expand linkages between secondary and postsecondary education, and promote productive work and self-sufficiency (Hughes, Bailey, & Mechur, 2001; Olsen, 1997). The Act identified three kinds of opportunities for education to make connections with work. Those opportunities included: school-based learning oriented to high academic standards; work-based learning leading to industry-recognized credentials; and connections between school-based and work-based learning, through career majors and applied or experiential learning (Hughes

et al., 2001). One of the major components of this Act was Career Development (Lester & Perry, 1995).

In Michigan, the newly formed Michigan Department of Career Development (MDCD) unveiled the Career Preparation System, which provided grant dollars to assist districts in offering various career awareness and exploration opportunities for students. The Career Preparation System included seven components, one of which was Career Development. Under the Career Development component, two benchmarks, Career Pathways and Education Development Plans (EDPs), were required of districts who received funding through this initiative (Office of Career and Technical Preparation [OCTP], 2002).

According to a study conducted by Neumark and Allen (2002) on the status of Michigan's Career Preparation System, Career Pathways implementation involves an integration of academic standards with career information and exploration. This contextual approach increases the relevance for students (Center for Occupation Research and Development [CORD], n.d.; North Central Regional Educational Laboratory [NCREL, n.d.]). In this same study, Education Development Plan (EDP) benchmarks were also identified. The required benchmarks include: personal information; career pathway goals; educational/training goals; career assessment results; plan of action; and parent/family consultation and endorsement for students under the age of 18. Thus, counselors found themselves as key players in this initiative as they were typically the ones responsible for working with students when

developing EDPs, as well as playing key roles in implementing career education in K–12 school systems (Hoyt, 2001).

Statement of the Problem

More than in any other career area in education, the responsibilities that high school counselors assume appears to be open to debate as to how they should spend their time. Some would argue that high school counselors should work with students in selecting classes that will help them meet graduation requirements; others would say that they should serve as advocates for students when dealing with personal and social problems. Poor job descriptions and haphazardly assigned duties are often the norm, which causes confusion as to counselors' roles and responsibilities (Kelleher, 2003).

Because of this lack of understanding regarding counseling practices, a committee consisting of practitioners from the Michigan School Counselor Association, practicing school counselors, counselor educators, and guidance administrators developed a program that provided a structure and framework for counselors when working with students (MSCA, 1997). The culmination of their work was the development of the Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program (MCGCP) that is now extensively used throughout the state as a structure for counselors to use when developing their counseling programs. The three major components of the program are: content (career planning and exploration, knowledge of self and others, and educational/career-technical development); structural

(definition and mission statement, facilities, school and community advisory committee, resources, staffing patterns, and budget); and programmatic (guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and systems support). One of the components of this program (content) focuses on career planning, which has seen an increased level of importance since the inception of Career Preparation across the state (MSCA, 1997).

Thus, the purpose of this study was to gather information from high school counselors on their perceptions of Michigan's Career Preparation System. Counselors were surveyed as to the level of involvement of the high school principal, teachers, and counselors in these initiatives. Comparisons were made based on counselors' years of experience (0 to 5 years in comparison to 25 years or more) and educational backgrounds (general education in comparison to career-technical education). On the surface, it would appear that the Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program and Michigan's Career Preparation System would complement one another as both initiatives address career preparation of students.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study depicts a visual representation of the connection between Michigan's Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program and Michigan's Career Preparation System (see Figure 1). Within the Guidance and Counseling Program, the Programmatic Component identifies the five areas where counselors should focus their time (Other Services, Guidance Curriculum, Responsive

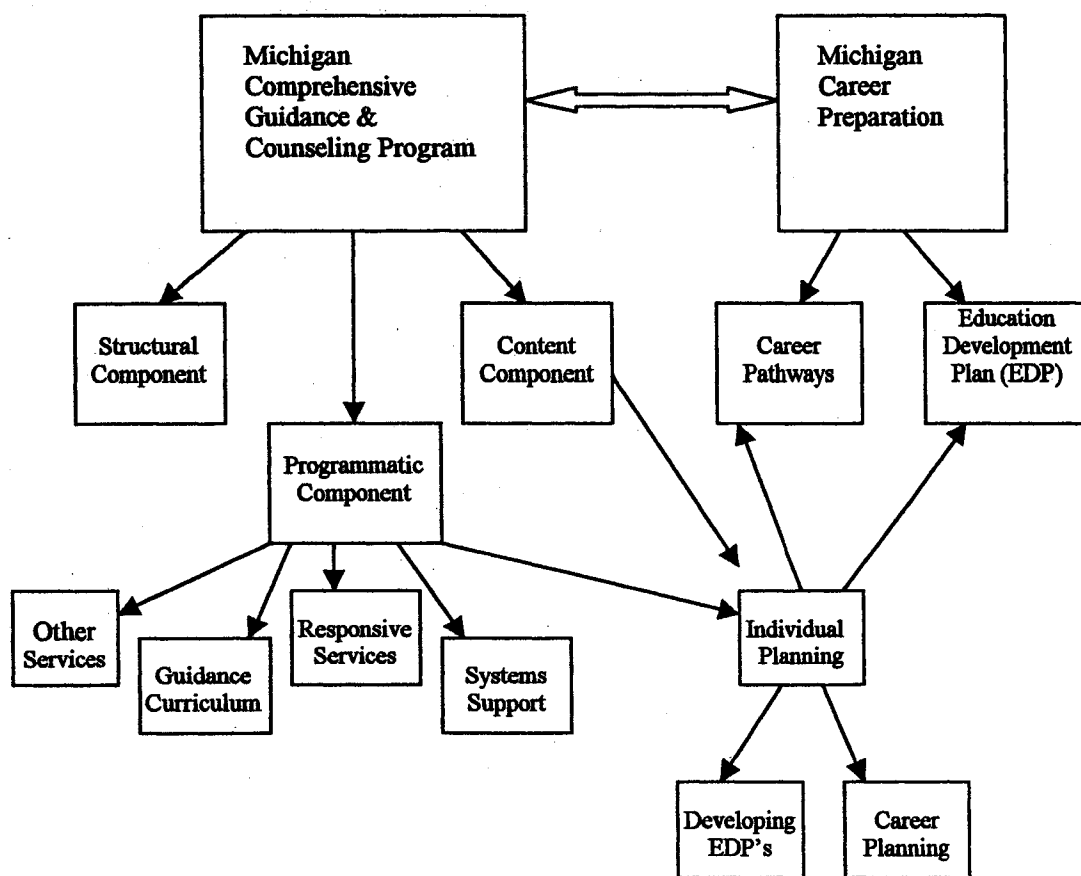


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework.

Services, Systems Support, and Individual Planning). The Individual Planning component specifically addresses EDPs and Career Planning, which complements the two required areas identified in Michigan's Career Preparation System. Thus, from this framework, it appears that there would be a strong connection between counselors' roles and responsibilities and the Career Preparation System. In turn, this connection should have some type of impact on the career preparation opportunities

experienced by students. One could make a case that there would be a direct correlation between the time counselors spend in the Individual Planning area and student career preparation.

Purpose of the Study

This study offers an opportunity to examine high school counselors' perceptions of Michigan's Career Preparation System and the impact this initiative has had on educators and students. The research also provided a framework for understanding some of the components of both the Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program and Michigan's Career Preparation System. An in-depth look at both programs and an overview of career education, including examples of work-based learning experiences, will be made.

Research Questions

This study addresses high school counselors' perceptions of Michigan's Career Preparation System and whether or not these perceptions differ based on years of experience and educational background prior to entering the counseling profession. The four research questions posed include:

1. How involved are high school principals, teachers, and counselors in working with the Career Preparation System?

2. What impact has the Michigan Career Pathways component made in helping students make future career plans based on counselors' years of experience and educational background?

3. How important are Education Development Plans (EDPs) for students based on counselors' years of experience and educational background?

4. How much time are high school counselors spending in the four areas identified in the Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program (guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and systems support)?

Importance of the Study

Since the early 1970s, a great deal of time, effort, and money has been spent on promoting the importance of providing career information to high school students, both at the state and national levels. High school counselors play a pivotal role in this initiative as they are often times viewed within the building as the main source for providing career information for students. Besides parents, teachers and counselors are often cited by students as being the most influential adult when it comes to career planning (Herbert, 1986; Sukovieff, 1989). This study obtained information from Michigan counselors as to whether or not students actually benefited from this renewed interest in career preparation. It also provided an increased awareness of the impact Michigan's Career Preparation System had in helping those students.

According to Dr. Harry Clay, the high school counselors have not previously been surveyed as to how they spend their time in relation to the tenets of Michigan's

Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program (H. Clay, personal communication, April 23, 2003). In addition, Michigan's School Counselor Association, which initiated the development of the Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program in 1992, will find this information of particular interest as it will provide this association with data on how Michigan's high school counselors actually spend their time.

Along those same lines, the Michigan Department of Career Development (MDCD), who initiated the development of Michigan's Career Preparation System, had not conducted any type of survey that gathered information specific to high school counselors' perceptions in regard to these initiatives. Glenna Zollinger-Russell, MDCD supervisor, expressed an interest in this study as a resource for planning professional development opportunities for counselors in the area of career development (G. Zollinger-Russell, personal communication, April 23, 2003).

Thus, one of the strengths of this study is that it provides relevant and timely information to both parties. This information is especially important in light of the recent executive order cuts by Governor Granholm, which eliminated Career Preparation funding in the 2003–04 education budget.

Definitions

In order to understand the terminology used within this study, the following definitions provide clarification:

Michigan's Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program is a systematically designed set of components, which includes a counseling curriculum, responsive services, individual planning, and systems support that empowers professional school counselors to assist students in meeting their academic, personal/social, and career needs from kindergarten through grade 12. It is developmental in design in that it offers sequentially planned activities which meet the needs of children and adolescents as they grow and progress from one grade level to the next. It addresses the needs of all students by helping them to acquire and apply knowledge of self and others, develop competencies in career/life planning, and achieve educational success (MSCA, 1997, p. 2).

Michigan's Career Preparation Initiatives pertain to the two required components that school districts must address: Career Pathways and Education Development Plans.

Michigan's Career Preparation System is a system of programs and strategies providing students with opportunities to prepare for success in careers of their choice (Neumark & Allen, 2002).

Career Education is the totality of experiences through which one learns about and prepares to engage in work as part of her or his way of living (Hoyt, 1974).

Career Pathways are broad groupings of careers that share similar characteristics and whose requirements for employment have similar strengths and competencies (Neumark & Allen, 2002).

Contextual Learning is when learners process new information or knowledge to their own frame of reference, their own inner worlds of memory, experience, and response (CORD, n.d.; NCREL, n.d.).

Education Development Plans (EDPs) are ongoing records of career planning by a student. Beginning in the middle school, students identify an initial career goal and desired work and educational experiences. School counselors ensure that career exploration, career assessment information, school performance, and expressed interests are integrated into the EDP process. The State of Michigan has identified six basic EDP elements: (1) personal information, (2) career pathway goals, (3) educational/training goals, (4) career assessment results, (5) plan of action, and (6) parent/family consultation and endorsement (Michigan Department of Education [MDE], 2002b).

Work-based Learning. Although there are numerous examples of work-based learning programs, Naylor's (1997) description of the various components is one of the most comprehensive and also reflects the current career preparation movement in Michigan. She concludes that work-based learning may occur in the following forms: contracted instruction, cooperative education, school-to-work apprenticeship/registered apprenticeship, career exploration, service learning, career internships, career academies, school-based enterprises, and clinical experience programs.

Limitations of the Study

A limitation of this study was that only public high school counselors were surveyed, thus the opinions of middle school and elementary counselors were not sought. Both the Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program and Michigan's Career Preparation System addresses activities K-12, and since the K-8 counselors were not included in the survey, this study will neither support nor negate any activity at the K-8 levels.

A second limitation was that one of the Education Development Plan (EDP) benchmarks required parent-endorsed EDPs being introduced by the eighth grade. This study did not address this requirement nor gather information as to whether this requirement had merit. There has been a great deal of discussion by counselors at both the middle school and the high school level regarding this requirement, especially regarding yearly parental review and endorsement.

Summary

Providing students with a sense of direction and purpose as they travel through the educational system is an integral component of any school program. From the early days when teachers served as vocational guidance counselors to the present environment where trained and certified counselors serve in this capacity, the importance of helping students make a connection between school and work is evident. Chapter II provides a foundation for understanding the career development movement throughout the country, and specifically in Michigan, through a critical

review of the literature. Michigan's Career Preparation System and Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program model will be described, and a connection will be made between the two programs in regard to career education for students. The research methodology will be discussed in Chapter III. The feedback received and an analysis of these data will be presented in Chapter IV. Chapter V provides an overall summary of the research, including implications and recommendations for future research in this area.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Never before in history has the time been so right for career education proponents to move into the forefront of educational reform. During the last decade, legislation at both the state and national levels supported a wide array of efforts geared toward assisting high school students in making future postsecondary education and employment decisions (Maddy-Bernstein, 2000). The reauthorized Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998 provided funding for secondary and postsecondary career and technical education; Tech Prep (allocated under the Perkins Act) established programs that smoothed the transition for students between high school and college; the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994 encouraged states to create more coherent systems to bridge the gap between education and work for all students; and the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 replaced the Job Training Partnership Act and marked the first major job training reform movement in more than 15 years (Bailey, 1995; Hughes et al., 2001; Perry, 2002; Reese, 2002; Stone, Bae, & Aliaga, 2003). Michigan responded to these federal initiatives by developing the Career Preparation System, which was created through a 1997 Executive Order from Governor John Engler (MDE, 2002a).

In addition to the legislative interest, state and national professional associations, national leaders, practitioners, and career development experts also

focused attention on this movement. Through a collaborative effort, professionals from these groups worked together to develop the National Career Development Guidelines in 1987 (Lankard, 1991). The guidelines contained 12 competencies focused on self-knowledge, educational and occupational exploration, and career planning. In Michigan, the national guidelines were infused into the employability skills effort and were used in developing an activity guide for the middle school (Miller, 1992).

Even though career education is a priority in many school districts, far too many people still believe that the measure of good public education is in its ability to prepare students for success at institutions of higher education (Cuevas, 2001). Amazingly, for these individuals, the yardstick for educational excellence is determined by the number of students who enter colleges and universities, even though only 20% of the jobs that will be available in the future will require a 4-year degree (Cuevas, 2001).

With education models from the 1950s still used in many school districts across the country, schools are losing students as they become bored in classes where they see little relevance between classroom learning and future career goals (Robertson, 2000). Patricia McNeil, assistant secretary for the Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education, suggested that "too many high schools are falling short and the fact of the matter is, kids have changed and schools must change." She noted that sometimes it is hard to break the inertia, "but we must

have a vision for that change” (Robertson, 2000). Career education programs provide the relevance that students are seeking.

Most recently, educators have been reacting to new legislation at both the state and national levels that is calling for high levels of accountability for schools and for high levels of achievement for all students. On January 8, 2002, President Bush signed into law the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). This new law represents the most sweeping changes to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) since it was enacted in 1965 (NCLB, 2002). The purpose of NCLB is to close the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility, parental choices, and research-based reforms. The five goals of this legislation are as follows: all students will attain proficiency or better in reading and mathematics by 2013-2014; all limited English students will become proficient in English; all teachers will be highly qualified by 2005-06; all students will be educated in safe, drug-free environments; and all students will graduate from high school (NCLB Desktop Reference, 2002). States are given the latitude to develop their own standards to address the goals.

In Michigan, *Education Yes!* is the school accreditation system designed to meet the needs of the 21st century and provides the foundation for school reform movements within the state. At the same time, *Education Yes!* also serves as the vehicle to respond to the requirements of No Child Left Behind. Under *Education Yes!* schools will be graded based on a 100-point system (MDE, 2002a). School performance indicators (performance management systems, continuous improvement, curriculum alignment), indicators of instructional quality (teacher quality and

professional development, extended learning opportunities, arts education and humanities for all students, advanced coursework), and indicators of learning opportunities (family involvement, student attendance and dropout rate, 4-year education and employment plans, school facilities) will account for 33 points. Adequate yearly progress (AYPs) benchmarks were developed by the state and are used by districts in grading the 11 performance indicators. The other 67 points are determined by the level of student achievement, which will be computed by success rates of students who take the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) test (MDE, 2002b).

Within the last decade, there has been a resurrection in the area of career education and a rebirth of interest in how we are preparing students for the competitive world of the 21st century (Cuevas, 2001). At the national, state, and local levels, recent legislation is forcing schools to become much more accountable for student achievement. On a local level, however, there is a much more practical reason to focus on student achievement. If students fall between the cracks and are not contributing members of society as adults, the entire community is impacted in a negative way. K-12 education, and specifically secondary education, is being asked to address this growing concern. At the same time, there is a much greater emphasis on providing relevant learning opportunities that will give students a sense of direction and purpose as they leave the K-12 arena and explore educational and employment opportunities after high school. Fortunately for Michigan, programs have been in place for several years that address all of these concerns.

The literature review focuses on highlighting what encompasses career education programs, the various components of Michigan's Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program, and the Career Preparation System implemented by the Michigan Department of Career Development. An overview, historical perspective with related programs, and exemplary models will be showcased in this chapter.

History and Foundation of Career Education

The roots of career education can be traced into post World War II (often referred to as "vocational guidance"). However, it was not until January 23, 1971, when it was introduced by the U.S. Office of Education to the annual convention of the National Association of Secondary School Principals in Houston, that career education became a priority in education (Herr, 1977). It was 3 years later, however, before the Office of Education officially adopted a comprehensive policy statement, which defined career education as "the totality of experiences through which one learns about and prepares to engage in work as part of her or his way of living" (Hoyt, 1974). By the time the Office of Education published this definition, 60% of the states' departments of education had already defined career education for themselves (Herr, 1977). In some instances, these definitions were very similar to the one developed by the Office of Education. In other instances, the definitions were more broadly conceived and were designed to reflect the needs and wants of their constituents.

With the passage of the School-to-Work Opportunities Act in 1994, Congress again brought career education to the forefront of educational reform. This Act provided both a philosophical framework and an infusion of federal funds to bolster initiatives in states and local communities (Steinberg, 1999). According to Steinberg,

The impetus for the school-to-work movement was generated by a growing sense of public alarm about the large number of young people who were floundering both during and after high school. Early efforts focused on connecting learning in and out of school and on ensuring that students had mentors who would help them find their way to college and careers. Consortia of educators and employers started youth apprenticeships and other work-based learning opportunities with the goal of opening doors to active learning for students whose motivation and interest were languishing in conventional classrooms. (p. 2)

Components of Career Education

Across the United States, career preparation systems are becoming integrated into many high school curriculums. Although the overall premise of providing career connections for students is the same, the components of that system may be quite varied and run the gamut from offering job shadowing experiences on a limited basis, to developing actual academic career magnet/career academy schools (Hughes et al., 2001; Maxwell & Rubin, 2000).

One career education initiative that has been especially successful is in the area of work-based learning, which provides students with a connection between what is learned in the classroom with the realities of the workplace (Hamilton & Hamilton, 1997; Jackson & Wirt, 1996; Naylor, 1997). With the renewed emphasis on connecting school and work, the good news is that there has been an increase in

employer participation by nearly 50% between December 1995 and June 1996; the bad news is that it still accounts for fewer than 1% of U.S. employers nationwide (Potosky, 1999). Research indicates that work-based learning excites and motivates most students, which has led to improved academic performance, an increase in graduation rates, and an increase in post-secondary enrollment (Jackson & Wirt, 1996). Traditional vocational and technical classes also help students make a connection with careers. In a study of students from the class of 1993 who enrolled in Montgomery County's vocational and technology classes, it was discovered that 8 years later those students were typically making more money than their classmates (those who were not enrolled in the vocational and technical classes) and were more certain about career choices (Perez-Rivas, 2001).

Work-based learning involves a variety of activities that can be identified along a continuum from short, introductory experiences to longer-term commitments by both the employer and the student (Jackson & Wirt, 1996). Although there are numerous examples of work-based learning programs, Naylor's (1997) description of the various components was one of the most comprehensive, and also reflects the current career preparation movement in Michigan. She concluded that work-based learning may occur in the following forms: contracted instruction, cooperative education (co-op), school-to-apprenticeship/registered apprenticeship, career exploration, service learning, career internships, career academies (career magnet schools), school-based enterprises, and clinical experience programs. To better understand each of the components, a brief description is provided.

Contracted instruction. Business, industry, or a private educational agency will develop formal written agreements with public education to provide instruction and training for a specific occupation. The training and instruction would be provided at the business site. Students who participate in contracted instruction typically attend high school for part of the day and then travel to the contracted site to receive training in a very specific career area. An example of a contracted program is the agreement between local school districts and a school of cosmetology (Naylor, 1997).

Cooperative education. Cooperative education (co-op) programs combine classroom instruction with paid work experience (Naylor, 1997). There are formal training agreements and guidelines that are established for this program, and students receive course credit for both their work and classroom experiences (Stone et al., 2003). Cooperative educational experiences are one of the oldest types of work-based learning programs in the United States (Hamilton & Hamilton, 1997).

School-to-work apprenticeship/registered apprenticeship. Youth apprenticeship programs are the most elaborate of all of the work-based programs (Hamilton & Hamilton, 1997). Apprenticeship programs are relationships between an employer and employee during which the paid worker, or apprentice, learns an occupation in a structured program jointly sponsored by employers and labor unions (Stone et al., 2003). Students are registered through the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training (BAT) and must follow guidelines established by the industry (Naylor, 1997).

Career exploration. Career exploration involves job shadowing and/or worksite mentors (Naylor, 1997). Career exploration is an important component of any work-based learning program. School-based career exploration programs can start as early as kindergarten and can continue through graduation from high school. Examples of career exploration activities may include classroom speakers, field trip experiences, Internet searches, and job shadowing placements (Hamilton & Hamilton, 1997).

Service learning. Service learning programs combine meaningful community service with academic learning, personal growth, and civic responsibility (Naylor, 1997).

Career internships. Students who participate in career internships spend time in a business, industry, or other organization and gain insight and direct experience in specific occupations (Naylor, 1997). Workplace activities may include sample tasks across different units or may focus on special projects. These experiences are either paid or unpaid (Stone et al., 2003).

Career academies (career magnet schools). The career academy constitutes a “school-within-a-school” and coordinates curriculum and activities around a single occupation, profession, or industry (Maxwell & Rubin, 2000). Career academies are gaining popularity around the country and have been quite successful. In a longitudinal study conducted by Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC), it was discovered that academies were especially beneficial to students who were at-risk for dropping out (American Youth Policy Forum [AYPF], 2000). Stern

(2001) identified three distinct characteristics of career academies. First, academic and technical instructors work together to provide instruction to students. Second, a college-preparatory curriculum is intertwined with a career theme, such as health or business. Academic coursework is designed to meet graduation and college entrance requirements and are linked with career-focused courses. In addition, work readiness skills are weaved throughout the curriculum in both academic and career-related classes. Third, career academies form partnerships with employers to make the real-world connection between what is taught in the classroom and the reality of the workplace. Employers support the academies through participation in advisory committees, serving as mentors for students, providing paid and unpaid work experiences, and offering financial support when needed. The career academy is the most well-developed school-to-work program model focused on school-based learning (Maxwell & Rubin, 2000).

School-based enterprises. School-based enterprise programs are designed to expose students to a business enterprise offered through the school system (Naylor, 1997). In school-based enterprises, goods or services are produced by students as part of their school program (Stone et al., 2003).

Another form of work-based education is work-based tech prep, which Bragg (1995) distinguishes from traditional tech prep programs on the basis of the higher visibility of employers. In work-based tech prep models, employers help develop formal plans linking students' school-based and work-based learning directly to their

career goals, they provide formal work-based experiences, and they sponsor mentors and coaches.

In addition to those programs that Naylor (1997) described, there are other work-based learning initiatives being implemented across the country. One example is the concept of contextual learning, which seeks to reconnect work and education, curriculum and instruction, different disciplines, and students of various levels and talents (Bolt & Swartz, 1997). Contextual learning develops concepts and skills holistically instead of as fragments, thus students understand that they must take responsibility for their own learning (Maxwell & Rubin, 2000). This educational approach has been successfully adopted by the “High Schools That Work” project being utilized in a number of states. This program provides all students a stronger academic preparation, integrated academic and technical skills, and career decision-making competencies (Hughes et al., 2001).

Another district that has been very successful in promoting the concept of contextual learning is David Douglas High School in Portland, Oregon (Schoelkopf, 1995). When focusing on career development, the leadership at David Douglas understood that the role of the teacher must change and that they no longer serve as the “subject specialist” only. They must collaborate with their colleagues to offer course content in an integrated, contextual way.

Since the very beginning, educators have been faced with answering the question “Why do we have to learn this?” An evolving body of research in cognitive science concludes that students are better able to learn, remember, and apply

knowledge and skills that they think are important, they learn by doing, that they learn in a social context, and that are authentic and situated in some real-life context of relevance to the learner. It is the connection between the curriculum and the workplace tasks that are key to a successful school-to-work program (Rhoder & French, 1999).

According to contextual learning theory, learning occurs best when students process new information or knowledge in such a way that it makes sense to them in their own frames of reference (their own inner worlds of memory, experience, and response). This approach to teaching and learning assumes that the mind seeks meaning in context, and that it does this by searching for relationships that make sense and appears useful (Hull, 2000). Contextual learning theory encourages educators to choose and/or design learning environments that incorporate as many different forms of experiences as possible—social, cultural, physical, and psychological—in working toward the desired learning outcomes. According to Hull, contextual learners represent 60% of the student body and are sometimes referred to as the “neglected majority” or “forgotten half.” Given this high percentage of students who are viewed as contextual learners, it would behoove educators to provide learning experiences that addresses the needs of these students.

The need to provide students with a focus and to offer a school with a vision is at the heart of a career preparation system (Clark, 1999; Shore & Beirne, 1997; Sullivan, 1999). Exemplary models can be found around the country. As mentioned previously, one of the most dramatic and innovative components in career education

has been the development of career academy/career magnet high schools. The foundation for these types of schools is that they recruit students by offering to prepare them for college, while at the same time providing initial exposure to a particular career of interest such as health, technology, or agriculture. Students attending career academy/magnet schools receive academic instruction and skills training simultaneously (Maxwell & Rubin, 2000).

Although there are numerous examples of successful career academies across the nation, the Bergen County Technical Schools' Career Academies in Hackensack, New Jersey demonstrates the breadth and scope of educational opportunities that can be offered to students (AYPF, 1999). The Bergen County Technical Schools system is comprised of a number of vocational schools, including seven career academies. Students who attend the career academies have strong academic skills and plan to pursue a 4-year degree. In addition to the academies, there are also two technical education centers that offer Tech Prep 2+2 programs, which combine secondary and postsecondary education. Students attending the center spend half of their day at the local high school receiving academic instruction, and then half of the day at the Center, where the focus is on technical training. There are also programs offered through two vocational high schools for students with educational disabilities. The seven academies were designed to increase the academic content of the more traditional vocational education high school. As the program grew and began experiencing success, the academies became more selective in regard to student enrollment. At the present time, there are 780 students enrolled in the seven

academies, which are The Academy for the Advancement of Science and Technology (begun in 1992), The Academy for Business and Computer Technology (1997), The Academy of Engineering and Design Technology (1997), The Academy for Medical Science Technology (1997), The Culinary Arts Academy (1998), The Power and Transportation Academy (1998), and The Visual Arts and Graphic Communications Academy (1998). The academy school year is 192 days and students report for 8.5 hours per day. The majority of the work is designed to be project-based and linked to each student's individual career field of interest. All of the academies have a core curriculum that is followed. For example, students are required to take 4 years of college preparatory English and 4 years of a foreign language. All students take college preparatory math, and all take biology, chemistry, and physics. In addition to social studies, arts and music, computer science, technology, and physical education, students fill in with electives and high level math and science courses targeted to their chosen career field. As a graduation requirement, students are required to participate in a senior internship experience, which provides an on-site learning experience in their chosen career field. Student interns report directly to their internship every Wednesday during the academic year for a full business day. They are assigned a mentor who works directly with the student. Although this program is very selective, the academic rigor of the academy has influenced the entire community. Parents and students are pressuring the lower grades to increase academic standards so that students will be prepared to handle the intense academic focus promoted at the seven academies.

Other studies conducted also document varying degrees of success. In 1993, Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (2002) initiated a 10-year longitudinal evaluation for the purpose of providing policymakers and educators with reliable evidence on whether the career academy approach truly improved achievement levels of students. The findings of this study conclude that although academies enhance the high school experience of their students, the positive effects did not translate into changes in high school graduation rates or transitions to postsecondary education and jobs. Positive findings include higher levels of satisfaction with overall school experience. For students who entered the programs at high risk for dropping out, the academies improved attendance rates and decreased the likelihood that the student would drop out.

In research conducted by Allen et al. (1999) on career magnet high schools, the data collected on 9,176 students who enrolled in such schools are quite favorable. It was discovered that graduates of the career magnet schools are more likely to have chosen a college major in their first 1 or 2 years after graduation, are less likely to engage in high-risk behaviors (smoking, drinking, fighting), have more parental support, and have a better developed career identity. They reported that their high school education enabled them to become "really good at something."

In Arizona, 2,131 10th grade students were surveyed following participation in 1 full year of school-to-work activities. Findings indicated 39.8% of the students who participated had a definite idea of what they wanted to do in the future; 54.5%

had some idea of what they wanted to do. Overall, a majority of the students rated all career activities as “somewhat helpful” (Larson & Vandegrift, 1997).

The U.S. Office of Career Education sponsored two mini-conferences for the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of career education programs. Evaluative studies were conducted (80 grants provided to conduct the research) and it was found that students who participated in career education projects achieved gains in occupational information, attitudes toward work, career maturity, knowledge of the world of work, and reality about their career planning (Enderlein, 1977). It was also discovered that when career education concepts were infused into existing curriculums, this infusion had a positive impact on academic growth.

Another method of offering career education opportunities for students (and one that does not involve total restructuring) is the implementation of a career pathway model. In 1997, the states of Missouri and Iowa developed comprehensive guidebooks to assist educators in implementing career pathways systems (*Career Pathways Resource Guide*, 1997; Cox, Desborough, & Stapleton, 1997). Since this time, numerous states (including Michigan) have begun providing local districts with similar materials. The pathway approach in Michigan organizes the curriculum and related occupations into six separate career paths (i.e., Arts & Communication; Business & Management; Health Sciences; Human Services; Natural Resources; and Engineering, Manufacturing, & Technology). Students are able to determine a career pathway of interest and then select various work-based learning opportunities that are focused on that particular pathway. Career pathway programs have become

increasingly popular over the last several years, and a large number of school districts throughout Michigan are becoming career pathway schools.

Michigan's Career Preparation System

During the last several years, there has been an increased awareness in providing students with a sense of direction and purpose as they travel through the K-12 arena, and this has been addressed throughout the nation in various ways. In response to this trend, Michigan developed the Career Preparation System, which is a system designed to give students a jump-start on their futures through integrating career exploration with academic preparation. It is based on the premise that "sooner or later, most people seek employment" (MDE, 2003). According to the Michigan Department of Career Development, "the mission of Michigan's Career Preparation System is that all students completing the Michigan education system will have the necessary academic, technical, and work behavior skills for success in a career of choice and in lifelong learning" (MDE, 2004). Although the Career Preparation System has several components, the mainstay is Career Pathways, which are six broad groupings of careers that have similar characteristics. Each pathway includes examples of careers within the broad pathway, related high school courses, level of education required beyond high school, specific occupational information, and related personal characteristics related to success. Although there are many ways to organize occupations within pathways, Michigan has selected six broad pathways. Those pathways are:

1. **Arts and Communication:** careers related to the humanities and the visual, performing, literary, and media arts.
2. **Business, Management, Marketing, and Technology:** careers related to all aspects of business including accounting, business administration, finance, information processing and marketing.
3. **Engineering/Manufacturing and Industrial Technology:** careers related to technologies necessary to design, develop, install, or maintain physical systems.
4. **Health Sciences:** careers related to the promotion of health as well as the treatment of injuries, conditions, and disease.
5. **Human Services:** includes careers in childcare, civil service, education, hospitality, and the social services.
6. **Natural Resources and Agriscience:** careers related to natural resources, agriculture, and the environment.

During the 2000–01 school year, more than 60% of the high schools in Michigan have structured their teaching and learning by the six pathways (MDE, 2003).

History of Michigan's Career Preparation System

In 1994, Congress passed the School-to-Work Opportunities Act, which served as the impetus for developing career programs throughout the country. As career preparation evolved (first school-to-work and then school-to-career), Michigan created the Career Preparation System through amendments in the 1997–98 School

Aid Act (Public Act 93) and Executive Order (1997-15) by Governor John Engler (MDE, 2003). The intent of the Career Preparation System was to give Michigan students a jump-start to future careers by exposing them to various career exploration opportunities throughout their K–12 education. In developing the model, three goals were identified (MDCD, 2002):

1. To ensure that career preparation is fully integrated into the Michigan education system.
2. To ensure that all students, with their parents, are prepared to make informed choices about their careers.
3. To ensure that all students have the types and levels of skills, knowledge, and performance valued and required.

In responding to this Act, the Michigan Department of Career Development designed broad components and activity categories that provided the foundation for the system. Most of the identified components and activities identified can be found in other educational initiatives. The components and related activity categories (in parentheses) were:

1. Academic Preparation (career contextual learning).
2. Career Development (career pathways, comprehensive guidance and counseling, career awareness/exploration, career assessment, and education development plans).
3. Workplace Readiness (career and employability skills and technology education).

4. Professional and Technical Education (career and technical education, tech prep, community college, college/university, military, and technical/trade/propriety schools.

5. Work-Based Learning (work-based learning techniques).

6. Accountability (data/evaluation /accountability).

7. School Improvement (school improvement planning).

When the career preparation grant was introduced, nine broad components were identified within the grant. The components were derived directly from the 17 activity categories listed above. Two of the activity categories, Career Pathways and Education Development Plans, were required in order to receive funding. The remaining activity categories were optional. For each category, specific benchmarks were developed that provided a framework for work within each category. In addition to the two categories that are required (Career Pathway and Education Development Plans), districts also had the option to select one or more of the following categories: comprehensive guidance and counseling, career awareness and exploration, career assessment, career contextual learning, career and employability skills, technology education, and work-based learning. For each of the nine categories, there were very specific benchmarks that were required to be implemented by the end of the 2004 school year. Since two of the categories were required, these will be examined in greater detail.

Career Pathway Requirements

The Michigan Department of Career Development designed standards to receive funds through the Career Preparation System (MDCD, 2002). The career pathway standard for this category follows (Benchmark Assessment Component for 2001–2004):

The participating education agency board of education or designees will have adopted the six Career Pathways approved by the Michigan Department of Career Development to provide the structure for making meaningful connections between education and the world of work. Alternatives to the six Career Pathways must assure the number of Career Pathways chosen: 1) represent the entire spectrum of careers available to students entering the workforce, 2) reflect the full range of work requirements (entry level to highly specialized), and 3) reflect the full range of educational requirements (high school graduation to advanced degree).

For this category, there were four required benchmarks:

1. The local board of education or designee adopted the six Career Pathways or an equivalent alternative that meets the state standard.
2. Ensures that school buildings within the district utilized the Career Pathways concept adopted by the district as evidenced by their curriculum plans/guides.
3. Ensures that all students have opportunities to learn about careers within all pathways as evidenced by curriculum plans/guides.
4. Ensures that the Career Pathways are used as a framework for:
 - a. organizing career contextual teaching/learning experiences as evidenced in curriculum plans used by staff.
 - b. providing systematic career planning and preparation as evidenced by Career Pathway use in the district's counseling and guidance program, Education Development Plans, career awareness/exploration activities, and work-based learning.

- c. aligning high school courses into the chosen Career Pathways to reflect which courses are needed to prepare for careers as evidenced in documents such as student handbooks and course selection guides.

Each year, districts are required to submit detailed end-of-year reports that reflect their current status. Schools respond numerically using a 6-point scale, ranging from 0, no implementation planned, to number 5, evaluation/improvement. By the year 2004, it was anticipated that districts would progress to level number 5.

Education Development Plan (EDP) Requirements

The second required category was Education Development Plans (EDPs). The standard for this category follows (MDCD, 2002):

The participating education agency board of education or designee adopted for use in the district an Educational Development Plan (EDP) to document student educational and career plans that encompasses the following six basic EDP elements approved by the Michigan Department of Career Development as part of Career Preparation: 1) personal information, 2) career pathway goals, 3) educational/training goals, 4) career assessment results, 5) plan of action, and 6) parent consultation/endorsement (under age 18).

For this category, there were four required benchmarks:

1. The local board of education or designee has adopted Education Development Plans (EDP) that meets the state standards.
2. Ensures that all middle school and high school buildings within the district utilize the Education Development Plan document and process adopted by the district as evidenced by student records in each building.
3. Ensures that all students are engaged in developing initial EDPs before leaving the 8th grade level as evidenced by student records.
4. Ensures that all high school students review and have opportunities to revise or update their EDPs at least annually to reflect changes in

career decisions for use in selecting courses and in choosing postsecondary options, as evidenced by guidance/counseling plans and student records.

Again, the same 6-point scale is used by districts when completing the end-of-year final reports for this grant.

Career Pathways in Michigan Schools: A Success Story

In December 2002, the Michigan Department of Career Development prepared a monograph to tout the success of Michigan's Career Preparation System (MDCD, 2002). Three districts, Berrien County Intermediate School District, Glen Lake School District, and Williamston Community Schools, were featured in this monograph. Based upon the findings, evidence was provided that students who were involved in Career Preparation initiatives have better attendance, higher grade point averages, enroll in more challenging courses, enroll more often in career-technical education courses, and have an increase in postsecondary enrollment (Rudy & Rudy, 2001).

In a report prepared by Michigan State University in September 2002, Neumark and Allen also discovered that Michigan's Career Preparation System is succeeding. In 1998–99, 90% of Michigan school districts participated in voluntary Career Preparation programs, and more than 60 high schools in the state during the 2000–01 school year were in the process of implementing Career Pathway programs. In addition, 88% of the school districts committed to implementing Education

Development Plan for each secondary student and developing a Career Pathways curriculum by 2004.

Although these reports are encouraging for Michigan youth, findings from other national studies are inconclusive as to positive student outcomes in relation to career development initiatives (Dykeman, Chen, et al., 2003; Maxwell & Rubin, 2000; Stone & Aliaga, 2003). Several research studies from the Career Education era to today's comprehensive school-to-work movement have not established a strong connection between career development initiatives and academic achievement (Dykeman, Chen, et al., 2003). Other national studies, however, indicate that there is a connection (Baker & Popowicz, 1983; Evans & Burck, 1992; Hoyt, 1980; Hughes et al., 2001; Omvig, 1975; Schmidt & Dykeman, 1979). Thus, the conclusion from most researchers is that, although career development programs are beneficial, there are enough sufficient inconsistencies to warrant further study. One recommendation is that large, macro-level, cross-sectional and longitudinal studies are replaced with evidence-based research methods (Dykeman, Chen, et al., 2003). As one can see, there are numerous challenges for individuals studying the effectiveness of career development programs, and evidence to either support or negate the impact can be found.

In Michigan, however, the findings of the three districts highlighted in the monograph indicate positive results. Although all three districts have some very subtle differences in their approaches, they all used the framework developed by the Michigan Department of Career Development in designing their programs. A six

pathway model—curriculum integration, career contextual learning, purposeful and focused planning, teacher and administrator commitment, sufficient resources, and a time for teacher collaboration and professional development—was an established practice in these districts. Another underlying factor was that teachers felt they were a part of the process, thus continually striving to improve their practices (MDCD, 2002). The differences evolved around meeting the individual needs of the community and their perceptions.

Michigan's Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program

In the fall of 1990, a grass roots effort was started for the purpose of developing a comprehensive guidance and counseling program for Michigan (MSCA, 1997). Practitioners from the Michigan School Counselor Association (MSCA), practicing school counselors, counselor educators, and guidance administrators formed a committee to develop a program that provided a structure and framework for counselors when working with students. This committee was given the responsibility to develop a comprehensive guidance and counseling program that addressed the following:

1. It is specific enough to provide clear guidelines for school counselors to follow in developing comprehensive, developmental/preventive guidance and counseling programs for their schools.

2. It is general enough to allow school counselors to develop standards and benchmarks which reflect the unique needs and characteristics of the student populations being served.

3. It provides a structure for school counselors to use in explaining the purposes of the guidance and counseling program and the functions of counselors to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community members.

4. It provides a framework which would enable school counseling programs to demonstrate accountability.

The program that was developed by this committee put an increased emphasis on the developmental and preventive assistance that counselors can provide versus the traditional and remedial services that historically have been viewed as the responsibility of the counselor (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000). The preventive aspect in counseling is especially important as today's students have greater opportunities to be exposed to harmful lifestyles at an earlier age than ever before (Dunn, 2001).

As stated in Michigan's Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program notebook (MSCA, 1997), the program is defined as "a systematically designed set of components, which includes a counseling curriculum, responsive services, individual planning, and systems support that empowers professional school counselors to assist students in meeting their academic, personal/social, and career needs from kindergarten through grade 12." The program is designed to address the needs of all students in Michigan, and is organized into three content areas: career planning and exploration, knowledge of self and others, and educational/career-technical

development. The delivery of the program is through four programmatic components: guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive service, and systems support. Michigan's Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program has three major components: content, structural, programmatic. Each of these areas will be described in further detail later in the literature review.

Historical Perspective

Career counseling has a "long and illustrious path," dating back to the contributions of Frank Parsons, who is generally conceded to be the father of the vocational guidance movement and the architect of the vocational counseling process (Guindon & Hanna, 2002; Herr, 2001; Whiston, 2003). During the late 1800s and early 1900s, guidance counseling in schools evolved from an emphasis on guidance for vocations to a more holistic education as guidance model (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000; Maddy-Bernstein, 2000). During the vocational guidance era, classroom teachers were typically appointed to serve in these roles in addition to full-time teaching positions (Gibson, 1997; Gysbers & Henderson, 2000, p. 5). The primary goal of the vocational guidance counselor was to expose students to the world of work. As the shift in philosophies evolved, a greater emphasis was placed on educating the whole child, and from this perspective, "guidance was seen as an emphasis on the individual during the educational process" (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000, p. 11). Classroom teachers who provided vocational guidance were slowly replaced with individuals who received specific training as a school counselor.

However, it was not until 1946 with the passage of the George-Barden Act that there was a significant impact on the growth and development of guidance in schools (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000). This Act specified that funds could be used to support guidance activities in a variety of situations and settings and could be used for four purposes: the maintenance of a state program of supervision, the reimbursement of salaries of counselor-trainers, research in the field of guidance, and reimbursement of salaries of local guidance supervisors and counselors (Smith, 1951). Then, in 1958, another important event occurred that impacted guidance in schools. The National Defense Education Act of 1958, under Title V, provided funds for two major programs. Part A provided grant funds to states to establish testing programs statewide; Part B provided grant funds to develop training institutes to prepare individuals to be secondary school counselors. The Act was then expanded in the 1960s to include support for counselors at the elementary and junior high school levels as well. Thus, support for guidance and counseling programs K-12 was established.

Beginning in the 1960s, but particularly in the 1970s, there was an increased interest in career development theory, research, and practice as well as in career guidance and career education (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000). Guidance models sprang up all across the country, but on July 1, 1971, the University of Missouri-Columbia was awarded a U.S. Office of Education grant to assist each state in developing models or guides for implementing career guidance, counseling, and placement programs in local schools. In the end, all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the

District of Columbia were involved in this project, and by 1974, 44 states had developed some type of guide or model for career guidance, counseling, and placement. A manual was developed to assist other states in developing and implementing guidance programs (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000, p. 21). In 1998, however, a nationwide study conducted by Sink and MacDonald (1998) determined that only 24 states had produced some type of comprehensive guidance and counseling model. An additional 17 states were either developing a model or were allowing individual districts to create guidance programs. The one common element that was missing in all of the models was the lack of a developmental emphasis, including such components as personal-social, cognitive, and career development. These components were not integrated in any thorough or systematic manner (Dykeman, Chen, et al., 2003).

Between the 1980s and 1990s, work continued in putting comprehensive guidance programs into practice. In addition to the Missouri model, the states of Alaska, Idaho, New Hampshire, Utah, Nebraska, Nevada, Texas, Colorado, Massachusetts, and South Dakota all developed similar models for use by school districts throughout the country to use when developing comprehensive guidance programs. Michigan's initial work in this area began in the fall of 1990 with a joint effort between different constituents (practitioners from the Michigan School Counselor Association, all practicing school counselors, counselor educators, and guidance administrators). This joint effort culminated in the Michigan Comprehensive

Guidance and Counseling Program model in 1992, with a revision being completed in 1997 (MSCA, 1997).

According to Gysbers and Henderson (2000), it is important to understand the history of guidance so that we have a better appreciation for the three premises that the comprehensive guidance and counseling program are built upon. The three premises are that guidance is a program, that guidance programs are developmental and comprehensive, and that guidance programs feature a team approach (p. 26).

Understanding and appreciating these beliefs and programs supports the concept that guidance is indeed an integral program that supports school improvement efforts.

According to Lewis (2001), career counseling has long been considered a significant domain of the counseling profession, thus formalizing structures to connect the counselors with career preparation is a worthy endeavor.

Components of Michigan's Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program

Michigan's Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program is organized around three major components: content, structure, and programmatic. In order to understand the model, the three components are described in detail.

Content Components

The content components consist of three separate areas (MSCA, 1997). Area I is career planning and exploration (MSCA, 1997, p. 11). In this area, counselors work with students in exploring, planning, and developing career awareness. Students

develop an understanding of how gender relates to school and work. They plan high school classes and make college decisions. Area II addresses an understanding of knowledge of self and others (p. 11). This area focuses on leading students through activities that focus on such areas as an understanding and acceptance of self, making decisions, understanding and getting along with others, knowing the affects of drugs and alcohol, and learning about family responsibilities. The last area, Area III, addresses educational/career-technical development (p. 11). Counselors work with students to improve study and basic learning skills, learning about school and jobs, planning for high school and beyond, preparing for the job search and finding employment, decision making, and career-technical selection and training.

Structural Components

The structural components provide the overall framework for designing a comprehensive guidance and counseling program (MSCA, 1997, p. 12). In this design, six areas are addressed.

Definition and Mission Statement describes the competencies students will possess as a result of being involved in the counseling and guidance program (MSCA, 1997, p. 12).

Program facilities include minimum requirements for a guidance center. The facility needs to be accessible to all students, including those with handicaps. Each counselor should have a private office that is properly equipped and sound-proofed for meeting with individual students. It is also recommended that there be a meeting

room available for both small and large group discussions. There should be adequate storage space as well as an area available to display guidance resources (MSCA, 1997, p. 12).

School and community advisory committee should be established to provide support for the program. The committee should include school board members, school staff, parents, students and community members (MSCA, 1997, p. 12).

Resources need to be available that support all of the guidance activities. Equipment and materials, staff expertise, and community resources need to be available (MSCA, 1997, p. 13).

Staffing organizational chart for the district is recommended. It should include a listing of the endorsed school counselors and their student ratio compared to state standards, secretarial and clerical support personnel assigned to counselors, and the relationship between the counselor and administration. It is recommended that a head counselor or guidance department head or chair be identified if there is more than one counselor in a building. This structure facilitates program planning, coordination, implementation, and evaluation more effectively (MSCA, 1997, p. 13).

Budgets should be established annually to ensure program support. The budget should include enough funds to cover expenses related to materials, equipment, and professional development opportunities (MSCA, 1997, p. 13).

Programmatic Components

There are four programmatic components in the Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program. These components consist of the guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and systems support (MSCA, 1997, p. 14). When developing the model, the committee also established a recommendation as to the amount of time counselors should spend in each of the four programmatic component areas. This recommended distribution for high school counselors follows:

Guidance Curriculum	15–25% of time
Individual Planning	25–35% of time
Responsive Services	30–40% of time
Systems Support	15–20% of time
Other	0% of time

The Guidance Curriculum consists of structured developmental experiences that are presented beginning in kindergarten and continuing through 12th grade. This curriculum is designed around the three content areas that were previously described: career planning and exploration, knowledge of self and others, and educational/career-technical development (MSCA, 1997, p. 15). The guidance notebook provides actual lesson plans and activities for counselors to use when working with students.

Individual Planning consists of those activities that helps students plan, monitor and manage their own learning (MSCA, 1997, p. 23). Personal and career development is also part of individual planning. In this area, counselors plan and

direct students when evaluating their educational, occupational, and personal goals. Individual planning is implemented through individual appraisal, individual advisement, and placement. Discussion topics and activities in this area would focus on such areas as career awareness and exploration, 4-year plan development (Education Development Plans), plans from school-to-school or school-to-work, course selection, and financial aid information and planning. The Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program notebook also provides sample lesson plans and suggested activities.

Responsive services consist of activities designed to meet the immediate needs of students. These services are provided through consultation, personal counseling, crisis counseling, and referral. It is recommended that high school counselors spend between 30–40 % of their time in the responsive services areas (MSCA, 1997, p. 29).

Management activities that establish, maintain, and enhance the total guidance and counseling program makes up the Systems Support area. Professional development, staff and community relations, advisory committees, community outreach, program management and operations and research and development are activities that support this component. High school counselors should spend between 15–20 % of their time in the systems support area (MSCA, 1997, p. 33).

In 1999, Gysbers and Henderson (2000) conducted a survey of 430 Missouri school counselors for the purpose of determining the extent to which their district had implemented a district-wide comprehensive guidance program. The survey results indicated that 80% to 96% of the school counselors reported the major components

were in place and that they had the means available to carry out the program. Many thought that they experienced changes in their roles, but that nonguidance tasks had not been reduced or eliminated.

In Alabama, secondary school counselors and principals were surveyed to determine their agreement or disagreement in relation to how essential each program element is in relation to the Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program (Robinson, 1998). A survey consisting of 50 Likert-type items was mailed to 130 principals and 200 counselors. The results indicated that no significant differences in the perceptions of principals and counselors regarding essential elements in a guidance curriculum, but significant differences were found in their perceptions in regard to individual planning, responsive services, and system support. The conclusions drawn are that career development interventions do not harm students or inhibit their academic progress, and that these interventions contribute to a variety of positive student outcomes, including career planning, career decision making, job search skills, and even increased academic performance (Dykeman, Chen, et al., 2003).

In a study conducted by Ballbe ter Maat (2000) on counselors in Northern Virginia, it was discovered that counselors level of education, years of experience as a counselor, and prior teaching experience did not appear to significantly affect the way they spend time during the day. Most of the counselors indicated that they would like to spend more time in the area of individual counseling. They also felt that they did not have enough time to spend in career planning with students.

Summary

As one can see, career education programs have been sustained throughout the years as they have proven to be effective in assisting students in planning for the future. Although the names of the programs are changed as new legislation was introduced, the heart of career education has always remained the same. Chapter II highlighted the various career education initiatives that have taken place throughout the years. Often fueled by legislative acts, career education continues to remain a focal point for school reform efforts nationwide. In Michigan, the Career Preparation System and the Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program are two programs that support career education for students. Descriptions of the various career education components as well as introducing success stories nationwide were showcased in this chapter. The following chapter begins reviewing the data collected for this study.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHDOLOGY

The breadth and scope of Michigan's Career Preparation System have the potential to impact high school counselors, teachers, building principals, and students. Whether or not these groups have been affected, and to what degree as perceived by counselors, was the basis for this study.

To date, the perceptions of counselors on the impact of Michigan's Career Preparation System have not been assessed. Since a number of the initiatives were directly related to the work they do each day, their perceptions were important as to whether this program had (a) impacted their job responsibilities, and (b) made any difference in student career preparedness. In addition to responding to their level of involvement, they were also surveyed as to the level of involvement in these initiatives of the high school principal and teacher. A 13-question survey was designed to gather this information from a randomly selected group of high school counselors in Michigan.

This study provided descriptive research, reporting out frequencies, averages, and percentages (Glatthorn, 1998). Measures of central tendency are used with descriptive statistics and are designed to describe the central part of the distribution created, identifying where most scores appear to group, cluster, or fall together. The three measures of central tendency include the mean, the median, and the mode

(Carroll & Carroll, 2002). The most commonly used indicator of central tendency is the mean, or the arithmetic average. The median is the point below which half the scores lie. The mode is the score, measure, or category that occurs most often (Krathwohl, 1998). According to Walonick (1998), the average person understands percentages and means, thus the descriptive research approach is best suited for this study. The results from this survey may generate a great deal of interest from numerous groups, which means that the average person must be able to understand, interpret, and perhaps react to the information presented.

Research Methods

There are three primary methods of conducting research: (1) survey, (2) observation, and (3) experiment (Walonick, 1998). Since the survey method lends itself to the types of studies typically used in education, it was selected as the method for this study. The survey research design was also selected as it drew responses from a larger population than what could be compiled with the observation or experiment methods.

The 13-question survey developed for this study consisted of three distinct sections. Part I asked questions about the participants' (counselors') backgrounds and contained nominal and ordinal questions. Question 1 asked the participants to circle the number of years of experience as a high school counselor. Five-year ranges from 0 to 25 and up were shown, with the participants circling the range that reflected their years of experience. This question was asked to determine whether or not the number

of years of experience a subject had made a difference in their perceptions as to Michigan's Career Preparation System. Questions 2 through 6 pertained to the size of the high school they worked in, whether or not they had a secondary teachable major, the areas of their teachable major (either general education or career-technical education backgrounds), teaching experience in their major area, and any leadership positions they held in either the Michigan School Counselor Association or the Michigan Counselor Association.

Part II focused on selected benchmarks from Michigan's Career Preparation System and contained nominal and interval questions. Question 7 asked participants to respond to five different questions pertaining specifically to the career pathway benchmarks, which required either a yes or no response. These questions were taken directly from the requirements outlined in the Michigan Career Preparation grant. Question 8 addressed the benchmarks required of grant recipients in the area of Education Development Plans (EDPs). Again, yes or no responses were required for the three statements in Question 8. Question 9 used a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Low Involvement to High Involvement. This question asked the participants, from their perspective, to identify the level of involvement of high school principals, teachers, and counselors in implementing Michigan's Career Preparation System, specifically Career Pathways and Education Development Plans (EDPs). Questions 10 and 11 also used a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Not Important to Important. Question 10 asked the counselors' perception as to the impact Michigan's Career Pathways component has had in helping students make future career plans. Question

11 asked for their perceptions as to the importance of Education Development Plans (EDPs) for students.

Part III consisted of two questions pertaining to Michigan's Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program. Nominal and ratio questions were asked in this section. Question 12 asked the counselors to indicate by either circling yes or no (nominal data) as to whether their Board of Education adopted the Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program. Question 13 asked the participants to estimate the amount of time (estimated by percentages) they spend in each of the programmatic components in the model (ratio data). The four programmatic components consist of (1) guidance curriculum, (2) individual planning, (3) responsive services, and (4) systems support. A fifth option, nonguidance activities, was included in determining the percentages as oftentimes counselors are given responsibilities outside of the traditional counseling roles (lunchroom duty supervision, filling in for absent teachers, etc.). It was anticipated that the response time for the participants to complete the entire survey would be less than 10 minutes.

The survey, along with a cover letter personally addressed to each of the administrators, was sent to the 53 regional Career-Technical Educator (CTE) administrators in Michigan. The cover letter provided specific directions to the administrators on how to select counselors to participate in this study. They were instructed to alphabetically select, using counselors' last names, the first 10 counselors from their region. To ensure complete anonymity and confidentiality, the surveys were not coded in any way. The alphabetic approach to selecting the

participants also eliminated any bias that the administrator may have had on selecting one counselor over another. Once the surveys were delivered by the CTE administrator, their involvement was no longer needed. One concern with conducting this survey was that the participants could feel coerced into completing the survey through the association with their CTE administrator. This concern was eliminated since the CTE administrators were not involved in the collection of the completed surveys. Western Michigan University's Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) approved the procedures, protocol, and methodology on April 14, 2003. Copies of the HSIRB approval letter, survey instrument, and cover letters can be found in Appendices A, B, C, and D, respectively.

Participants

The population for the survey included counselors in Michigan who were employed in either a public high school or career center setting. Although Michigan has counselors at every building level (elementary, middle, and high school), only the feedback from high school counselors was sought for this study.

Data Collection

There are very few strict rules to define the task of data collection, and each research project must use a data collection technique appropriate to the research methodology used (Walonick, 1998). The two primary goals, however, for both quantitative and qualitative studies are to maximize response and maximize accuracy

(Walonick, 1998). During the data collection phase, it was suggested that the fewer number of steps between receiving the raw data and actually inputting the data into the computer, the better (Cone & Foster, 2001).

The surveys were sent via the U.S. Postal Service, and the responses were received the same way. The return envelopes were self-addressed and stamped for subject ease when sending back the completed surveys. Once the raw data were received, they were entered directly into the computer using the Excel program for statistical analysis. Cone and Foster (2001) recommend that all of the questions from the survey be recorded in the database, whether or not they are considered initially to be relevant. Including everything ensures that future analysis can occur using these data. The raw data will be stored for a minimum of 3 years at Western Michigan University.

Data Analysis

During the data analysis process, there are typically three procedures that should be addressed (Glatthorn, 1998). The first procedure is an explanation of how the raw data were reduced, which means taking the raw data and grouping the data order to make initial sense of them. In this study, the initial analyses involved treating each question individually. For example, the first question asked the participants to report their years of experience as a high school counselor using a 5-year span, ranging from 0 to 5 years, 6 to 10 years, 11 to 15 years, 16 to 20 years, 21 to 25 years, and 25 and up. The participants were asked to circle the span of years that

reflected their years of experience. Percentages were then computed for each of the 5-year spans. Similar procedures were followed when analyzing all 13 questions in the survey. Either percentages or means were used as this is the type of statistical analysis most frequently understood by educators (Walonick, 1998).

The second procedure involved the reporting and displaying of the reduced data. There were several acceptable methods to use. The procedure selected in this study was to report raw data, percentages, and means (Glatthorn, 1998). Tables and graphs will be used to provide a visual explanation of the survey results.

The final procedure involved an explanation as to how the data were analyzed in order to determine what they actually meant. Since this is a quantitative study, *t* tests were used to make comparisons between counselors' years of experiences and educational backgrounds.

Summary

This chapter explained the methods and procedures used to analyze the data collected in determining counselors' perceptions of the impact Michigan's Career Preparation System had on their personal work responsibilities, students' career preparedness, and level of involvement of building principals and teachers. The following chapter will present the results obtained using those methods.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

This chapter presents the results of analyses conducted on the data collected from the survey instrument. It explains how data were organized and analyzed. Several sections are provided to interpret the results.

The purpose of this study was to gather information from high school counselors on their perceptions of Michigan's Career Preparation System. The participants were surveyed as to their perceptions of the level of involvement in these initiatives of the high school principal and teachers. The survey consisted of three separate sections. Part I contained information pertaining to the counselor's background and experience. Years of experience as a counselor, the size of high school where they were employed, whether or not they had a secondary teachable major and in what area (General Education or Career-Technical Education), whether or not they ever taught in their major, and if they held a leadership position in either the Michigan School Counselor Association or the Michigan Counselor Association were outlined as to better understand the characteristics of the counselors participating in this study.

Part II consisted of questions surrounding Michigan's Career Preparation System, specifically Career Pathways and Education Development Plans (EDPs), which were two components mandated by the state. Specific questions pertaining to

the required benchmarks were asked. In this section, the participants were also asked to identify the level of involvement in the Career Preparation System of high school principals, teachers, and counselors. The final two questions dealt with their perceptions of the impact the Career Pathways component had in helping students make future career plans and the importance of Education Development Plans (EDPs) for students. In analyzing this data, T-tests were administered to make a comparison between responses from those counselors who were newer to the profession (0 to 5 years of experience) and those counselors who had 25 or more years of experience. In addition, T-tests were used to determine if counselors with general education backgrounds responded differently than those who had career-technical backgrounds.

Part III addressed Michigan's Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program (MCGCP). The first question asked the participants whether or not their Board of Education had adopted Michigan's Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program. The participants were also asked to respond to the percentage of time they spend in each of the four programmatic areas identified in the Michigan Comprehensive and Guidance Program (guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and systems support). A non-guidance activity area was also added as often times counselors spend time performing job duties not specifically related to those identified in the MCGCP. Percentages of time spent in each of the five areas were then used as a comparison to the amount of time spent as recommended by the MCGCP.

Research Questions

- 1. How involved are high school principals, teachers, and counselors in working with the Career Preparation System?**
- 2. What is the impact that the Michigan Career Pathways component has had in helping students make future career plans based on counselors' years of experience and educational background?**
- 3. How important are Education Development Plans (EDPs) for students based on counselors' years of experience and educational background?**
- 4. How much time are high school counselors spending in the four areas identified in the Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program areas (guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and systems support)?**

Participant Information

The survey was distributed to 530 randomly selected high school counselors throughout Michigan. There was a 35.28% return rate (187 returned out of 530 distributed), although not all of the participants responded to the entire questionnaire. When determining sample size for data using percents, four questions must be answered (Walonick, 1998). The first question determined the best estimate of the population size. Since the known population was 530, that number was used for the population size. The second question was to determine the best estimate of the rate (percent) of the survey characteristic in the population. Using statistical software, it was determined that a 50% estimated percentage level would be acceptable (Vassar,

2004). The third consideration was the maximum acceptable difference (percent) between the true population rate and the sample rate. Typically, in social science research, one would be willing to accept a difference of 5%. Thus, 5% was used in this study. The final question was designed to determine the desired confidence level, where 90% or 95% is typical for educational research. For this study, a 90% confidence level was used. Based upon this formula, it was determined that the sample size for this study should be a survey return rate of 179.86. The number of participants who responded was 187.

The first question focused on the number of years the subject worked as a counselor. The results indicated that 30.5% of the counselors had less than 5 years of experience, 22.4% of the counselors had 6 to 10 years of experience, 17.6% had been counselors for 11 to 15 years, 10.2% between 16 and 20 years, 4.3% between 21 and 25 years, and 15.0% had more than 25 years of experience. Thus, 70.5% of the participants had been employed as counselors for 15 years or less. Table 1 shows years of experience.

The second question focused on the type (class size) of high school being represented. Michigan identifies districts by class size using an A, B, C, or D designation, where A is the largest, etc. Since this survey was distributed to the 53 career-technical administrators across Michigan, participants could also be represented by technical/career centers. The results indicated that 23.2% of the participants were from large Class A high schools, 30.4% were from Class B, 31.5 % represented Class C high schools, and 9.9% were from Class D. Five percent of the

participants were employed in technical/career centers. Table 2 shows size of high school.

Table 1
Years of Experience ($N = 187$)

Range	Frequency	%
0 to 5	57	30.5
6 to 10	42	22.5
11 to 15	33	17.6
16 to 20	19	10.2
21 to 25	8	4.3
25 and higher	28	15.0

Table 2
Size of District ($N = 181$)

Size	Frequency	%
Class A	42	23.2
Class B	55	30.4
Class C	57	31.5
Class D	18	9.9
Tech/Career Center	9	5.0

The third question posed asked the participants to indicate whether or not they had a secondary teaching major, with 85.6% indicating that they did have a teaching major and 14.4% indicating that they did not. Table 3 shows whether or not the counselor had a secondary teaching major.

Table 3
Secondary Teaching Major ($N = 187$)

Teaching Major	Frequency	%
Yes	160	85.6
No	27	14.4

Participants were asked to identify their teachable major in either general education and/or career-technical education. In some incidents, participants responded more than once as they had majors in more than one area. In general education, they were instructed to circle either art/phys ed/music, language arts, math, science, social studies, or other. In the other category, participants identified a wide range of majors, from human ecology to foreign language. In the category of career-technical education, participants were able to choose from agriscience, business education, family and consumer sciences, health occupations, industrial technology, marketing, trade and industrial, and other. A total of 143 respondents (76.5%) had a major in general education, 29 (15.5%) had a major in career-technical education, and only 1 counselor had majors in both general education and career-technical education. Fourteen participants (7.5%) did not respond to this question. The follow-up question

was to inquire as to whether the participants had ever taught in their teachable major. In this case, 162 participants indicated that they had taught in their major (89.0%) and 20 (11.0%) indicated that they had not taught. Table 4 shows teaching experience in major.

Table 4
Teaching Experience in Major ($N = 182$)

Teaching Experience	Frequency	%
Yes	162	89.0
No	20	11.0

The final question (Question 6) posed in Part I asked the participants whether or not they hold or have ever held a leadership position in the Michigan School Counselor Association (MSCA) or the Michigan Counselor Association (MCA). Two participants did not respond to this question, but of the 185 who did, 12 (6.5%) had been in a leadership position and 173 (93.5%) had not held such positions.

Part I contained some discrepancies in the data that require further discussion. Questions 3, 4, and 5 made reference to teaching majors. In Question 3, 160 participants indicated that they did have a teaching major and 27 indicated that they did not have a teaching major. However, Question 5 asked whether or not the participants had ever taught in their major. The survey results indicate that 162 had taught and that 20 had not (5 did not respond to this question). This discrepancy could be attributed to a misinterpretation of the question or that some individuals had

teaching experience in their minor, not major. This discrepancy in results also appeared in Question 4 as 173 participants indicated that they had a major in either general education or CTE education or both (14 did not respond). Again, it appears that the questions may not have been interpreted correctly.

Career Preparation Initiatives

There were five broad questions that focused on selected benchmarks from Michigan's Career Preparation System. Question 7 addressed the career pathway benchmarks specifically and asked five subquestions. Participants were asked to circle either yes or no when responding. The first question asked whether or not the subject's Board of Education adopted the six career pathways or an equivalent alternative that met the state standards. One hundred percent of the participants responded to this question, with 182 (97.3%) indicating that they had board approval and 5 indicating that they did not (2.7%). In a report prepared by the Michigan Department of Career Development (2002), a vast majority of the school districts in Michigan (95%) intended to fully implement Career Pathways by 2004. The survey results from this study indicated that 97.3% had already had full Board of Education approval, thus movement toward full implementation was greater than expected. This report also indicated, however, that only 23% of the districts as of December 2002 had implemented Career Pathways. Since this survey was conducted in April of 2003, there seems to be a discrepancy between the state report and the findings of this

study, or there was a great deal of movement within a few short months to gain momentum for career pathway implementation.

Question B of number 7 asked whether or not the curriculum plans/guides were aligned by the six pathways. One subject did not respond to this question and one subject responded yes and no, which indicated that perhaps there was movement in that direction. However, of the 185 clear responses, 159 (85.9%) of the participants indicated that they were using the six career pathways as a model for alignment and that 26 (14.1%) participants responded that they were not yet there.

Question C asked whether or not the staff provides career contextual/learning experiences for students. Of the 184 responses, 162 (88.0%) responded with a yes, 22 (12.0%) responded with a no, 1 responded with a “some do,” 1 responded with a “yes and no,” and 1 subject did not respond at all to this question.

Question D asked whether or not the school provided systematic career planning and preparation as evidenced by Career Pathway use in the district’s counseling and guidance program, Education Development Plans, career/awareness/exploration activities, and work-based learning. One individual indicated that these activities and/or programs were offered at his or her career center, but 176 (94.6%) said that they were involved in those activities and/or programs and 10 (5.4%) indicated that they were not using the Career Pathway model.

Question E under number 7 asked whether or not the high school courses were aligned into the six career pathways to reflect the courses needed for preparing for careers as evidenced in documents such as student handbooks and course

selection guides. Subject responses (183 yes or no responses) indicated that 154 (84.2%) were aligned; 29 (15.8%) were not aligned. One person again indicated that this was handled at the career center, 2 participants indicated that they were in process, and 1 person did not respond to this question. Table 5 shows the frequency and percentage of responses for questions A, B, C, D, and E of Question 7.

Table 5

Questions Pertaining to Question 7: Career Pathway Implementation

Response	<u>Board Adopted Career Pathways</u>		<u>Aligned Curriculum</u>		<u>Contextual Learning</u>		<u>Systematic Planning</u>		<u>Align Guide</u>	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Yes	182	97.3	159	85.9	162	88.0	176	94.6	154	84.2
No	5	2.7	26	14.1	22	12.0	10	5.4	29	15.8

Question 8 also had three subquestions and focused on Education Development Plans (EDPs) benchmarks. The first question asked whether or not the Board of Education had adopted Education Development Plans (EDPs) that met state standards. The response rate for this question follows: 167 (92.3%) indicated that their board had adopted EDPs, 14 (7.7%) had not adopted EDPs, 4 individuals did not respond, 1 responded with a question mark, and 1 responded with a “yes and no.”

The next question was whether their district had adopted an Education Development Plan document and process adopted by the district as evidenced by student records. Yes responses were given by 165 participants (90.7%) and no

responses were given by 17 participants (9.3%). For this question, 3 did not respond at all and 2 indicated that they were “in process.”

The final question concerning Education Development Plans asked whether or not there was a process to ensure that all high school students have the opportunity to review and revise their EDPs at least annually to reflect changes in career decisions, as evidenced by guidance/counseling plans and student records. Yes responses were given by 161 participants (91.0%) and no responses were given by 16 participants (9.0%). Seven participants did not respond to this question, 1 indicated that it was “in process,” 1 responded with a “yes and no,” and 1 indicated that it was accomplished at the career center. Table 6 shows the responses for three parts of Question 8 regarding Education Development Plans (EDPs).

Table 6

Questions Pertaining to Education Development Plans (EDPs)

Response	Board Adopted EDPs		EDP Document and Process		Plan for Review/Revisions	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Yes	167	92.3	165	90.7	161	91.0
No	14	7.7	17	9.3	16	9.0

The counselors’ perception on the level of involvement from principals, teachers, and counselors in implementing Michigan’s Career Preparation System (Career Pathways and Education Development Plans) was asked in Question 9. Using

a five-point Likert scale ranging from low involvement (number 1) to medium involvement (number 3) to high involvement (number 5), the participants responded by circling the level that best reflects their perceptions. The levels of involvement are shown in Table 7.

Table 7
Level of Involvement of Principals, Teachers, and Counselors in
Implementing Michigan's Career Preparation System

Group	Low 1		2		Medium 3		4		High 5	
	RS	%	RS	%	RS	%	RS	%	RS	%
Principals	32	17.4	25	13.6	68	37.0	31	16.8	28	15.2
Teachers	27	14.7	35	19.0	85	46.2	31	16.8	5	2.7
Counselors	0	0.0	0	0.0	23	12.4	46	24.9	116	62.7

Note. RS = Raw Score of subject responses.

The findings indicate that counselors have the highest level of involvement (62.7% at level 5) in the implementation of the Career Preparation System. From their perspective, principals and teachers were much less involved, 15.2% and 2.7%, respectively.

Question 10 asked for the participants' perception as to the impact Michigan's Career Pathways component has had in helping students make future career plans. A 5-point Likert scale was used for this question, ranging from 5 (important) to 3

(somewhat important) to 1 (not important). For this question, several participants responded with either a 2.5 or 3.5, which is reflected in Table 8.

Table 8
Perception of Impact of Michigan's Career Pathways Component
in Helping Students Make Future Career Plans

Level of Importance	Scale	Raw Score	Percentage
Important	5	29	15.6
	4	65	34.9
	3.5	1	.5
Somewhat Important	3	72	38.7
	2.5	2	1.1
	2	12	6.5
Not Important	1	5	2.7

One person (.5%) did not respond to this question, so the results were based on the responses of 186 participants (99.5%).

One of the comparisons to be made was whether or not the participants' years of experience made any difference in their perceptions of the impact Michigan's Career Pathways component had in helping students make future career plans. The two extremes (0 to 5 years and 25 years or more experience) were used in this comparison. The null hypothesis was stated as "there is no significant difference between counselors' years of experience (0 to 5 compared to 25 and up) and their perceptions of the impact Michigan's Career Pathways component had in helping

students make future career plans.” A critical alpha level of .05 was used, which is a range acceptable for educational research (Carroll & Carroll, 2002). The results are depicted in Table 9.

Table 9

Difference of Perceptions in Participants’ Years of Experience and Impact of Career Pathways in Helping Students Make Future Career Plans

Group	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i> value	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
0–5 years	57	3.67	.909	2.48	83	.0152
25 and up	28	3.17	.844			

Note. *N* = Number of Participants; *SD* = Standard Deviation; *df* = degrees of freedom; *p* = probability.

An independent group *t* test was performed to determine if there was a significant difference between the mean average perceptions of participants based on years of experience and the importance of Career Pathways in helping students make future career plans. The *t* statistic was significant at the critical alpha level, $t(83) = 2.48, p = .0152$. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and concluded that there was a significant difference in perceptions of participants with 0 to 5 years of experience in comparison to those with 25 or more years. Participants who were newer to the profession believed that Career Pathways was important and that it did assist students in making future career plans.

In the demographic section of the survey, Question 4 asked the participants to identify their teachable major in either general education and/or career-technical

education. This question was asked to determine whether or not the participants had different perceptions as to the impact of Michigan's Career Pathway system in helping students make future career plans. The mean and standard deviations in regard to the participants' responses can be found in Table 10.

Table 10

Comparison of Teachable Major and Perception of Impact in Students' Career Plans

Category	Mean	Standard Deviation
General Education Major	3.50	.92
Career-Technical Major	3.66	1.00
Both General Ed. and CTE Major	2.0	0

For Question 4, there were 143 participants (76.5%) who responded as having majors in general education, 29 participants (15.5%) had majors in career-technical education, 14 participants (7.5%) did not respond to the question, and 1 subject (.5%) stated a major in both general education and career-technical education.

In determining whether or not there was a difference in the perceptions between participants with general education backgrounds and those with career-technical backgrounds, an independent *t* test was performed. The null hypothesis was stated as "there is no significant difference between participants' backgrounds (general education or career-technical education) and their perceptions of the impact Michigan's Career Pathways component had in helping students make future career

plans." A critical alpha level of .05 was used. Table 11 shows the difference of perceptions in participants' backgrounds and impact of Career Pathways on students.

Table 11

Difference of Perceptions in Participants' Backgrounds and Impact of Career Pathways in Helping Students Make Future Career Plans

Group	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i> value	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Gen. Ed.	143	3.50	.923	.844	170	0.39985
CTE	29	3.66	1			

Note. *N* = Number of Participants; *SD* = Standard Deviation; *df* = degrees of freedom; *p* = probability.

An independent group *t* test was performed to determine if there was a significant difference between the mean average perceptions of participants with backgrounds in general education and those with career-technical education backgrounds and the importance of Career Pathways in helping students make future career plans. The *t* statistic was not significant at the critical alpha level, $t(170) = .844$, $p = .3998$. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted and concluded that there was not a significant difference in participants' backgrounds and their perceptions of the importance of Career Pathways in helping students make future career plans.

The participants were asked in Question 11 about their perception of the importance of the Education Development Plans (EDPs) component for students in their buildings. Table 12 shows the importance of EDPs for students.

Table 12

**Participants' Perception of the Importance of the Education Development Plan
Component for Students**

Importance	Scale	Raw Score	Percentage
Important	5	40	21.4
	4	56	30.0
	3.5	1	.5
Somewhat Important	3	59	31.6
	2.5	1	.5
	2	24	12.8
Not Important	1	6	3.2

All of the participants responded to this question, with 83.5% of the participants indicating that Educational Development Plans were important components for students.

In regard to Question 11, a comparison was then made as to whether or not participants' years of experience made any difference in their perceptions of the importance of the Education Development Plan component for students. The two extremes (0 to 5 years and 25 years or more experience) were used in this comparison. The null hypothesis was stated as "there is no significant difference between participants' years of experience (0 to 5 compared to 25 and up) and their perceptions of the importance of the Education Development Plan component for

students." A critical alpha level of .05 was used. Table 13 shows difference in years of experience and importance of EDPs for students.

Table 13

Difference of Perceptions in Participants' Years of Experience
and Importance of EDPs for Students

Group	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i> value	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
0 to 5 years	57	3.40	1.083	.779	83	.438
25 years and up	28	3.22	.847			

Note. *N* = Number of Participants; *SD* = Standard Deviation; *df* = degrees of freedom; *p* = probability.

An independent group *t* test was performed to determine if there was a significant difference between the mean average perceptions of counselors based on years of experience and the importance of the EDP component for students. The *t* test was not significant at the critical alpha level, $t(83) = .779, p = .4382$. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted and concluded that there was not a significant difference in perceptions between participants with less than 5 years of experience and those with 25 years or more.

A second comparison was then made as to whether the participants' major emphasis of study had an impact on their perception as to the importance of Education Development Plans for students. The null hypothesis was stated as "there was no significant difference between participants' backgrounds and their perceptions as to the importance of the EDPs component for students." A critical alpha level of

.05 was used. The difference in perceptions of participants' backgrounds and importance of EDPs for students is shown in Table 14.

Table 14

Difference in Perceptions of Participants' Backgrounds and Importance of Education Development Plans for Students

Group	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i> value	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Gen. Ed.	3.48	1.052	1.809	170	.0722
CTE	3.86	1.022			

Note. *N* = Number of Participants; *SD* = Standard Deviation; *df* = degrees of freedom; *p* = probability.

An independent group *t* test was performed to determine if there was a significant difference between the mean average perceptions of participants' backgrounds and the importance of EDPs for students. The *t* statistic was not significant at the critical alpha level, $t(170) = 1.809$, $p = .0722$. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted as there was not a significant difference between participants' backgrounds and their perceptions of the importance of EDPs for students.

The results for Questions 10 and 11 indicate that participants' educational background, whether in general education or career-technical education, was not an issue in their perceptions as to the importance of Career Pathways and Education Development Plans. In both cases, the participants perceived the areas to be

somewhat important to important (Likert scale ranging from 3 to 5) in helping students with career planning.

Michigan's Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program

The final part of the survey consisted of two questions pertaining to Michigan's Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program. Nominal and ratio questions were asked in this section. Question 12 asked whether or not the Board of Education had adopted the Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program. The number of participants who responded with a yes was 101 (56.1%), and the no response was 79 (43.9%). Seven individuals did not respond to this question.

The final survey question asked the participants to estimate by percentages the amount of time spent in five areas. Four of the areas mirrored the components identified in the Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program model, but a fifth component was added (nonguidance activities) as many counselors spend time performing tasks that are not aligned with the Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program model. The participants were asked to provide percentages for the amount of time they spend in each of the five areas, with the ending total percentage being 100%. Two of the participants (1%) did not respond to this question, and 15 participants (8.1%) had total percentages either below or above 100%, so this information was not used in analyzing the data. Table 15 shows the

responses of the 170 participants (90.9%) who responded with a total of 100% for all five areas.

Table 15

Distribution of Time Spent in Five Counseling Components Identified in Study in Comparison to the MCGCP Guidelines

Results	GC	IP	RS	SS	Other
Survey	16.32%	26.38%	23.57%	15.87%	17.86%
MCGCP	15–25%	25–35%	30–40%	15–20%	0%

Note. GC = Guidance Curriculum; IP = Individual Planning; RS = Responsive Services; SS = Systems Support.

The Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program (MCGCP) percentages above reflect the amount of time counselors should spend in each of the areas as recommended by the Michigan School Counselor Association (MSCA). MSCA does not recommend that counselors be involved in any other activity aside from those outlined in the guidance program. The reality is that the participants spend approximately 18% of their time in duties not recognized by MCGCP. With the exception of Responsive Services, however, the participants still fall within the required time allotments in the Guidance Curriculum, Individual Planning, and Systems Support areas. Responsive Services consist of activities designed to meet the immediate needs of students. These services are provided through consultation, personal counseling, crisis counseling, and referral. Although there is an ever-increasing need for counselors to spend time in this area, school counselors are not

trained in intensive personal counseling and interventions. Their attention should focus on meeting the immediate needs of students, and then making outside referrals as quickly as possible. Thus, in this survey, the participants indicated that they were spending 23.57% of their time in this area, so perhaps they are recognizing that referrals to outside agencies are appropriate. In the Guidance Curriculum and Individual Planning areas, the focus for both was to work with students in career planning and preparation, completing Education Development Plans (EDPs), school-to-work and school-to-career planning, and assistance with the transition to college. The participants surveyed were falling within the recommended guidelines as identified by the Michigan School Counselor Association.

Now that there is an understanding of the results compiled for the study, the research questions will be addressed in the next section.

Research Question 1

How involved are high school principals, teachers, and counselors in working with the Career Preparation System?

Question 13 of the survey gathered responses from the participants to discover how involved principals, teachers, and counselors were in working with the initiatives. Although 187 participants were included in this study, 184 participants responded to the level of involvement for principals and teachers, and 185 responded to the level of involvement for counselors. A 5-point Likert scale ranging from 5 (high involvement) to 3 (medium involvement) to 1 (low involvement) was used as the

method for determining levels of involvement. The results indicate that counselors were the most heavily involved (62.7% at level 5), with principals (15.2%) and teachers (2.7%) ranked second and third, respectively. The data also indicate that the participants perceived that 100% of the counselors had at least a minimum level (level 3) of involvement in this initiative, with teachers being the least involved (33.7% in the 1 and 2 range). Overall, the level of involvement for principals, teachers, and counselors who were at the medium level of involvement (level 3) and above ranked as follows: counselors (100% involvement), principals (69% involvement), and teachers (65% involvement).

According to a study conducted by Helen Mary Sukovieff (1989), the persons who influenced graduates' career decisions, ranging from those with "some influence" to those with "very little influence," were parents, teachers(s), siblings/relatives, peers, guidance counselors, and principal/vice-principal. This sample was based on the responses of 184 graduates from Regina School Division No. 4, Saskatchewan, and was undertaken approximately 2 years after graduation from high school. In a more recent study conducted by the Kentucky Long-Term Policy Research Center (Clements & Kifer, 2001), students perceived that family, friends, and their own deliberations had more influence on their educational choices than do school personnel such as teachers and counselors. For students who were pursuing 4- year degrees, nearly three quarters of the students surveyed indicated that they most often turn to their parents for advice, with high school counselors ranked second (Art & Science Group, 2000).

The results of this study, however, indicate that counselors are the most involved in the Career Preparation System (62.7% indicated that they were at the highest level of involvement; 37.3% were involved at least at a medium level). In looking at previous studies, counselors were not mentioned by students as having the most influence, and in the study by Sukovieff (1989), counselors ranked behind teachers and just above principals/vice principals in students' perceptions as to whether or not they influenced career decisions. In this study, counselors indicated that teachers' level of high involvement was at 2.7%, well below principals' high involvement of 15.2%. From medium to high levels of involvement, teachers still ranked below principals, 69% of principals compared to 65.7% for teachers.

Thus, one could make the argument that the level of involvement by teachers in the Career Preparation System should be increased as they are cited as having more influence than counselors or principals when helping students make future career plans.

Research Question 2

What impact has the Michigan Career Pathways component had in helping students make future career plans based on counselors' years of experience and educational background?

A 5-point Likert scale, ranging from not important (1) to somewhat important (3) to important (5) was used in gathering data to address this question. The results indicate that 15.6% (level 5) perceived that Michigan's Career Pathways component

was important in impacting students when making future career plans. The data also revealed that 89.7% of the participants believed that the Career Pathways component was somewhat important (level 3) to important (level 5) overall, which demonstrates that Career Pathways was perceived to be effective in regard to the counselors' perspective.

In a study conducted by Michigan State University in 2002, however, those results indicated that it is still too early to determine whether or not Career Pathways had much impact (Neumark & Allen, 2002). This was based on data compiled by 100 school districts who participated in the study. At that time, 77% of the districts had only partially implemented Career Pathways, with 22% of them only recently moving in that direction. Because this initiative is relatively new, the impact is difficult to determine. In a letter dated August 13, 2002 from Dr. Barry Stern, director of the Michigan Department of Career Development, he states that "Career Pathways are helping students make meaningful connections to the current and emerging world of work" If future study is conducted, and if the counselors' perceptions are accurate, then Stern's statement will be indeed true.

Research Question 3

How important are Education Development Plans (EDPs) for students based on counselors' years of experience and education background?

An Education Development Plan (EDP) documents an ongoing process in which a student identifies both career goals and a plan of action to achieve those goals

(MDCD, 2002). School counselors verify that EDPs reflect an individual career decision-making process based on career exploration, career assessment information, school performance, and areas of interest. Counselors also facilitate selection and enrollment into courses that relate to the career pathway of choice indicated in the EDP. Counselors are often seen as the educator who is responsible for developing EDPs with students, thus their opinions as to how effective this process is for students is important.

In this study, the participants were asked how important Education Development Plans (EDPs) are for students. Using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from not important (1) to somewhat important (2) to important (3), the participants indicated that 83.5% perceived Education Development Plans somewhat important to important (levels 3 to 5). In examining the data in greater detail, it was also discovered that years of experience and counselors' backgrounds did not have any impact on their perceptions as to how important EDPs are for students. When developing the benchmarks for EDPs, Michigan identified six basic elements that must be included: personal information, career pathway goals, educational/training goals, career assessment results, plan of action, and parent/family consultation and endorsement for students under the age of 18 (MDE, 2003). These benchmarks reflect those recommended by the Career Prep System (MDCD, 2002).

Research Question 4

How much time are high school counselors spending in the four areas identified in the Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling program areas (guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, systems support) and in nonguidance activities?

The Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program (MCGCP) made recommendations for the amount of time counselors should spend in each of the four areas identified as being complementary to the profession. Under Guidance Curriculum, it was recommended that counselors spend between 15 to 25% of their time in this area. Guidance Curriculum consists of experiences designed for students in grades kindergarten through 12th grade that involve career planning and exploration, knowledge of self and others, and educational/career-technical development. Of the 170 participants who responded with percentages that totaled exactly 100% (as indicated in the directions for completing this section), 16.32% of the participants' time was spent in the Guidance Curriculum area. This falls within the range recommended by those responsible for developing the Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program.

In the Individual Planning area, the recommendation was that counselors should spend between 25 to 35% of their time in activities related to the personal and career development of students. Activities associated with the Individual Planning area would be career awareness and exploration, 4-year plan development (Education Development Plans), plans from school-to-school or school-to-career, course

selection, and financial aid and planning. The participants in this study indicated that they spend 26.38% of their time in the Individual Planning area. This again falls within the recommended amount of time stated in the Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program.

The third area was Responsive Services. The recommendation was that counselors spend between 30 to 40% of their time in this area. The reality, according to this survey, was that counselors are spending 23.57% of their time in this area. Responsive Services consist of those activities that are designed to meet the immediate needs of students, through consultation, personal counseling, crisis counseling, and referral.

Systems Support was the fourth area identified in the Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program. Systems Support entails all of those activities that fall in the management category. Professional development, staff and community relations, advisory committees, community outreach, program management and operations and research and development activities are included in this area. It was recommended that counselors spend between 15 to 20% of their time in this area. This study shows that counselors spend 15.87% of their time in the Systems Support area, which falls within the recommended guidelines.

The final area that participants were asked to respond to in the survey was the "Other" category. The Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program believes that counselors should not spend any part of their time in activities that do not support the four areas identified in the program, thus they believe that zero time is

appropriate in performing nonguidance activities. This survey, however, asked the counselors to identify if they did spend time performing activities that some may view as being “nonguidance.” The participants indicated that they spend 17.86% of their time performing nonguidance activities. In a survey conducted in North Carolina in August 2000 (“How North Carolina Counselors Spend Their Time”), nonguidance activities were viewed as bus and lunch room duties, registrar responsibilities, schedule changes, test coordination, substitute teaching (covering classes) and other noncounseling activities. These activities are reflective of similar duties that Michigan counselors are assigned to do as a part of their responsibilities.

Question 12 of the survey asked the participants whether or not their Board of Education had adopted the Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program. Of the 180 who responded, 101 indicated that they did have board approval (56.1%). The number of participants who responded that they did not have board approval totaled 79 (43.9%). One of the concerns in developing the survey was that the participants may or may not be familiar with the tenets of the Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program. To respond to this concern, a brief description of each of the four areas was included with the survey to assist the participants when responding to this question. Given the fact that a little over half (56.1%) of the participants had official adoption of the program by their Boards of Education, it was encouraging that the participants were spending their time in activities that complement the Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program’s recommended guidelines and time allocations.

In the North Carolina survey, however, it was found that fewer than half of the counselors who responded (57% return rate) were spending the nationally recommended amount of time in the major function areas of a comprehensive school counseling program ("How North Carolina Counselors Spend Their Time," 2000). They found that more than one third of high school counselors spend between 10% and 40% of their time on test coordination activities. Student schedule changes also took up a significant amount of time, both of which were viewed as being nonguidance activities.

Summary

Based on the analysis of this data, it was difficult to ascertain the impact Michigan's Career Preparation System had on high school counselors. The time allocated to participate in activities was reflective of Michigan guidelines in three of the four areas (Guidance Curriculum, Individual Planning, and Systems Support), although in every case the percentage of time was at the low end of the recommended range. The Responsive Services area falls below the recommended guidelines. As well, the Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program guidelines recommend that counselors spend zero percent (0%) of their time in nonguidance activities. The true picture, however, is that counselors are involved in activities that are viewed as nonguidance, spending 17.86% of their time in this area. According to the study conducted in North Carolina, this is not atypical ("How North Carolina School Counselors Spend Their Time," 2000).

The second question focused on the impact that Michigan's Career Preparation System had on students. Question 10 asked the participants their perceptions of the impact Michigan's Career Pathways component had in helping students make future career plans. Using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not important) to 3 (somewhat important) to 5 (important), 89.7% of the participants indicated that Career Pathways was somewhat important to important in assisting students with future career plans. Using the same scale, the participants were then asked their perceptions as to the importance of Education Development Plans (EDPs) for students (Question 11). The results indicated that 83.5% of the participants perceived EDPs to be somewhat important to important. Thus, one would conclude from this study that the participants perceive Michigan's Career Preparation System as having a positive impact in assisting students with future career plans.

The results and summary of the findings were reported in this chapter. In relation to the literature review, the findings were also mentioned in Chapter II. The final chapter will restate the research problem and review the methodology used in this study. Results and implications as well as recommendations for future study are included in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

This final chapter contains a summary of counselors' perceptions of the impact of Michigan's Career Preparation System and the level of involvement by various stakeholders. The research problem will be restated and a review of the methodology will be provided. Results and implications as well as recommendations for future study will also be presented.

Restatement of Research Problem and Methodology

This study was conducted to determine, from high school counselors' perspectives, the impact of Michigan's Career Preparation System. Participants were also surveyed as to their perceptions of the level of involvement of high school principals and teachers in these initiatives, as well as their own.

A 13-question survey was sent to the 53 Regional Career-Technical Education (CTE) administrators (regional directors) throughout Michigan. Each director was provided with 10 survey packets (consisting of the counselor letter, the survey, and a self-addressed stamped envelope) to distribute to 10 high school counselors within their region. A total of 530 surveys were distributed. The administrators were asked to use an alphabetic process when distributing the surveys to the counselors (those

counselors with the last name beginning with an "A, B, C, etc." were sent the surveys).

The survey instrument consisted of three separate sections. Part I gathered background information on the participants. Part II focused on the two required benchmarks from Michigan's Career Preparation System (Career Pathways and Education Development Plans). Part III consisted of two questions pertaining to Michigan's Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program. Nominal, ordinal, interval, and ratio type questions were used in the survey.

The survey was sent out April 16, 2003 and the participants were asked to return the completed survey by May 9, 2003. There was a 35.28% return rate (187 returned out of 530 distributed), although not all of the participants responded to the entire questionnaire. This return rate was acceptable based on survey sample size estimations (Walonick, 1998).

Results

Career counseling has a long and illustrious path, and the importance and influence of federal legislation on career counseling cannot be overlooked (Hoyt, 2001; Pope, 2000; Whiston, 2003). Providing students with an awareness of career possibilities while still in high school was not a new concept, but the impetus and financial support for offering such opportunities for students was oftentimes dependent upon legislative initiatives. With the passage of the School-to-Work

Opportunities Act in 1994, once again career education was brought to the forefront of educational reform (Steinberg, 1999).

Counselors were typically viewed as the primary provider of career information to students, thus they were oftentimes highly involved in career education initiatives. Due to this high level of involvement, gathering data of their perceptions was key in determining the overall importance of career education, which was the purpose of this study. The participants were asked to complete a self-study of their perceptions, thus issues of validity arose. This was alleviated through a careful analysis of each question. A study of Michigan's Career Preparation System conducted by Neumark and Allen (2002a) concluded that the System was quite positive overall, although they also indicated that additional research would be necessary as "assessing the extent to which school-to-work transitions are improved relative to what would have occurred in the absence of this system is lacking." This statement is not surprising as numerous researchers have made the same conclusion when trying to determine the impact of offering career education (Dykeman, Herr, Ingram, Mandsager, Pehrsson, & Wood, 2003; Rossi & McLaughlin, 1976).

Since counselors are viewed as the primary source for providing career information to students, this study focused on gathering their input as to whether or not the Career Preparation System was actually making a difference in students' career preparation. The testimonies provided by the three districts in Michigan highlighted in the most recent studies indicated overall that the Career Preparation

System was having a positive impact (Neumark & Allen, 2002a). The results from this study also support this finding.

Question 9 asked the participants to identify the level of involvement of principals, teachers, and counselors in the Career Preparation System. This was also presented as the first research question (How involved are high school principals, teachers, and counselors in working with the Career Preparation System?). A 5-point Likert scale (ranging from low involvement to high involvement) was used in determining levels of involvement. The results showed that counselors were the most involved, with 62.7% of them identified as being highly involved. Overall, 100% of the counselors were somewhat involved to highly involved. Principals were ranked second in their levels of involvement (15.2% highly involved; 69% medium to high levels of involvement). Teachers ranked third with only 2.7% being highly involved and 66.3% with medium to high levels of involvement. From research previously cited on who was most influential in assisting students in career preparation, parents were identified as having the most influence, followed by teachers (Art & Science Group, 2000; Sukovieff, 1989). This study did not address parental involvement, but to have the greatest impact on students' career preparation, teachers should be encouraged and supported to become more heavily involved in career education activities.

Questions 10 and 11 from the survey surfaced as two of the most important questions asked of the participants, and also addressed the second and third research questions (What is the impact that the Michigan Career Pathways component had in helping students make future career plans? and How important are Education

Development Plans [EDPs] for students?). Using a 5-point Likert scale, the participants responded positively to the impact of Career Pathways and Education Development Plans in helping students make future career plans, although participants with 5 years of experience or less viewed Career Pathways as being more important than those participants with 25 years or more experience. Overall, Career Pathways were viewed as being somewhat important to important by 89.7% of the participants; Education Development Plans were viewed as being somewhat important to important by 83.5% of the participants. A conclusion can then be made that counselors perceive these two components as being important in helping students make future career plans.

Research Question 4 asked the high school counselors to identify the amount of time they spend in the four areas identified in the Michigan Comprehensive and Guidance Program areas (guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, systems support) and in nonguidance activities. In most cases, the participants were spending proportionate amounts of time as recommended in each of the areas; however, they were also involved in nonguidance activities not recognized within the framework of this program. The reality is that participants do spend a considerable amount of time (approximately 20%) performing nonguidance activities. From unsolicited written comments on the returned surveys, some of the counselors expressed concern about the "other" types of activities they are asked to perform. Although the Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program does not recognize the "Other" category, the fact that counselors spend some of their time in

“nonguidance” activities is not necessarily a flaw in how counseling programs are organized. Oftentimes, counselors are asked to fill in for an absent administrator or supervise lunch periods. If the counselors use this time to interact with students in a positive manner, then serving as lunchroom supervisors when needed may provide another avenue for counselors to make connections with students.

Implications

The results of this study can be used to support and challenge earlier research findings. Although previous research studies indicate that career preparation is important, almost all of the researchers agree that there is not enough documentation to truly understand the impact (Dykeman, Herr, et al., 2003; Rossi & McLaughlin, 1976). To gather concrete evidence, longitudinal studies would be most beneficial, but this type of evaluation is the most expensive and requires a level of commitment and constant support beyond the capabilities of most schools (Rossi & McLaughlin, 1976). A fear expressed by some educators has been that career education, while strengthening certain elements of career development, might negatively impact student achievement (Omvig, 1975). As well, higher education is critical of the career development movement and has met it with skepticism as they “bemoan the lack of student intellectualism,” attributing this to not focusing on just the academics (Moss, 2003). They believe that career development impedes intellectual growth. Although findings are inconclusive, it is determined that career development activities do

promote self-efficacy on the part of the student, which may encourage students to perform better academically (Dunn, 2001).

Although this study showed that counselors are the most heavily involved in the Career Preparation System, previous research indicated that teachers are viewed by students as having more influence than counselors when helping them make future career plans. High student/counselor ratios may be one of the reasons that students make stronger connections with teachers than counselors. The average student/counselor ratio is 560:1, which impedes counselors' ability to make personal connections with students. Involving teachers in assisting students with career preparation is not an easy task as there is still a divide between teachers as to who should be responsible for providing career preparation activities. Some view the connection between school and work as the responsibility of the "vocational teacher," who sometimes is not considered to be on the same level as the "academic educator." This paradigm is difficult to change as its roots run deep within the educational system. To add to this misperception, the image of career-technical education (CTE) among students, teachers, counselors, and administrators is a recurring problem as too often CTE programs are seen as a "dumping ground" for problem or low-achieving students (Huss & Banks, 2004; Little, 1996). Although changing this perception is difficult, it is not impossible. Dr. John Grieco, superintendent of Bergen County Technical Schools, indicated that it took a cultural shift in the way teachers and administrators thought about high school in order to change the structure of their schools (AYPF, 1999). He had to work with his team to create an environment that

embraced change, teamwork, and risk-taking, which became an 18-year journey. For Bergen County schools, however, the journey evolved into a system that has had a positive impact on their entire community.

Even with these differences, most educators would agree that the greatest educational gift we can give to students is the opportunity to see that they can advance; can master skills; can become competent, successful, and productive members of the community; and can make the connection between all the things they work so hard to learn in school and their real-life goals. They need to see the relevance of the learning that takes place in school; they need to see the connection between what they learned and the realities of the workplace. If one believes that it is the responsibility of educators to provide opportunities for students to make connections between school and work, then the components of career education can provide a framework for making those connections.

School-to-work (career education) programs restructure education so students improve their academic performance and get “turned on” to learning. Children learn better when they see a purpose to their studies and this understanding is reinforced through cognitive research that shows people learn best by doing, when they apply their academic lessons to real-world activities and situations (*Elements of the School-to-Work Opportunities Act*, 2001). These endeavors are the soul of career education.

Current research is hindered by a poor definition of what constitutes career development and/or career interventions. The lack of studies on specific career

interventions and career development activities is also a roadblock in the design and implementation of effective comprehensive guidance programs, which has a direct affect on how counselors spend their time if following a specific model (Dykeman, Herr, et al., 2003). In addition, the counselors' role in this work is also uncertain as oftentimes their roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined. As well, the role the school counselor plays is an important consideration in the success of any career preparation program. According to Daggett (2003), school counselors need to expand their influence by mentoring teachers about the changing workplace, convincing administrators to only provide rigorous and relevant learning opportunities, and effectively work with parents and students about future expectations. To assist them, they need concrete guidance on what career development activities can give them the most leverage in promoting student success (Dykeman, Herr, et al., 2003).

On the opposite end of the spectrum, however, is the belief that unknown instances of coincidence, happenstance, and chance factors may also influence career decision making and that it cannot be viewed as just linear, progressive, and rationale (Guindon & Hanna, 2002). Understandably, these two very separate viewpoints may be contributing to the internal battle that counselors wage when working with students in the area of career education. Do they focus on the concrete, rationale career tools that are available to assist students in making future decisions, or do they take a more holistic approach?

As one can see, the various legislative initiatives that support career education provides opportunities as well as challenges. With the recent legislation, counselors must take their rightful place as important contributors to high school reform. This can be accomplished through integrating career tech and academic education so that high-level standards meet the expectations of the public (Lynch, 2000).

Recommendations

The recommendations identified by Neumark and Allen (2002a) on Michigan's Career Preparation System are worth mentioning as they are reflective of concerns expressed by numerous researchers nationwide. They suggest that one way to understand the true impact of the state's Career Preparation System is to evaluate outcomes for students who have participated in career development activities with outcomes for comparable students who have not participated in related activities. By using such control groups, educators would then be able to determine whether career development activities had an impact or whether other factors (improvement in labor market, for example) were the cause. Although other researchers did not specifically address using control groups, overall there was a widespread belief that the effectiveness of career development programs was not conclusive and that additional studies should be conducted. Additional recommendations based on the results of this study follows.

Recommendation 1

To better understand the impact of the Career Preparation System in Michigan, designing a longitudinal study that involves surveying students 2 or 3 years after high school graduation would have merit. However, this type of study is difficult to execute as making connections with students post high school graduation is nearly impossible. From this research study, counselors perceived that Career Pathways and Education Development Plans were important, but this was probably based on assumptions or personal feelings, not hard data. However, one could hardly argue that providing students with relevant career information would be harmful.

Recommendation 2

A second recommendation is to focus on the influence that parents have in helping their children make future career plans. Counselors need to encourage and support parental involvement, so one way to impact Career Preparation would be to develop strong connections with parents. One of the required components of the Michigan Career Preparation System was to have a parent-endorsed Education Development Plan. For many educators, this mandate offered challenges as the level of parental participation at the secondary level lessens as students progress through high school. This requirement, however, has merit as parents are viewed by teenagers as being the most influential to them in regard to making future plans. According to a study conducted by Helen Mary Sukovieff (1989), "The persons who influenced graduates' career decision, in order from those with 'some influence' to those with

'very little influence,' were parents, teacher(s), siblings/relatives, peers, guidance counselors, and principal/vice-principal" (p. 1). Marzano (2003) also supports the important role of parents by stating that "home atmosphere has the strongest relationship with student achievement." When a similar study was conducted in Kentucky, it was discovered that "family, friends, and their own deliberations" have more influence on educational choices of youth than do school personnel such as teachers and counselors (Clements & Kifer, 2001). In a Canadian study, 11th grade students indicated that parents were the primary significant influence in their career selection, followed by friends, fellow workers, and other relatives. Only 5% of these students relied on teachers or counselors, and less than 1% were influenced by either the principal or assistant principal (Powlette & Young, 1996). The low value for teachers and counselors (in influencing students) is disturbing, as there is a general held belief that counselors and teachers play important roles when helping students make future career plans.

Although there are numerous requirements of the No Child Left Behind legislation, one of the most overlooked provisions is that districts must have a written parental involvement policy (Ferguson, 2003). Although districts who received Title I funds have long been required to have this type of policy, this is now mandated by No Child Left Behind. However, a written policy that is nothing more than a document that is filed and then retrieved when appropriate is not an effective policy. The policy, like the Career Preparation System as well, must be a living document that is used as the foundation for how educators, parents, and students work cooperatively. The

Michigan Career Preparation System funneled millions of dollars into Michigan school districts, but one component that was missing was the challenge to districts to provide more than a cursory requirement to have parents sign off on Education Development Plans.

Coincidentally, national surveys indicate that career guidance is a major issue for American families, a finding supported in a Gallup poll which reported that helping their children choose a career is the second most pressing concern for parents (Herbert, 1986). In 1995, the National Center for Research in Vocational Education's (NCRVE) Office of Student Services (OSS) recognized nine exemplary career guidance and counseling programs (Cunanan & Maddy-Bernstein, 1996). These exemplary programs were recognized for forging strong partnerships with parents, businesses, community organizations, teachers and other school personnel. In the area of family/parental involvement and support, there was a belief that strong school and family partnerships were key in offering a successful program in secondary schools. Parents were encouraged to participate in numerous ways, including career planning, educational planning, advisory committees, financial aid workshops, parent-teacher conferences, and guidance and counseling sessions. This component was again mentioned in the exemplary programs identified in 1998 (Matias, Maddy-Berstein, & Harkin, 1999). To truly impact student knowledge of career opportunities, counselors in Michigan should explore ways to make stronger connections with parents and provide them with the necessary tools to work with their children. They should be

able to support parents to look objectively at possible alternatives to 4-year college and university degrees.

Recommendation 3

The third recommendation is for counselors to work more closely with classroom teachers in the area of career education. Guidance counselors and principal/vice principal rank below teachers when it comes to influencing students in regard to making career decisions, yet in this study Michigan counselors indicated that 100% of them had medium to high levels of involvement, whereas the same levels of involvement for principals was at 69% and teachers ranked third with 66.3%. Other surveys have shown that the adults to whom students of all ages are most likely to turn to, after their parents, are teachers (Ellis, 1990). Thus, teachers in Michigan may not be as involved as they should be. However, in this study, principals emerged as having a higher level of involvement than teachers in the Career Preparation System. This is not surprising given the fact that administrative support is a critical element in implementing any type of new initiative. The three school districts in Michigan touted as being exemplary all mentioned that strong administrative support was a key element in providing a sustainable career preparation program.

Ellis (1990) suggested that one way to impact the effectiveness of a career guidance program would be to implement a Teacher Advisor Program (TAP). Although teachers are not trained in the counseling profession, they have a long tradition of helping students with personal problems. They have daily interaction with

students, and their student/teacher ratio is typically much smaller than the student/counselor ratio, which in Michigan is an astounding 600:1 (American Counseling Association [ACA], 1999). The TAP program would be structured so that teachers and students would be provided the opportunity to meet during the regular school day to participate in developmental guidance activities, during which time they would explore such areas as study skills, decision-making, career awareness and development, educational planning, and self-assessment. However, moving teachers to this type of system is oftentimes met with skepticism and criticism, but it is an area that counselors should consider if they want to continue the work of providing effective career education opportunities for Michigan students.

Recommendation 4

One final recommendation, and one that is supported by research conducted by Hoyt and Hughey (1997), is that postsecondary counseling programs must equip their graduates with skills that will support career preparation activities. Counselors should hone their skills to include an awareness and knowledge about the kinds of occupational and educational changes being created by the emerging knowledge-based society. They should be able to assist high school graduates in making reasoned choices about the kind of postsecondary education best for them. The more counselors know about careers, the more effective and integral they become in the career development process. Postsecondary counseling programs need to include career education information as a part of the curriculum.

Recommendation 5

Most researchers agree that career education programs are important in helping students make future career plans, but that additional research needs to be conducted. A great deal of the research included in this study contained information obtained from other quantitative studies. A recommendation for future work in this area would be to develop a qualitative study where counselors had the opportunity to personally verbalize and share their thoughts and ideas about career education.

Recommendation 6

The survey used in this study did not address whether or not counselors were spending more or less time in certain areas since the inception of Michigan's Career Preparation System. Thus, to actually determine the effectiveness of the program and the impact that these initiatives have had on counselors, it is recommended that this question be added to future surveys.

Clearly, there is evidence that career education programs are important. Making these programs sustainable, however, continues to provide challenges for educators. Federal and state legislative mandates can provide the impetus to get started, but to continue the momentum once the funding is gone, that is the challenge. Too many times, educators experience passing fads that seem to fade in and out. Career education is one fad that has maintained some level of importance even though undergoing numerous facelifts throughout the years. Exposing students to what the

future holds is the purpose of career education, and every student should have the opportunity to explore their future.

Appendix A

Human Subjects Institutional Review Board Letter of Approval

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY



Human Subjects Institutional Review Board

Date: April 14, 2003

To: Van Cooley Principal Investigator
Sandra Standish, Student Investigator for dissertation

From: Mary Lagerwey, Chair

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Mary Lagerwey", is written over the printed name.

Re: HSIRB Project Number 03-04-12

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project entitled "Impact of Michigan's Career Preparation Initiatives on High School Counselors" has been **approved** under the **exempt** category of review by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application.

Please note that you may **only** conduct this research exactly in the form it was approved. You must seek specific board approval for any changes in this project. You must also seek reapproval if the project extends beyond the termination date noted below. In addition if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the HSIRB for consultation.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: April 14, 2004

Walwood Hall, Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5456
PHONE: (269) 387-8293 FAX: (269) 387-8276

Appendix B
Survey Questionnaire

COUNSELOR SURVEY

PART I: Participant Information - Please circle your responses

1. **Years of experience as a high school counselor? (Circle One)**
 0 to 5 6 to 10 11 to 15 16 to 20 21 to 25 25 and up
2. **Type of high school where you are employed? (Circle One)**
 Class A Class B Class C Class D ☒ Tech/Career Center
3. **Do you have a secondary teachable major?** YES NO
4. **Which of the following area(s) represent your teachable major? (Circle All That Apply)**

<u>General Education</u> Art/Phys Ed/Music Language Arts Math Science Social Studies Other (Please List)	AND/OR	<u>Career-Technical Education</u> Agriscience Business Education Fam & Cons Sciences (formerly Life Mgmt) Health Occupations Industrial Technology (formerly Ind Arts) Marketing (Distributive Education) Trade & Industrial Other
--	---------------	--
5. **Have you ever taught in your teachable major? (Circle One)** YES NO
6. **Do you presently hold or have you held a leadership position in the Michigan School Counselor Association (MSCA) or Michigan Counselor Association (MCA)?** YES NO

PART II: Career Preparation Initiative - Michigan's Career Preparation Initiative has two required components (Career Pathways and Education Development Plans). For each area, there are required benchmarks. Please respond to the following.

7. **Career Pathways Benchmarks: (Circle Yes or No)**
 - Has your board of education adopted the six Career Pathways or an equivalent alternative that meets the state standards? YES NO
 - Have you aligned your curriculum plans/guides by the six pathways? YES NO
 - Does your staff provide career contextual/learning experiences for your students? YES NO

D. Do you provide systematic career planning and preparation as evidenced by Career Pathway use in the district's counseling and guidance program, Education Development Plans, career/awareness/exploration activities, and work-based learning? YES NO

E. Has your high school aligned courses into the six Career Pathways to reflect which courses are needed for preparing for careers as evidenced in documents such as student handbooks and course selection guides? YES NO

8. Education Development Plans (EDPs) Benchmarks: (Circle Yes or No)

A. Has your board of education adopted Education Development Plans (EDPs) that meet the state standards? YES NO

B. Has your district adopted an Education Development Plan (EDP) document and process adopted by the district as evidenced by student records? YES NO

C. Do you use a process to ensure that all high school students have the opportunity to review and revise their EDPs at least annually to reflect changes in career decisions, as evidenced by guidance/counseling plans and student records? YES NO

9. From your perspective, what is the level of involvement from each of the following groups in implementing Michigan's Career Preparation Initiative (Career Pathways and Education Development Plans components) in your building?

High School Principal

Low Involvement		Medium Involvement		High Involvement
1	2	3	4	5

Teachers

Low Involvement		Medium Involvement		High Involvement
1	2	3	4	5

Counselors

Low Involvement		Medium Involvement		High Involvement
1	2	3	4	5

10. What is your perception of the impact Michigan's Career Pathways component has had in helping students in your building make future career plans? (Circle One)

Not important		Somewhat Important		Important
1	2	3	4	5

11. What is your perception of the importance of the Education Development Plans (EDPs) component for students in your building? (Circle One)

Not important		Somewhat Important		Important
1	2	3	4	5

PART IEE Michigan's Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program

12. Has your board of education adopted the Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program? (Circle One) YES NO
13. Please estimate (by percentages) the amount of time you spend in each of the five areas: (A description of each of the components is included)

NOTE: PERCENTAGE TOTAL MUST BE NO MORE THAN 100%

Programmatic Components:	Percentage:
Guidance Curriculum	_____ %
Individual Planning	_____ %
Responsive Services	_____ %
Systems Support	_____ %
Non-guidance Activities	_____ %
TOTAL	_____ 100%

COMPONENT DESCRIPTIONS

Guidance Curriculum

The Guidance Curriculum consists of structured developmental experiences presented systematically through classroom and group activities kindergarten through twelfth grade. The purpose of the Guidance Curriculum is to guarantee selected benchmarks for all students empowering them to learn to live, learn to learn, and learn to work over a lifetime.

Individual Planning

Individual Planning consists of activities that help all students plan, monitor and manage their own learning as well as their personal and career development. Within this component, students evaluate their educational, occupational, and person goals.

Responsive Services

Responsive Services consist of activities to meet immediate needs and concerns of students, whether these needs or concerns require counseling, consultation, referral or information.

Systems Support

Systems Support consists of management activities that establish, maintain, and enhance the total guidance and counseling program, such as professional development, staff and community relations, advisory committees, community outreach, program management and operations, and research and development.

Non-guidance Activities

Non-guidance Activities consists of those responsibilities that are assigned outside of the scope of practice for counselors (lunchroom supervision, etc.).

Appendix C
Administrator Letter

April 3, 2003

Mr. Tom Conor, Executive Director
Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency
1819 East Milham Road
Kalamazoo, MI 49002

Dear Tom:

I am in the process of writing my dissertation and would appreciate your help in conducting this research. Would you please assist me by selecting 10 high school counselors that work in your area and then sending them the enclosed survey for them to complete? When selecting the counselors, please select them alphabetically, beginning with last names that begin with an "A". A cover letter explaining the purpose of the survey and a stamped, self-addressed envelope are also enclosed for their convenience when returning the survey to me.

The focus of this study is to determine the impact of Michigan's Career Preparation Initiatives on high school counselors in relation to the work that they do each day. This short, 13-question survey should take less than 5 minutes to complete. Once the results are compiled, this information will be available to all interested parties. Counselors responses will be completely anonymous.

If you have any questions regarding the survey, please contact either Dr. Van Cooley at 269.387.3891 or me at 269.998.3538 (cell phone). You may also contact the Chair, Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) at 269.387.8293 or the Vice President for Research at 269.387.8298 if questions or problems arise during the course of the study.

I am working hard to have my dissertation completed by late May, so I would appreciate it if you would send out the surveys as soon as possible. I would like the surveys to be returned to me by May 9, 2003. Thank you so much for assisting me with this survey.

Best wishes,

Sandy Standish, Executive Director
Kalamazoo County Education for Employment
Eastern Service Area

Enc

Appendix D
Letter to Counselors

April 3, 2003

Dear High School Counselor:

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled ***Impact of Michigan's Career Preparation Initiatives on High School Counselors***. Dr. Van Cooley, chair for the Department of Teaching, Learning & Leadership at Western Michigan University, and Sandy Standish, doctoral student and CTE administrator, are conducting this study to determine the impact of Michigan's Career Preparation Initiatives on high school counselors in relation to the work that they do each day. Sandy Standish will be using this information as the basis for her dissertation.

This survey consists of 13 questions that pertain to Michigan's Career Preparation Initiatives and Michigan's Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program. Please respond to the questions regardless of whether your district/building has adopted either program. The survey should take less than 5 minutes to complete and will be completely anonymous. You may choose not to answer any question by simply leaving it blank. If you choose not to participate, you may either return the blank survey or you may discard it. Once the results are compiled and the findings summarized, this information will be made available to all interested parties.

If you have any questions regarding the survey, please contact either Dr. Van Cooley at 269.387.3891 or Sandy Standish at 269.998.3538 (cell phone). You may also contact the Chair, Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) at 269.387.8293 or the Vice President for Research at 269.387.8298 if questions or problems arise during the course of the study.

Thank you for responding to this survey. Once completed, please return BY APRIL 30, 2003 in the stamped, self-addressed envelope that is enclosed.

Sincerely,

Van Cooley, Ph.D., Chair
Dept. of Teaching, Learning & Leadership

Sandy Standish, Exec. Director
Education for Employment

Enc

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Allen, A., Crain, R., Quigley, D., Sullivan, D., Thaler, R., Warren Little, J., & Zellman, G. (1999). *The effects of academic career magnet education on high schools and their graduates*. National Center for Research in Vocational Education. Retrieved May 15, 2001, from <http://nccte.com>
- American Counseling Association. (1999). *School counselors' caseload grow 9.3%*. Retrieved February 10, 2004, from <http://gotocollegelc.com>
- American School Counseling Association. (2003). *Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program manual*. Revised 1997.
- American Youth Policy Forum. (1999). *Bergen County academies work*. Retrieved February 17, 2004, from <http://www.aypf.org/tripreports/1999/tr012999.htm>
- American Youth Policy Forum. (2000). *Do career academies work? New findings show encouraging outcomes*. Retrieved October 30, 2002, from <http://www.aypf.org/forumbriefs/2000.fb012100.htm>
- Art & Science Group. (2000). *Students report high satisfaction with the quality of college counseling in their high schools, but counselors have little influence over final college choice*. Retrieved February 29, 2004, from <http://www.artsci.com>
- Bailey, T. (1995). *Learning to work: Employer involvement in school-to-work transition programs*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution.
- Baker, S., & Popowicz, D. (1983). Meta-analysis as a strategy for evaluating effects of career education interventions. *Vocational Guidance Quarterly*, 31, 178–186.
- Ballbe ter Maat, M. (2000). The functions of school counselors in northern Virginia public schools. *Digital Library and Archives*. Retrieved May 15, 2004, from <http://www.scholar.lib.vt.edu/theses/available/etd-04202000-10070058>
- Bolt, L., & Swartz, N. (1997). Contextual curriculum: Getting more meaning from education. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 97, 1–6.

- Bragg, D. D. (1995). Linking high schools to postsecondary institutions: The role of tech prep. *Education Through Occupations in American High Schools*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Career pathways in school-to-work systems. 1997 resource bulletin.* (n.d.). Retrieved May 15, 2001, from <http://www.stw.ed.gov/factsht/bul10326.htm>
- Career pathways resource guide.* (1997). Des Moines: State of Iowa, Department of Education.
- Career Prep.* (2004). Retrieved February 29, 2004, from <http://careerprep.org>
- Carroll, D. J., & Carroll, S. R.. (2002). *Statistics made simple for school leaders*. Maryland: Scarecrow Press.
- Center for Occupation Research and Development (CORD). Retrieved February 22, 2004, from <http://www.cord.org>
- Clark, C. S. (1999). Standards-based academics: School-to-career institute offers promise as a national model. *High School Magazine*, 7, 1–4.
- Clements, S., & Kifer, E. (2001). *High school students "talk back" in new center report.* Retrieved July 29, 2003, from http://www.kltprc.net/pressreleases/pr_talkback.htm
- Cone, J. D., & Foster, S. L. (2001). *Dissertations and theses from start to finish*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Contextual learning.* (n.d.). Retrieved February, 22, 2004, from <http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/envrnmnt/stw/swllk3.htm>
- Cox, S., Desborough, K., & Stapleton, D. (1997). *Facilitator's guide to exploring career paths*. University of Missouri-Columbia.
- Cuevas, R. C. (2001). Painting a positive picture. *Techniques*, 76, 18–19.
- Cunanan, E., & Maddy-Bernstein, C. (1996, March). *1995 exemplary career guidance programs: Opening career paths for all students*. University of California, Berkeley.
- Daggett, W. (2003, April). School counselors and information literacy from the perspective of Willard Daggett. *Professional School Counseling*.

- Dunn, K. (2001). *Efficacy of school counseling programs*. Retrieved July 29, 2003, from http://www.isca.indiana.edu/_discussion/00000076.htm
- Dykeman, C., Chen, M., Gitelman, A., Herr, E., Ingram, M., Mandsager, N., & Wood, C. (2003). *Career development interventions and academic self-efficacy and motivation: A pilot study*. National Research Center for Career and Technical Education. Retrieved February 8, 2004, from <http://www.ncrte.org>
- Dykeman, C., Herr, E., Ingram, M., Mandsager, N., Pehrsson, D., & Wood, C. (2003). *The structure of school career development interventions: Implications for school counselors*. Retrieved February 16, 2004, from http://www.findarticles.com/cf_0/m0KOc/4_6/103380607/print.jhtml
- Elements of the School-to-Work Opportunities Act: School-based learning*. Retrieved May 15, 2001, from <http://www.stw.ed.gov/factsht/fact5.htm>
- Ellis, T. (1990). *Counselors and teachers as student advisors*. Ann Arbor, MI: Clearinghouse on Counseling and Personnel Services. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 315 703)
- Enderlein, T. (1977). *A review of career education evaluation studies*. Washington, DC: Department of Health, Education and Welfare.
- Evans, J., & Burck, H. (1992). *The effects of career education interventions on academic achievement: A meta-analysis*, 71. Retrieved June 06, 2001, from <http://www.askeric.org>
- Ferguson, S. (2003). What happened to partnerships? *Council of Chief State School Officers*, 5, 3.
- Finch, A., & Ryan, P. (2002). *Effective counseling within the high school setting*. Retrieved July 29, 2003, from <http://www.tiger.towson.edu/users/afinch/researchpaper.htm>
- Gibson, D. (1997). Your guide to guidance: What to expect from your school counselor. *Better Homes and Gardens*. Retrieved March 24, 2004, from http://www.findarticles.com/cf_dls/m104/n5_v75/19332720/print.jhtml
- Glatthorn, A. A. (1998). *Writing the winning dissertation*. California: Corwin Press.
- Guindon, M., & Hanna, F. (2002, March). Coincidence, happenstance, serendipity, fate, or the hand of God: Case studies in synchronicity. *Career Development Quarterly*.

- Gysbers, N. D., & Henderson, P. (2000). *Developing and managing your school guidance program*. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.
- Hamilton, S. F., & Hamilton, M. (1997). When is learning work-based? *Phi Delta Kappan*, 78, 676–681.
- Herbert, D. (1986). *Career guidance, families and school counselors*. Ann Arbor, MI: Counseling and Personnel Services. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 279 991)
- Herr, E. L. (1977). The roots of career education. *College Board Review*. 7–18.
- Herr, E. L. (2001, March). Career development and its practice: A historical perspective. *Career Development Quarterly*.
- How North Carolina school counselors spend their time*. Retrieved February 29, 2004, from <http://ncpublicschools.org>
- Hoyt, K. B. (1974). *An introduction to career education: A policy paper of the U.S. Office of Education*. Washington, DC.
- Hoyt, K. B. (1980). Evaluation of K-12 career education: A status report. [Monograph]. *Monographs on Career Education*, 1–45.
- Hoyt, K. B. (2001, June). A brief history of career counseling in the united states. *Career Development Quarterly*.
- Hoyt, K. B., & Hughey, K. F. (1997). Career counseling in the knowledge age: Implications for change in school counselor education programs. *Journal of Career Development* 24(2), 95–102.
- Hughes, K. L., Bailey, T. R., & Mechur, M. J. (2001). *School-to-work: Making a difference in education*. Columbia University.
- Hull, D. M. (2000). *Education and career preparation for the new millennium*. Retrieved November 26, 2002, from <http://www.cord.org>
- Huss, S., & Banks, A. (2004). *Career and technical education: Getting school counselors on board*. Retrieved February 8, 2004, from <http://www.nccte.org>
- Jackson, G. B., & Wirt, J. G. (1996). Putting students to work. *Training and Development*, 50, 58–59.

- Kelleher, M. (2003). *With little guidance, students drift through and out of school*. Retrieved February 29, 2004, from <http://catalyst-chicago.org/03-0303mainprint.htm>
- Krathwohl, D. R. (1998). *Methods of education and social science research: An integrated approach*. New York: Longman.
- Lankard, B. A. (1991). *Strategies for implementing the National Career Development Guidelines*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Digest No. 338 898)
- Larson, E., & Vandegrift, J. (1997). Tenth grade students' perceptions of career preparation and work experience in Arizona schools. *Arizona School-to-Work Briefing Paper*, 9, 6.
- Lester, J., & Perry, N. (1995). *Assessing career development with portfolios*. Greensboro, NC: Clearinghouse on Counseling and Student Services. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 391 110)
- Lewis, J. (2001). Career and personal counseling: Comparing process and outcome. *Journal of Employment Counseling*, 38, 82-89.
- Little, J. (1996). *High school restructuring and vocational reform: The question of "fit" in two schools*. Retrieved February 29, 2004, from <http://www.ncrve.berkeley.edu>
- Lynch, R. L. (2000). Welcome to the 21st century challenges. *Techniques*, 75, 58-59.
- Maddy-Bernstein, C. (2000). *Career development issues affecting secondary schools*. Retrieved February 2, 2003, from <http://www.nccte.org/publications/infosynthesis/highlightzone/highlight01.index.asp>
- Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation. (2002). *Career academies evaluation*. Retrieved October 30, 2002, from <http://www.mdrc.org>
- Marzano, R. J. (2003). *What works in schools*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Matias, Z., Maddy-Bernstein, C., & Harkin, G. (1999, June). *Zeroing in on students' needs: The 1998 exemplary career guidance and counseling programs*. University of California, Berkeley.
- Maxwell, N. L., & Rubin, V. (2000). *High school career academies*. W. E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.

- Michigan Department of Career Development. (2002). *Career pathways in Michigan schools: A success story* [Monograph]. Retrieved from <http://www.mich.gov/mdcd>
- Michigan Department of Education. (2002a). Retrieved January 24, 2004, from <http://www.mich.gov/prINTERfriendly/0,1687,7-122--35998--,00.html>
- Michigan Department of Education. (2002b). *Education development plans*. Retrieved February 29, 2004, from <http://www.michigan.gov/prINTERfriendly/0,1687,7-122--29226--,00.html>
- Michigan Department of Education. (2003). Retrieved April 4, 2003, from http://www.michigan.gov/mdcd/0,1607,7-122-1680_2629_2722-28015--,00.html
- Michigan Department of Education. (2004). Retrieved February 11, 2004, from <http://www.michigan.gov/prINTERfriendly/0,1687,7--122--29226--,00.html>
- Michigan School Counselor Association. (1997). *The Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program* (Revised 1997). Michigan.
- Miller, J. V. (1992). *The National Career Development Guidelines* [Abstract]. Retrieved February 2, 2003, from ERIC Digest No. 347493.
- Moss, G. (2003, June). Intellectualism vs. career preparation: A comparative assessment of self reported growth among graduating college seniors. *College Student Journal*.
- Naylor, M. (1997). *Work-based learning*. Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education. (ERIC Digest No. 187)
- Neumark, D., & Allen, A. (2002a). *From Michigan's school-to-work to career preparation system: How do we know it's working?* (Policy Report No. 11). E. Lansing, MI: Michigan State University, Education Policy Center.
- Neumark, D., & Allen, A. (2002b). *School-to-work in Michigan*. (Working Paper No. 7). E. Lansing, MI: Michigan State University, Education Policy Center.
- No Child Left Behind*. (n.d.) Retrieved November 5, 2002, from <http://www.nochildleftbehind.org>
- No Child Left Behind. A desktop reference*. (2002). Washington, DC: Office of Elementary and Secondary Education.

- North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL). Retrieved February 22, 2004, from <http://www.ncrel.org>
- Office of Career and Technical Preparation. (2002). *Administrative guide*. Michigan Department of Career Development.
- Office of the State Board of Education. (2002, March 14). *News release: State board approves Education Yes! accreditation system*.
- Olson, L. (1997). *The school-to-work revolution: How employers and educators are joining forces to prepare tomorrow's skilled workforce*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Omvig, C. (1975). The effect of career education on career maturity. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 7, 265-272.
- Perez-Rivas, M. (2001, January 18). *Montgomery classes are paying off, report finds*. Washington Post Company.
- Perry, C. (2002). *An historical perspective of federal legislation regarding vocational education*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Northern Arizona University.
- Pope, M. (2000). A brief history of career counseling in the United States. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 48, 194-211.
- Potosky, A. (1999). Taking the worry out of work-based learning. *Techniques*, 74, 24-25.
- Powlette, N. M., & Young, D. R. (1996). *Career and other factors influencing post-secondary decisions: Survey of high school students in Alberta, Canada*. Fairview, Alberta: Fairview College.
- Reese, S. (2002). Federal funding for career and technical education. *Techniques*, 77, 37-39.
- Rhoder, D., & French, J. N. (1999). School-to-work: Making specific connections. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 80, 534-536.
- Robertson, R. (2000). The "new" American high school. *Techniques*, 75, 32-33.
- Robinson, T. M. (1998). *Elements important for implementation of the four essential components of a comprehensive counseling and guidance program*:

- Perceptions of secondary school counselors and principals.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa.
- Rossi, R., & McLaughlin, D. (1976). Longitudinal evaluation in career education. *Journal of Career Education*, 2(3).
- Rudy, D. W., & Rudy, E. L. (2001). *Report on career pathways: A success story in Berrien County, Michigan.* (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 457 408)
- Schmidt, W., & Dykeman, B. (1979). Testing the effectiveness of a career education program for potential dropouts. *Education*, 99, 287–290. Retrieved from <http://www.askeric.org>
- Schoelkopf, J. (1995). Frequently asked questions about tech prep/school-to-work. *Career Pathways*, 79, 14–18.
- Shore, R. M., & Beirne, J. (1997). Connecting the curriculum. *Thrust for Educational Leadership*, 26, 1–4.
- Sink, D. A., & MacDonald, G. (1998). The status of comprehensive guidance and counseling in the United States. *Professional School Counseling*, 2, 88–94.
- Smith, G. E. (1951). *Principles and practices of the guidance program.* New York: Macmillan.
- Steinberg, A. (1999). *Schooling for the real world: The essential guide to rigorous and relevant learning.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Stern, D. (2001). *Career academies and high school reform before, during and after the school-to-work movement.* Retrieved November 28, 2002, from Spotlight on Student Success, No. 606.
- Stone, J. R., & Aliaga, O. A. (2003). Career and technical education, career pathways, and work-based learning: Changes in participation 1997–1999. National Research Center for Career and Technical Education. Retrieved February 8, 2004, from <http://www.nrcte.org>
- Stone, J. R., Bae, S., & Aliaga, O. A. (2003). *Participation in career pathways, career and technical education, and work-based learning: A new look at participation patterns.* National Research Center for Career and Technical Education, University of Minnesota.

- Sukovieff, H. M. (1989). *An investigation of influences on career decisions of high school graduates: A follow-up study*. (SSTA Research Center Report #90-04). Retrieved July 29, 2003, from <http://www.ssta.sk.ca/research/students/90-04.htm>
- Sullivan, L. E. (1999). Education to career and professions. *High School Magazine*, 7, 1-3.
- Vassar. (2004). Retrieved February 11, 2004, from <http://faculty.vassar.edu/lowry/vassarstats.html>
- Walonick, D. S. (1998). *Survival statistics*. Minnesota: StatPac.
- What is contextual learning?* (n.d.). Retrieved February 22, 2004, from <http://www.cord.org/lev2.cfm/56>
- Whiston, S. C. (2003, September). Career counseling: 90 years old yet still health and vital. *Career Development Quarterly*.