

ALASKA LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE FILES 1991-1992

8672

6859 HOUSE HEALTH EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES

183

eliminated some of the barriers to recruiting physicians in medically underserved areas. The MAINE law gives more latitude to physician specialists from unaccredited medical schools by allowing them to complete educational programs that meet specified standards, while the ARKANSAS law increases the annual cap on rural practice loans from \$8,000 to \$12,000.

In addition, five states approved scholarship and loan forgiveness programs for physicians, nurses and other health professionals who agree to practice in underserved areas. A FLORIDA measure extended the Medical Education Tuition Reimbursement program to include physician assistants, certified nurse midwives and nurse practitioners in rural areas. IOWA lawmakers added physicians to those eligible for loans administered by the state's College Aid Commission, upon agreement to practice in an eligible community with fewer than 5,000 residents for a minimum of four consecutive years. Nurses and occupational therapists will also now be eligible to participate in the guaranteed loan payment program.

In OREGON, the Rural Health Services Program was established for physicians and nurse practitioners who agree to practice in a medically underserved rural community in the state, and in TEXAS, the legislature established the Outstanding Rural Scholar Recognition Program. The program requires that participating communities make a commitment to pay for half of the cost of a sponsored medical student's tuition, fees, education materials and living expenses. The state will award forgiveness loans to match the community support; recipients will be forgiven one year's loan for each year of practice in the sponsoring community. A WEST VIRGINIA law established a loan program in which students who will practice in a medically underserved area or in a designated medical specialty may have the loans cancelled.

Under a newly-created MAINE Choice Program, at least 50 percent of the funds loaned must be made available to students enrolled in nursing programs. The rest of the money will be loaned to students in allied health occupation programs, including nurse practitioners and physicians' assistants. Loans will be made for up to \$2,500 per academic year, not to exceed a total of \$12,500 per student and preference will be given to students enrolled in a program determined to be in an underserved region or medical specialty in which there is a shortage. MISSISSIPPI established a loan program for

students in specified health care professions. Recipients must repay the loans by working in a state health institution for four years after graduation. The law targets nurses, nurse practitioners, speech pathologists, psychologists, occupational therapists and physical therapists.

Loan and Scholarship Programs for Nurses

Most of the loan forgiveness programs approved this year have targeted the nursing profession. The programs incorporate a variety of strategies designed to increase the supply of licensed professional nurses (LPNs) and registered nurses (RNs), by offering grants to make education more attainable and making nursing careers more financially and personally attractive.

A TEXAS law, for instance, requires the state's Higher Education Coordinating Board to establish and administer a scholarship program for both professional and vocational nursing students. The board is also required to establish and administer: 1) a matching fund program for health care employers to sponsor professional nursing or vocational nursing students; and 2) a loan repayment program for registered nurses and licensed vocational nurses.

A new MAINE law establishes a government student loan payback plan for RNs. Any nursing home, hospital, home health agency or rural health clinic that pays for an RN student loan can be reimbursed for the amount they invested. A loan forgiveness program in FLORIDA authorizes loans of up to \$4,000 a year for students seeking an RN or LPN degree. Higher licensure fees will help pay for the program. And in DELAWARE, a measure passed this year will increase the amount of scholarship loans available through the Nursing Incentive Program from \$1,000 an academic year to \$3,000.

Seven states establishing or amending loan forgiveness programs for nurses included a requirement for a "service payback" in an underserved area of the state. A KANSAS law established the nursing student scholarship program, stipulating that 100 of the 250 annual \$3,500 scholarships to be awarded to registered nurse students whose sponsors are located in rural areas. An IDAHO law amends the student education incentive loan forgiveness contract by adding professional nursing to the program, with preference given to those willing to practice in rural areas of the state. A new MARYLAND statute entitles recipients of

Gov's Interim Commission on Health Care

the Longevity Bonus in the continuum of services to older adults.

In its efforts to serve older people, the Older Alaskans Commission is one of the primary funding sources for community- and home-based services in Alaska. It also plays an important role in planning, promoting, and developing these services.

The Older Alaskans Commission is charged with reviewing and evaluating state programs concerned with the problems and needs of older Alaskans. Under AS 44.21, the Older Alaskans Commission is not permitted to review Pioneers' Homes or the Longevity Bonus program. Not to consider these programs when planning for needs of older Alaskans is to ignore important resources and programs available to some older Alaskans. To develop the most effective continuum of services for older Alaskans, it is necessary that decisions made by the Older Alaskans Commission accurately reflect the environment in which services are delivered.

Implementation: Legislation is required to amend AS 44.21 to permit the Older Alaskans Commission to consider the Pioneers' Homes and the Longevity Bonus program.

36. Shortage of Health Professionals and Paraprofessionals

Findings

- The availability of an adequate number of properly trained health care workers, at both the professional and the paraprofessional levels, is necessary to assure access to health care and the quality of that care. A shortage of health care workers will increase the cost of care as providers compete for scarce workers by increasing wages.
- Alaska currently faces a shortage of certain health professionals and paraprofessionals. National trends indicate this problem may increase.
- Many Alaskans might become or remain in the health care profession if appropriate training opportunities were more readily available.

Recommendation

The state should address the need for health professionals and paraprofessionals in Alaska by:

Providing a training continuum from the level of home health aide to nurse with graduate level of education through the state-funded university system;

targeting student loan forgiveness programs to health professionals whose primary practice is in medically underserved areas; and

extending third-party reimbursement to mid-level licensed health practitioners.

1988 Legislative Update: Senate Bill 315 (Chapter 56 SLA 1988) requires health insurers to reimburse consumers for services provided by advanced nurse-practitioners.

Testimony indicates that Alaska currently faces a statewide shortage of nurses and physical therapists. In rural areas, there is a need for more rural health aides and personal care attendants. Current national trends in the demand for and training of various kinds of health care workers suggest that shortages of health care workers will worsen in the future.

The state must take action to ensure that Alaska has an adequate number of health care workers. Besides reducing access, a shortage of health care professionals and paraprofessionals can affect the quality and cost of care.

To foster an adequate supply of health professionals and paraprofessionals, the state should ensure that residents have access to an educational ladder that provides training for those entering the health professions at the lowest levels and for those seeking to move to a higher skill level.

By providing a training continuum, the state avoids health facilities' being forced to train their own paraprofessionals or hire from outside Alaska. This continuum would also prevent Alaskans from having to leave the state for training. It is important that this training be accessible to people throughout the state. Limiting programs to one or two campuses will not meet the needs of those who cannot relocate for training.

Some areas of Alaska will always have difficulty attracting health professionals. A wide range of services are needed. Many medical specialties, such as obstetrics and psychiatry, are not accessible in many parts of rural Alaska. Targeting student loan forgiveness programs to health professionals whose primary practice is in a medically underserved area is a means by which the state can encourage professionals to locate in those areas.

Extending third-party coverage to mid-level licensed practitioners is another way for the state to encourage access to care. By including mid-level licensed practitioners under Medicaid and GRM and by requiring private insurance to reimburse for care they provide, the state increases clients' ability to purchase their services.

Cost: The student loan forgiveness program would have to be funded; the cost would depend on the success of the program. Developing a training continuum might require additional funds, although most of the components of the program already exist.

Implementation: Legislative action is required to enact the student loan forgiveness program, to adopt Medicaid options for covering licensed mid-level practitioners, and to mandate private insurance coverage of mid-level practitioners.

37.

State and Federal Coordination

Finding

- Health care delivery in Alaska would benefit from closer cooperation between state and federal agencies involved in health-related services.

Recommendation

The state should endeavor to coordinate planning and provision of health care with federal agencies.

The federal government provides health care in Alaska through a variety of programs, including the Indian Health Service, the Veterans Administration, the military, Medicare, and Medicaid. Commission testimony and discussion raised

concerns about the provision of health care services by the federal government. The issue of cost shifting between federal and state programs and a general uncertainty about federal policies and their future direction were both identified as problems the state must address. State and federal coordination of planning and health care delivery will allow more efficient use of resources.

Cost: Coordination can be implemented at no additional cost to the state.

Implementation: Coordination of planning and provision of health care can be accomplished through administrative activities of state and federal health care agencies.

38.

Medical Liability Insurance

Findings

- An estimated 10 percent of every medical bill in Alaska goes for medical liability insurance.
- Medical liability insurance premiums in Alaska more than doubled between 1985 and 1988.
- Nationally, it is estimated that 15 percent of health care expenditures pays for defensive medicine.
- Rural providers, especially those providing obstetrical care, have been particularly hard hit by the increase in medical liability insurance.
- Health providers are not the only professions that face problems with the availability and affordability of liability insurance. Addressing the problem comprehensively requires the involvement of many professions and industries and the consideration of insurance regulation and tort reform.

Recommendation

The Governor should appoint and fund a Liability Insurance Task Force, outside the legislative process, in an effort to achieve meaningful liability insurance reform. The task force should include: one legislator each from the Alaska House and Senate, and representatives from the trial lawyers, medical doctors, the Alaska Chamber of Commerce,

HB

450



Alaska Nurses Association

MAR 09 1992

237 East Third Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
(907) 274-0827

... a constituent of American Nurses' Association

March 9, 1992

Representative Pat Parnell
State House of Representatives
Capital Room 128
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

File

Dear Representative Parnell:

Thank you for your recent meeting with representatives of the Alaska Nurses' Association, the Alaska Advanced Nurse Practitioner Association and the Alaska Chapter of the American College of Nurse Midwives. We certainly appreciate your time and attentiveness.

The Alaska Nurses' Association would like to go on record supporting HB450 which would make it possible for nurses at the Alaska Psychiatric Institute and correctional nurses to be categorized as "peace officers". This proposal would allow for these employees to be considered under the retirement plan offered to other state employees in hazardous fields of work. Certainly these employees are at high risk for injury in the workplace.

One of the major objectives of the Alaska Nurses' Association is to promote the economic and general welfare of nurses. Certainly the changes being proposed in the retirement options for this group of professionals can only enhance their welfare.

The Alaska Nurses' Association urges prompt passage of this legislation.

Sincerely yours,

Jackie Pflaum
Legislative Chairperson
Alaska Nurses' Association

letters of support

MAR 13 1992

2900 Providence Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99508
February 20, 1992

The Honorable Pat Parnell
3111 C Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Dear Sir:

I thank you for introducing HB 450, the twenty year retirement bill for the employees of the Alaska Psychiatric Institute. Do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide further information and support.

I appreciate your effort on our behalf.

Sincerely,

Shenni Knoedler
4850 Bryn MAWR
Anch. Ak. 99508



Alaska State Legislature

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Official Business

Kevin "Pat" Parnell

Room 128

State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

LIST OF PEOPLE FROM API LETTERS.

Abbot, Sam
P.O. Box 220202
Anchorage, 99521

Aragon, Mike
P.O. Box 672196
Chugiak, 99567

Carlson, Lorenz
2040 Campbell Place
Anchorage, AK 99507

Couey, Zula A.
3900 Coventry Drive
Anchorage, AK 99507

Davis, Michael
P.O. Box 9-1801
Anchorage, AK

Drabe, Denise
801 Airport Heights, #241
Anchorage, AK 99508-1914

Eshenower, Kim
2137 Sunrise Drive
Anchorage, AK 272-3320

Fish, Emma
3611 East 66th
Anchorage, AK 99507

Hord, Johnnie M.

Knoedlek, Sherrie
4850 Bryn Mawr
Anchorage, AK 99508

Myers, Willie E. PNA

Aguila, Joe
P.O. Box 87312
Wasilla, Alaska 99687-2312

Butler, Jason
1924 S. Salem Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99508

Clinch, Richard

Davis, Louis S.
11741 Shetland Heights
Anchorage, Alaska 99516

Davis, Steven L.
2452 Oak Drive
Anchorage, AK 99508

Drost, Patricia RN

Ferbracke, Barbara

Goocey, Paul
P.O. Box 670242
Chugiak, AK 99567

Hudson, Elizabeth
P.O. Box 211863
Anchorage, AK 99521

McCracken, heather
P.O. Box 142471
Anchorage, AK 99514

Olson, Sandra
1340 W. 70th Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99518

Page 2 of 2
April 1, 1992
List of API Letters

Powell, Charles S.
HC78, Box 2221
Chugiak, AK 99567

Roat, Alison L.
4301 Macalister Drive
Anchorage, AK 99515

Smith, Thomas A.
12631 Brandcn Street
Anchorage, 99515

Stuvek, Pamela, RN, CPQA
Ass't Nursing Director

Ventura, Leticia
3433 W. 80th Avenue
Anchorage, 99502
1511 Beaver Place

Walsh, Marlin
5311 Mockingbird Drive, #315
Anchorage, 99507

Widener, Gary
3501 East 42nd, Apt. 118
Anchorage, AK 99508

Powell, Dean
SR 1-1112
Chugiak, AK 99567

Schwelf, Ned
6531 Imlach
Anchorage, AK 99507

Sneed, Lois RN

Sung, C. Chol
905 Richardson Vista, #189 #189
Anchorage, AK 99501

Vickers, Dorothy
1511 Beaver Place
Anchorage, AK 99504
*Nurse for 26 1/2 years.

Wider, Shirley
P.O. Box 211405
Anchorage, AK 99521

Yi, Yun O.
2511 West 79th Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99502

ALASKA LEGISLATURE

Committees

JUDICIARY
LABOR & COMMERCE
BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE-
ADMINISTRATION



JUNEAU

BOX V
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811
(907) 465-2647

ANCHORAGE

BOX 10-1776
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510
(907) 562-1776

Kevin "Pat" Parnell
Representative
University-Midtown, Anchorage

SPONSOR STATEMENT

House Bill 450 grants the status of "peace officers" under the public employees' retirement system to correctional nurses and certain state employees employed at a residential psychiatric facility.

This bill was brought to my attention by employees of the Alaska Psychiatric Institute (API), in Anchorage. Some employees of API face hazards equal to or more than "peace officers," but are not recognized under the public employees' retirement system as such.

HB 450 simply allows for these employees to be considered under the retirement plan offered to other state employees in hazardous fields of work.

Certain employees at API are exposed to a daily risk of violence, having an average of 166 total days lost due to patient-connected injury for employees at API (Over the last ten years, ending in 1990). In the year 1990, "API had a total of 2394 hours lost from work due to injuries."

Realizing that not all the 304 employees at API are at risk, therefore they should not all qualify for "Peace Officer" status. API officials state there are slightly over 200 employees who should be entitled to this level.

To determine whether or not one would be able to qualify, the wording on Page 1, Line 7 states "that requires interacting with patients at the facility on a direct basis...", thus eliminating those in support positions such maintenance, supply, and administrative.

The primary goal is protect those individuals who do a job under hazardous conditions. I encourage your support for this bill in committee and welcome any suggestions you may have to improve upon it.

sponsor statement

ALASKA LEGISLATURE

Committees

JUDICIARY
LABOR & COMMERCE
BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE
ADMINISTRATION



JUNEAU

BOX V
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811
(907) 465-2647

ANCHORAGE

BOX 10-1776
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510
(907) 562-1776

Kevin "Pat" Parnell
Representative
University-Midtown, Anchorage

SECTIONAL ANALYSIS FOR HOUSE 450

"An Act granting status as peace officers under the public employees' retirement system to correctional nurses and to certain state employees employed at a residential psychiatric facility; and providing for an effective date."

Section 1.

This section provides an amendment to the existing definitions of "peace officer" or "fire fighter," which was used in determining the ability to qualify under the public employees' retirement system.

The addition of a state employee at a residential psychiatric facility employed in a position that requires interacting with patients at the facility on a direct basis, or which would then qualify those nurses, nursing supervisors, at API to qualify.

Correctional Nurse was added because they are also being exposed to the same dangers as those of a correctional officer and correctional superintendent, i.e., exposure to prisoners with possible threat of harm.

Section 2.

This section allows for an employee to convert credited service because they were employed before the effective date clause came into effect. Once they claim this retroactive credited service, an indebtedness shall be established. This will be equal to the contributions to the system that the employee would have made if the service was counted as peace officer service, less the contributions they actually have made.

Section 3.

This takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c).

sectional analysis

In the Matter of the Appointment)
of a Special Peace Officer.)
_____)
_____)

ORDER

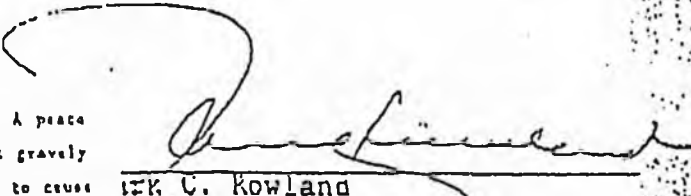
In that it appears that there is an omission in AS 47.30 as to persons who appear at Alaska Psychiatric Institute or who have been brought to Alaska Psychiatric Institute, neither under an Order for Screening Investigation through AS 47.30.700 nor emergency detention for evaluation under AS 47.30.705, and who appear to be proper subjects for admission,

IT IS ORDERED that the Nursing Supervisor on duty is designated as a Peace Officer under AS 47.30.915(13) and, as such, is authorized by the court to make an independent determination; based on probable cause, that a person in their presence is gravely disabled and is suffering from a mental illness and is likely to cause serious harm to themselves or others. This designation as Peace Officer is limited to those duties described for a peace officer in AS 47.30. Based on such determination, the designee may complete an application for examination under AS 47.30.705.

DATED at Anchorage, Alaska this 3 day of February, 1982.

Sec. 47.30.705. EMERGENCY DETENTION FOR EVALUATION. A peace officer who has probable cause to believe that a person is gravely disabled or is suffering from mental illness and is likely to cause harm to himself or others of such an immediate nature that considerations of safety do not allow initiation of involuntary commitment procedures set out in AS 47.30.700, may cause the person to be taken into custody and delivered to the nearest evaluation facility. A correctional facility may be used as an emergency evaluation facility if an evaluation facility is not available. Upon arrival at the evaluation facility, the peace officer shall complete an application for examination of the person in custody and be interviewed by a mental health professional at the facility.

Sec. 47.30.710. EXAMINATION. (a) A respondent who is delivered for AS 47.30.700 or 47.30.705 for emergency examination and treatment


K. C. Kowland
Residing Judge
Third Judicial District

misc. back-up

reference when the landlord pays the heat.)
 s for the dry rot in the floor when the
 ant didn't tell you there was a leak.
 security deposits don't cover everything.
 It doesn't begin to compensate us for our
 hurt wher whom we have allowed
 to make p ments for months
 because tl hard times, skips
 owing tw is back rent and
 leaves the is well.
 You see care, but what
 about you' o that landlords
 were suffe rent our proper-
 ties and n osing them.
 I agree ise is a lot. Ms.
 Sloan migl d why he seems
 to want h

Monday, February 3, 1992
 Anchorage Daily News
 B6

DISCONTINUED

Ads don

It seems
 ment is rec
 officials ac
 liquor comp

Let's get
 believe this
 ka is ridicu

Surely a
 responsible
 problem.

At the sar
 also send a
 this very co
 prints of eac
 to design ind
 support AII
 with the use
 our minds a
 ment, we are
 AIDS.

.Don't get
 individuals :
 drinking problems — there's no doubt it's a
 struggle, but at the same time one cannot
 blame an advertisement for their problem —
 let's look at the real reasons for these
 problems. Liquor ads in a newspaper not
 only promote a brand, you're also able to
 see the low low price you can get it for.

Alcoholism goes much deeper than ink.
 — Claudia Krupa

Sm'ear

We are writing in response to the cheap
 shot the Alaska Ear took at Rep. Bettye
 Davis in your Jan. 12 edition. Reference was
 made to her sponsoring a 20-year retirement
 bill for the nursing staff at API, alluding to
 her husband's employment at API as her
 reason for doing this.

Had the "Dear Ear" bothered to do its
 homework, it would have discovered that
 Rep. Davis was approached by several of
 the nurses at API because of the inequities

Alcoholism

olut advertise-
 as well as city
 embracing the

one or group to
 holism in Alas-

ents are not
 al's drinking

same ad could
 Alaskans —
 mited edition
 roceeds going
 for AIDS. To
 ll know that
 rugs altering
 better judg-
 f contracting

pathize with
 who have

pathize with
 who have
 drinking problems — there's no doubt it's a
 struggle, but at the same time one cannot
 blame an advertisement for their problem —
 let's look at the real reasons for these
 problems. Liquor ads in a newspaper not
 only promote a brand, you're also able to
 see the low low price you can get it for.

Alcoholism goes much deeper than ink.
 — Claudia Krupa

Diane Wendling

we feel strongly about. Our nursing staff
 constantly works under the threat of phys-
 ical assault, in addition to the fact that the
 emotional stress involved is enormous —
 and we do it without benefit of hazardous
 duty pay or any of the considerations given
 those employees of the Department of Cor-
 rections. We care for the same clients as
 DOC and have agreements with the prison
 system for the transfer of criminals between
 the prisons and API when these people
 become mentally ill and untreatable in their
 prison setting. Oftentimes these clients are
 out of control, putting our nursing staff at
 great risk to physical assault.

We would like to take this opportunity to
 thank Rep. Davis for her concern and
 initiative in drafting a bill to help meet the
 needs expressed by our nursing staff. We
 would also like to thank Sens. Pat Rodey
 and Virginia Collins for their Senate Bill
 220 addressing this same subject, and Rep.
 Pat Parnell for his continued support in the
 House.

It's unfortunate that the Ear felt the need
 to print something for the sake of its
 "readability" rather than find out the facts
 behind the story.

— Lois Sneed, R.N. and 11 other members
 of the nursing administration
 of Alaska Psychiatric Institute

Ad was jingoistic claptrap

Anchorage Chrysler Dodge seems to be-
 lieve that "real Americans" only buy Amer-
 ican cars (Anchorage Daily News advertise-
 ment Jan. 18). This diversionary, jingoistic
 claptrap ignores facts. "Real Americans"
 have been buying Japanese cars because
 they're getting a better deal. Now tell me,
 would a real American turn down a deal?

The American auto industry is in trouble
 not because the Japanese will not buy
 American cars but because Americans are
 not. The screw-the-worker, fat bonus, take-
 what-we-make-or-leave-it management
 style, historically the hallmark Big Three
 attitude, has come home to roost. Perhaps it
 would help the sales of American cars in
 Japan to actually design and make them for
 the Japanese consumer? Maybe they could
 start by offering them cars with a steering
 wheel on the right and not the left.

The Japanese learned from Americans the
 theories of management that now make
 them top producers. Are the Japanese who
 applied the theories of "real American"
 Robert Demming to be condemned for it?
 What would the price and quality of autos
 be now if the Japanese were not allowed
 into our market? Where would the air bags
 and long-term warranties be? Probably in
 the pockets of Lee Iacocca.

Anchorage Chrysler Dodge stoops low as
 they wave the bloody shirt of World War II.

TO: Mr. Frank Crum
Nursing Director

DATE: April 25, 1989

FILE NO:

TELEPHONE NO:

FROM: Roberta Helmuth, RN, Educ. Coor. SUBJECT: Staff Injury Audit Report
Heather McCracken, RN

Attached is a report summarizing some of the data compiled during investigation of staff injuries resulting from patient assaults.

As the principal investigators in this project, we request permission to submit for publication pending Education and Research Committee approval of the research.

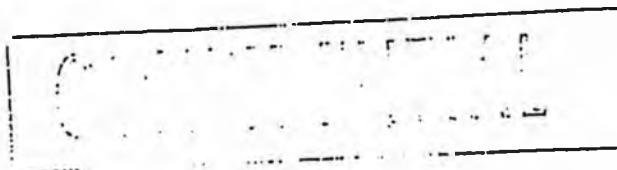
Roberta Helmuth Ed. Coor.
Heather McCracken, Nursing Director

A STUDY OF STAFF INJURIES AT THE ALASKA PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTE

by Roberta Helmuth, RN, BA
and Heather McCracken, RN, BA

In recent months numerous nursing staff have been assaulted by patients resulting in injuries requiring time off work. The rising number and severity of staff injuries was noted by nursing administration and referred to the Nursing Quality Assurance Committee for review. The committee concurred with a proposal to research the problem utilizing an audit process. Nursing Education staff designed an audit tool and implemented the project. ¹

Due to the urgent need for the results of the research, the Nursing Director assigned one staff member from Nursing Education to work full time on gathering the audit data to enable rapid generation of a report from the data.



Ms. Helmuth is Education Coordinator, and Ms. McCracken is a Nursing Instructor at the Alaska Psychiatric Institute, 2900 Providence Drive, Anchorage, Alaska 99508.

¹ All data not otherwise credited was retrieved by an audit of records of patients who assaulted staff during the audit period, March '87 - February '89. The data will be presented for publication elsewhere.

FINDINGS

In the period March 1, 1987 through February 26, 1989 there were 1397 reports of patient assaults on staff. Sixteen (16) of the reports were dropped from the sample as invalid due to incomplete information. Of the 1381 remaining assaults, 1147 had no staff injury reported. Staff injuries occurred in 234 (17%) of the assaults. These injuries ranged from scratches to dislocated shoulders and concussions.

A month by month comparison of incidence of injury to patient census did not demonstrate any correlation in these two factors. (Table I)

TABLE I

MONTH	INJURIES	MONTHLY CENSUS
3/87	9	128
4/87	9	137
5/87	7	153
6/87	9	137
7/87	8	125
8/87	12	121
9/87	6	121
10/87	0	120
11/87	6	118
12/87	12	119
1/88	5	119
2/88	17	120
3/88	9	127
4/88	7	131
5/88	12	119
6/88	8	125
7/88	16	134
8/88	11	131
9/88	9	124
10/88	5	115
11/88	19	115
12/88	12	114
1/89	11	129
2/89	15	114

A breakdown of assaults by patient unit was done. (Table II)

TABLE II

UNIT	Total Assaults	Assaults with Injury	Assaults without Injury
Third	106	18	88
AAU	156	27	129
PSU	368	78	290
DTU	386	46	340
STP	31	6	25
ICP	102	20	82
YTP	232	39	193

Table III data was retrieved from Medical Record Departments annual reports and details the average daily census per unit and % of bed occupancy on the unit. Table III data covers FY '88, the only complete fiscal year within the audit period. Within that limited time frame, there does not appear to be any correlation between numbers of staff injuries, (Table II), and the % of bed occupancy on any given unit.

TABLE III

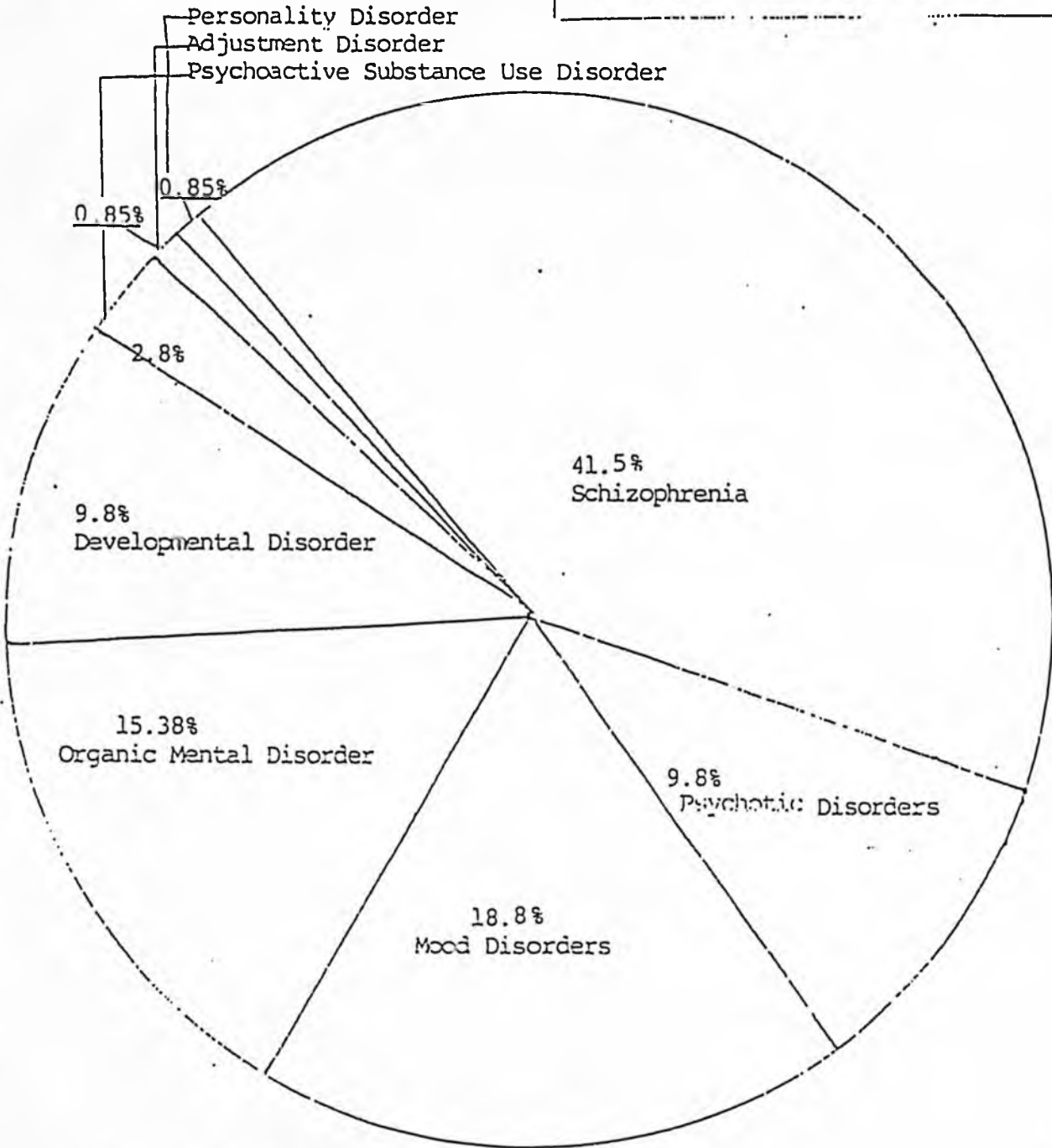
CONFIDENTIAL

UNIT	Average census FY'88	Bed Capacity	% of Capacity
Third	32	48	66.6
AAU	14	16	87.5
PSU	8	14	57.1
DTU	22	24	91.6
STP	17	20	85.0
ICP	17	20	85.0
YTP	13	32	40.6

Table IV shows a breakdown of the Primary diagnosis , per DSM-III-R classification, of patients committing assaults resulting in staff injuries. It is significant to note that 70.1% of these people fall into three (3) broad categories: Schizophrenia, Psychotic Disorders not elsewhere classified, and Mood Disorders. Traditionally, the majority of these three (3) categories have been successfully treated/controlled with medications.

TABLE IV

CONFIDENTIAL



Categories as designated in the DSM-III-R

Table V is a breakdown of assaultors by DSM-III-R diagnostic categories. This table identifies how many patients in each category had no psychotropic medications ordered, how many were refusing ordered medications and the per category percentage not on medication.

TABLE V

DSM-III-R Categories	Total number of Patients	Number with no Psychotropics Ordered	Number Refusing	Total % not on Medication
Schizophrenic Disorders	97	14	26	41%
Psychotic Disorders	23	4	4	35%
Mood Disorders	44	9	17	59%
Organic Mental Disorders	36	5	7	33%
Developmental Disorders	23	8	5	57%
Psychoactive Substance Use	7	7	0	100%
Personality Disorders	2	2	0	100%
Adjustment Disorders	2	2	0	100%

In summation, 22% of the total 234 assaultors had no medications ordered, 25% were refusing ordered medications for a total of 47% of the assaultors who were not receiving medications. In the review of diagnostic categories, 34 patients (including developmental disorders, psychoactive substance use disorders, personality disorders, and adjustment disorders), may or may not be appropriate for medication depending upon physician interpretation of their individual circumstances. Keeping in mind the 34 patients represent 14.5% of the 234 assaultors, there remains 32.5% of the assaultors in this review who fall into categories traditionally treated by medications. This segment either had no medication ordered or were refusing ordered medication.

CONFIDENTIAL

RELATED FACTORS

Risk Management data regarding staff injuries was reviewed. The quarterly figures from '87 and '88 show a steady and marked increase since the fourth quarter of 1987, corroborating our data.

All API nursing staff have been trained in the Mandt system since 1979. The focus of the system is prevention and de-escalation utilizing verbal skills prior to using physical techniques. It prepares staff to use verbal and physical skills in situations requiring intervention.

In accordance with hospital policy, none of the records (except charts on the unit) were flagged in any manner to alert the care giver to a history of assaultive behavior. We defined "history of assaultive behavior" for the purposes of this research as more than one assault. It was found that 54% of the assaultors had a history of previous assaults.

While compiling various sets of statistics it was discovered that three (3) patients accounted for 46 (19.7%) of the injuries. In the interest of prevention a memo of 4/18/89 as forwarded to you prior to report completion.

The researcher's attempts to correlate reports of injury with workmen's compensation filings were unsuccessful.

CONFIDENTIAL

TO: Al Finneseth
Administrator

DATE: January 24, 1991

FILE NO:

TELEPHONE NO:

THRU:

SUBJECT: Workmen's Compensation
Report, 1990

FROM: Jim Gordon
Administrative Assistant I

<u>Calendar year</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>
Total Days Lost Due to Injury	210.9	258.73	448.6	803.1	319.2
Total Days Lost Due to Non-Patient Injury	93.5	84	353.7	593.7	84.6
Total Days Lost Due to Patient-Connected Injury	117.4	174.73	94.9	209.4	234.6

For the calendar year 1990, API had a total of 2394 hours lost from work due to injuries.

There were 106 incidents reported, 36 involving lost time (12 of which resulted from a combative patient).

There were 70 incidents filed which did not result in any lost time, of these 32 were small abrasions and bumps suffered while subduing patients.

There were five staff injuries resulting in more than 150 hours away from the job. Three were the result of combative or uncooperative patients. One was the result of a fall in gym activities. One was a recurring hand injury that required surgery.

Additionally, there were 412 hours carried over as a result of prior year injuries that were not included in this report.

JG/ojb/MISC33/5024

r. & t. 1/25/91

PERSONNEL REPORT

NOVEMBER 14, 1990

NUMBER OF PCN's: 304

NUMBER OF FULL-TIME EQUIVALENTS: 292

1292

	<u>Number PCN's</u>	<u>Part-Time & Seasonal</u>	<u>Number FTE's</u>	<u>Vacancies</u>
Medical Staff	11	1	10.5	4
Ancillary Services	4	1	3.5	1
Nursing Services	164	20	154	4
RN's	72(*)	3	70.5	3
LPN's	3	0	3	0
PRN's	83	17	74.5	1
Clerical	6	0	6	0
Social Services ✓	9	0	9	1
Psychology ✓	7	0	7	1
Forensics ✓	4	0	4	0
Activity Therapy ✓	10	0	10	1
<u>SUPPORTING SERVICES:</u>				
Administration (includes Volunteer Services Coordinator and Chaplain) ✓	14	2	13	4
Medical Records X	11	0	11	0
Maintenance	14	0	14	2
Housekeeping X	22	0	22	1
Business Office X	9	0	9	1
Dietary X	21	0	21	0
Supply X	4	0	4	0
TOTALS	304	24	292	20 (FTE's 19)

Includes 2 Mental Health Clinician II positions with nursing specialty.

Presently there are 2 non-penns. working in Maintenance which are not indicated on this report.

JG/bj/IMISC4 4152

r. 11/1/90
t. 11/6/90

11/14/90

1990

Reports Involving No Lost Time

Lifting.....6
Walking.....2
 In Hospital.....1
 On Grounds.....1
Gym Activities.....7
Responding to Aide Calls.....4
Miscellaneous.....19
Combative Patients.....32
TOTAL.....70

Reports Involving Lost Time

Lifting.....5
Walking.....6
 In Hospital.....1
 On Grounds.....5
Gym Activities.....4
Responding to Aide Calls.....2
Miscellaneous.....7
Combative Patients.....12
TOTAL.....36

JG/ojb/MISC33/5024

r. & t. 1/25/91

FISCAL NOTE

BILL NO. HB 450

STATE OF ALASKA
1992 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Revision Date: _____
Title: An act granting employees of a state residential psychiatric facility status of peace officers under PERS.

Department Affected: ALL STATE
BRU: ALL STATE

Sponsor: PARNELL
Requestor: House Health, Education & Social Services

Component: ALL STATE
COMPONENT SERIAL NO. _____

Expenditures/Revenues: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96	FY 97	FY 98
PERSONAL SERVICES	0	0	501.2	501.2	501.2	501.2
TRAVEL	0	0	0	0	0	0
CONTRACTUAL	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUPPLIES	0	0	0	0	0	0
EQUIPMENT	0	0	0	0	0	0
LAND & STRUCTURES	0	0	0	0	0	0
GRANTS, CLAIMS	0	0	0	0	0	0
MISCELLANEOUS	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL OPERATING	0	0	501.2	501.2	501.2	501.2

CAPITAL	0	0	0	0	0	0
---------	---	---	---	---	---	---

REVENUE	0	0	0	0	0	0
---------	---	---	---	---	---	---

FUNDING: (Thousands of dollars)

GENERAL FUND	0	0	501.2	501.2	501.2	501.2
FEDERAL FUNDS	0	0	0	0	0	0
OTHER FUND SOURCE	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	0	0	501.2	501.2	501.2	501.2

POSITIONS

FULL-TIME:	0	0	0	0	0	0
PART-TIME:	0	0	0	0	0	0
TEMPORARY:	0	0	0	0	0	0

Estimate of current year impact: Zero

ANALYSIS: (attach a separate page if necessary.)

Since this bill only affects employees of a state facility, we do not anticipate that political subdivisions will incur additional costs.

Prepared By: Gary Bader *Gary M. Bader*
Division: Retirement and Benefits

Phone: 465-4460
Date: February 11, 1992

Approved by Commissioner: Nancy Bear Usery *Nancy Bear Usery*
Agency: Department of Administration

Date: 2/18/92

Distribution (by preparer): Legislative Finance, Legislative Sponsor, Requestor, OMB & Impacted Agency(ies).

*All State
FN & Admin*

House Bill 450
Analysis of Fiscal Implications to the Retirement Funds
Prepared by Division of Retirement and Benefits
Department of Administration
February 11, 1992

Analysis: This bill is intended to include Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) members who serve as employees of a state residential psychiatric facility under "Peace Officer/Firefighter" coverage. They are currently covered under the "All Other" category. We have assumed that this bill will increase the "Peace Officer/Firefighter" participation and decrease the "All Other" participation in PERS by 440 members.

This bill is estimated to increase the state FY 95 PERS contribution rate by .08%. The state payroll is estimated to be \$626,535,254 in FY 95 and remain stable each year thereafter.

The state cost of \$501.2 is calculated as follows:

State FY 95 payroll	\$ 626,535,254
Increase in PERS rate	X <u>.08%</u>
TOTAL FY 95 STATE COST.....	<u>\$ 501,228</u>

This bill will increase the PERS accrued liabilities by \$3 million and result in a decrease of .01% in the funding ratio of the PERS fund.

FISCAL NOTE

BILL NO. HB 450

STATE OF ALASKA
1992 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Revision Date: _____
Title: An act granting employees of a state residential psychiatric facility status of peace officers under PERS.

Department Affected: Administration
BRU: Retirement and Benefits

Sponsor: PARNELL
Requestor: House Health, Education & Social Services

Component: Retirement and Benefits
COMPONENT SERIAL NO. 64

Expenditures/Revenues: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96	FY 97
PERSONAL SERVICES	0	0	0	0	0	0
TRAVEL	0	0	0	0	0	0
CONTRACTUAL	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUPPLIES	0	0	0	0	0	0
EQUIPMENT	0	0	0	0	0	0
LAND & STRUCTURES	0	0	0	0	0	0
GRANTS, CLAIMS	0	0	0	0	0	0
MISCELLANEOUS	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL OPERATING	0	0	0	0	0	0

CAPITAL	0	0	0	0	0	0
---------	---	---	---	---	---	---

REVENUE	0	0	0	0	0	0
---------	---	---	---	---	---	---

FUNDING: (Thousands of dollars)

GENERAL FUND	0	0	0	0	0	0
FEDERAL FUNDS	0	0	0	0	0	0
OTHER	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0

POSITIONS

FULL-TIME:	0	0	0	0	0	0
PART-TIME:	0	0	0	0	0	0
TEMPORARY:	0	0	0	0	0	0

Estimate of current year impact: Zero

ANALYSIS: (attach a separate page if necessary.)

Prepared By: Gary Bader *Gary M. Bader*
Division: Retirement and Benefits

Phone: 465-4460
Date: February 11, 1992

Approved by Commissioner: Nancy Bear Usura *Nancy Bear Usura*
Agency: Department of Administration

Date: 2/18/92

Distribution (by preparer): Legislative Finance, Legislative Sponsor, Requestor, OMB & Impacted Agency(ies).

*Retirement & Benefits
FN & Admin*

H B

4 5 5

HB 455 "An Act relating to high school counselors."
HB 456 "An Act relating to elementary school counselors."

Fiscal Note (Blue) - 0 - DOE Education Program Support

Sponsor Statement with "benefits" and definition.

Children Achieving Potential -- An Introduction to Elementary
School Counseling and State-Level Policies (PLEASE RETURN TO REP.
B. DAVIS)

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Office of Majority Whip

3111 C STREET, SUITE 508
ANCHORAGE AK 99503
(907) 561-2039

PO BOX V
JUNEAU AK 99811
(907) 465-3875/4894



VICE CHAIR
HEALTH, EDUCATION
& SOCIAL SERVICES

COMMUNITY AND
REGIONAL AFFAIRS

INTERNATIONAL TRADE
AND TOURISM

CHAIR
CHILDREN'S CAUCUS

REPRESENTATIVE BETTYE DAVIS

DISTRICT 14 SEAT B • EAST ANCHORAGE • MULDOON

SPONSOR STATEMENT

There is a general belief that our public schools are at a critical point and changes are needed. Comprehensive programs in counseling and guidance are vital if excellence in education is to be achieved.

HB 455 requires that a district shall select and employ at each secondary school at least one person who is certified in school counseling for every group of 300 students enrolled at the school.

HB 456 states that a city or borough school district shall select and employ at least one person who is certified in school counseling at each elementary school in the district, and that a Rural Education Attendance Area shall provide students with access to a person who is certified in school counseling at each elementary school in the district. A person employed in an may not have a caseload higher than 250 students.

School counselors in Alaska deal with diverse systems and services. Counseling may take place in a large urban guidance center or in a corner of a library in a rural setting. Itinerant counselors fly to bush communities in every kind of inclement weather, and in many settings, are expected to serve also as half-time teachers. Wherever these counselors serve, they attempt to meet the needs of all students, especially the "At Risk" population.

It is important to note that American society is constantly changing. The expectation of life long learning, single parent families, blended families, teenage suicide, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, peer and family pressure, and cultural differences are not abstract issues. They are real and have a substantial impact on students in their personal, social, career and educational development.



BENEFITS OF THE SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

1. Promotes knowledge and assistance in career exploration and development.
2. Develops decision-making skills.
3. Assists in acquiring knowledge of self and relating effectively to others.
4. Broadens knowledge of our changing world.
5. Increases opportunities for counselor-student interaction.

BENEFITS FOR PARENTS

1. Provides support for parents regarding their child's educational.
2. Develops a system for a child's long-range planning.
3. Increases opportunities for parent/counselor interaction.
4. Enables parents to obtain resources when needed.

BENEFITS FOR TEACHERS

1. Encourages positive, supportive working relationships.
2. Provides a team effort to address competencies.
3. Enhances the role of the counselor as a resource person.

BENEFITS FOR ADMINISTRATORS

1. Provides program structure with specific content.
2. Provides a means of evaluating counseling program efforts.
3. Enhances the image of the counseling program in the community.

BENEFITS OF LOCAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION

1. Provides a rationale for including a comprehensive counseling program in the school system.
2. Provides program information to the community.
3. Provides a basis for determining funding allocations.
4. Provides ongoing data relative to the attainment of student competencies through counseling program efforts.

CORRECTION

**THIS DOCUMENT
HAS BEEN REPHOTOGRAPHED
TO ASSURE LEGIBILITY**

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Office of Majority Whip

3111 C STREET, SUITE 508
ANCHORAGE AK 99503
(907) 561-2039

PO BOX V
JUNEAU AK 99811
(907) 465-3875/4894



VICE CHAIR
HEALTH, EDUCATION
& SOCIAL SERVICES

COMMUNITY AND
REGIONAL AFFAIRS

INTERNATIONAL TRADE
AND TOURISM

CHAIR
CHILDREN'S CAUCUS

REPRESENTATIVE BETTYE DAVIS

DISTRICT 14 SEAT B • EAST ANCHORAGE • MULDOON

SPONSOR STATEMENT

There is a general belief that our public schools are at a critical point and changes are needed. Comprehensive programs in counseling and guidance are vital if excellence in education is to be achieved.

HB 455 requires that a district shall select and employ at each secondary school at least one person who is certified in school counseling for every group of 300 students enrolled at the school.

HB 456 states that a city or borough school district shall select and employ at least one person who is certified in school counseling at each elementary school in the district, and that a Rural Education Attendance Area shall provide students with access to a person who is certified in school counseling at each elementary school in the district. A person employed in an may not have a caseload higher than 250 students.

School counselors in Alaska deal with diverse systems and services. Counseling may take place in a large urban guidance center or in a corner of a library in a rural setting. Itinerant counselors fly to bush communities in every kind of inclement weather, and in many settings, are expected to serve also as half-time teachers. Wherever these counselors serve, they attempt to meet the needs of all students, especially the "At Risk" population.

It is important to note that American society is constantly changing. The expectation of life long learning, single parent families, blended families, teenage suicide, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, peer and family pressure, and cultural differences are not abstract issues. They are real and have a substantial impact on students in their personal, social, career and educational development.



In the past five years, various task forces have been formed to address these critical issues. One group in particular, the Governor's Interim Commission on Children and Youth, suggested that children and youth in Alaska must overcome social, economic, and educational barriers. The following statement is from their 1988 Report:

"We must invest our limited human and financial resources to prevent problems as well as treat them once they arrive---prevention is cost effective and the only real alternative to band-aid approaches that are not working".

One of the major recommendations of the task force was the need for the initiation and expansion of school counselor programs, especially at the elementary level.

The Hensley's Suicide Committee stated in their report that: "Although not part of the formal system intended by law to address suicide issues, the schools of the state have become engaged by the problem." The committee points out that "these schools are an appropriate focal point for direct efforts to prevent suicide". Currently, the suicide rate among Alaska Natives is the highest in the nation.

School counseling programs could play an important role in not only the solution to these problems, but also in their prevention.

BENEFITS OF THE SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

1. Promotes knowledge and assistance in career exploration and development.
2. Develops decision-making skills.
3. Assists in acquiring knowledge of self and relating effectively to others.
4. Broadens knowledge of our changing world.
5. Increases opportunities for counselor-student interaction.

BENEFITS FOR PARENTS

1. Provides support for parents regarding their child's educational.
2. Develops a system for a child's long-range planning.
3. Increases opportunities for parent/counselor interaction.
4. Enables parents to obtain resources when needed.

BENEFITS FOR TEACHERS

1. Encourages positive, supportive working relationships.
2. Provides a team effort to address competencies.
3. Enhances the role of the counselor as a resource person.

BENEFITS FOR ADMINISTRATORS

1. Provides program structure with specific content.
2. Provides a means of evaluating counseling program efforts.
3. Enhances the image of the counseling program in the community.

BENEFITS OF LOCAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION

1. Provides a rationale for including a comprehensive counseling program in the school system.
2. Provides program information to the community.
3. Provides a basis for determining funding allocations.
4. Provides ongoing data relative to the attainment of student competencies through counseling program efforts.

BENEFITS FOR BUSINESS, INDUSTRY AND LABOR

1. Provides increased opportunity for collaboration among counselors and business, industry, and labor communities.
2. Enhances the role of the counselor as a resource person.
3. Increases opportunities for business, industry and labor to participate actively in the total school program.
4. Provides a potential work force with decision-making skills, pre-employment skills, and increased worker maturity.

BENEFITS FOR COUNSELING PERSONNEL

1. Provides a clearly defined role and function.
2. Eliminates non-counseling functions.
3. Offers the opportunity to reach a large majority of students.
4. Provides a tool for program management.
5. Outlines clearly defined responsibilities for specific student competencies.

A SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM

DEFINITION

The Alaska program definition for School Counseling is:

School counseling is an integral part of the total educational program. It is developmental by design and includes sequential activities organized and implemented by certified school counselors with the support of teachers, administrators, students and parents. A school counseling program shall include:

- 1. Counseling Curriculum**
- 2. Individual Student Planning**
- 3. Responsive Services**
- 4. System Support**

The program addresses the needs of all students by helping them to:

- * Acquire knowledge of self and relating effectively to others.**
- * Develop competencies in career/vocational planning and exploration.**
- * Achieve educational success.**

For the record, my name is Drew Alexander. I am currently an assistant principal at Juneau-Douglas High School and southeast Alaska's representative on the Alaska School Counselors Association Executive Board. Prior to becoming an administrator, I was a counselor at Juneau-Douglas High School for two years and for the two years preceding that, a counselor at Barrow High School. I appreciate the opportunity to testify before you this morning in favor of ^{House} Senate Bills 455 & 456.

Not quite two years ago, the results of an Alaskan adolescent health survey was released to the public. The document, entitled The State of Adolescent Health in Alaska, detailed the responses of 5000 students enrolled in the our state's public schools. Even though the results were startling to most, the teachers and counselors who interact daily with these students were not surprised by the fact that one-in-six Alaskan youths reported that they have attempted suicide . . . that 25%

of all female respondents and 8% of all male respondents report sexual abuse . . . that 75% of females and 67% of males report being sexually active by their senior year. Teachers and counselors were not surprised by the fact that over 20% of the state's teenage girls have been pregnant and more than 1-in-4 of that number had been pregnant multiple times . . . that nearly half of high school age males and a third of high school age females report drinking and driving. Teachers and counselors were not surprised by the fact that one-in-ten seniors reported daily or weekly use of marijuana . . . and that nearly 40% of all youths had been involved in violent behaviors and between 15% and 25% of Alaskan youths had participated in illegal activities such as vandalism, shoplifting, and stealing from home.

It's a fact of life that unprecedented changes are taking place in our state, society, and the various cultures composing it. Alaskan youth are faced with choices and problems no earlier

group has ever had to confront.

In response to these challenges, the Governor's Interim Commission on Children and Youth recommended the expansion and extension of kindergarten through twelfth grade counseling programs. Fortunately, this was the catalyst for the Alaska School Counseling Program that is being successfully implemented in several farsighted districts within the state . . . but unfortunately, some districts have never gotten the message . . . unbelievably a few districts in our state have no counselors, others have 1 itinerant counselor for a number of schools, and, with the exception of the Juneau Schools which have one counselor for each of its five elementary schools, elementary counselors are indeed a rare breed.

It's time that all districts within the state get the message that, try as hard as they might, their students are not going to learn when they cannot cope with the problems besieging them today.

Today there exists a new breed of school counselor who is trained to work with the most troubled youth, providing workable, realistic solutions to overcome those tremendous hurdles. But we have to get those counselors to the districts . . . that's where you come in. By supporting this bill, you are taking a tremendous step in the right direction. Your support is support for the state's youth and the state's future.

Thank you. Do you have any questions?

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
1992 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. HB 455

Revision Date: _____

Department Affected: Education

Title: "An Act relating to high school counselors."

BRU: Educational Program Support

Component: Data Management

Sponsor: Representative B. Davis

Requestor: (H) HESS

COMPONENT SERIAL NO.

1	2	4	1
---	---	---	---

Expenditures/Revenues: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96	FY 97	FY 98
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	0	0	0	0	0	0

CAPITAL						
---------	--	--	--	--	--	--

REVENUE FUND SOURCE:						
----------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND						
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER FUND SOURCE:						
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

Estimate of current year impact: _____

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary.)
See attached detailed analysis. For this analysis, 7-12 was considered secondary.
low estimate \$904,327
high estimate \$1,100,000

Prepared by: Mike Maher

Phone: 465-2800

Division: Commissioner's Office

Date: 2-18-92

Approved by Commissioner: 

Jerry Covey

Agency: Education

Date: 2-18-92

	REEA Cost	REEA Cost if redistribute existing staff and hire necessary staff	City and Borough Cost	City and Borough Cost if redistribute existing staff and hire any necessary staff	Total Cost for Bill if hire new staff	Total Cost for Bill if redistribute existing staff and hire any necessary staff
Bill						
House Bill No. 455 (Secondary Counselors)	424,978	263,289	702,268	641,038	1,127,246	904,327

Bettye Davis

Children Achieving Potential

**An Introduction to Elementary School
Counseling and State-Level Policies**

Harriet L. Glosoff

Constance L. Koprowicz



Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	v
Introduction	1
I. The Challenge: Children Achieving Potential	3
Why Do Elementary School Children Need Counseling?	3
Elementary School Counselors and Children Achieving Potential	4
II. The Role of Counselors in Elementary Schools	7
Principles of Comprehensive School Counseling Programs	7
What Do Elementary School Counselors Do?	8
Career Awareness in Elementary School Counseling Programs	14
III. Research in Support of Elementary School Counseling	15
IV. State Legislatures and Elementary School Counseling Policy	19
State Legislators and Education Policy	19
Legislative Interest in Elementary Counseling	20
State Elementary Counseling Policies	20
Some Policy Alternatives	25
V. Conclusion	29
Recommendations	29
Appendix A: State Policy for Elementary School Counselors	31
Appendix B: Virginia Elementary Counseling Mandate	33
Bibliography	35

Acknowledgments

The authors and their respective organizations are especially grateful to the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation for supplying the grant that made this project possible.

A special thanks goes out to the following people for their hard work in connection with this report: James J. Bergin, government relations chairman, Oklahoma School Counselor's Association; Doris Rhea Coy, president, American School Counselor Association; Dr. Libby R. Hoffman, assistant professor, Department of Counseling Education, Virginia Technical Institute; Carol Neiman, director of administrative services, American School Counselor Association; Robert Palaich, senior policy analyst, Education Commission of the States; Eleanor Saslaw, secondary school counselor, Virginia; Mark Weston, minority staff assistant, Appropriations Committee, U.S. House of Representatives; and Richard Yep, director of government relations, American Association for Counseling and Development.

Others who contributed their time to this project are: David Addicot, HARK Coalition, Washington; Beverly Anderson, associate executive director, Education Commission of the States; Derek L. Burlson, special publications editor, Phi Delta Kappa; Paul Ciborowski, chair, Committee on Childhood and Adolescence, American Mental Health Counselors Association; Sally Klein, elementary school teacher, California; Anne Kopmeier, family therapist; Karen Meek, director of guidance and counseling, Oklahoma State Department of Education; State Representative C. Arthur Ollie, Iowa; Nicholas J. Penning, director of legislation, American Association of School Administrators; Bella Rosenberg, assistant to the president, American Federation of Teachers; Dr. Richard Smith, Department of Counseling and Psychological Services, Georgia State University; State Assemblyman John Vasconcellos, California; Charlene Wallace, guidance supervisor, Des Moines Public Schools; and Julie B. Wertz, elementary school counselor, Colorado.

Thanks also to the American Association for Counseling and Development and National Conference of State Legislatures staff for their advice, support and suggestions, and to the staff in each state department of education who contributed information for the 50-state survey on counseling mandates.

CORRECTION

**THIS DOCUMENT
HAS BEEN REPHOTOGRAPHED
TO ASSURE LEGIBILITY**

Bettye Davis

Children Achieving Potential

**An Introduction to Elementary School
Counseling and State-Level Policies**

Harriet L. Glossoff
Constance L. Koprowicz



This publication was made possible through a grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

Copyright (c) 1990 by the National Conference of State Legislatures and the American Association for Counseling and Development.
ISBN 1-55516-322-X

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	v
Introduction	1
I. The Challenge: Children Achieving Potential	3
Why Do Elementary School Children Need Counseling?	3
Elementary School Counselors and Children Achieving Potential	4
II. The Role of Counselors in Elementary Schools	7
Principles of Comprehensive School Counseling Programs	7
What Do Elementary School Counselors Do?	8
Career Awareness in Elementary School Counseling Programs	14
III. Research in Support of Elementary School Counseling	15
IV. State Legislatures and Elementary School Counseling Policy	19
State Legislators and Education Policy	19
Legislative Interest in Elementary Counseling	20
State Elementary Counseling Policies	20
Some Policy Alternatives	25
V. Conclusion	29
Recommendations	29
Appendix A: State Policy for Elementary School Counselors	31
Appendix B: Virginia Elementary Counseling Mandate	33
Bibliography	35

Acknowledgments

The authors and their respective organizations are especially grateful to the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation for supplying the grant that made this project possible.

A special thanks goes out to the following people for their hard work in connection with this report: James J. Bergin, government relations chairman, Oklahoma School Counselor's Association; Doris Rhea Coy, president, American School Counselor Association; Dr. Libby R. Hoffman, assistant professor, Department of Counseling Education, Virginia Technical Institute; Carol Neiman, director of administrative services, American School Counselor Association; Robert Palaich, senior policy analyst, Education Commission of the States; Eleanor Saslaw, secondary school counselor, Virginia; Mark Weston, minority staff assistant, Appropriations Committee, U.S. House of Representatives; and Richard Yep, director of government relations, American Association for Counseling and Development.

Others who contributed their time to this project are: David Addicot, HARK Coalition, Washington; Beverly Anderson, associate executive director, Education Commission of the States; Derek L. Burleson, special publications editor, Phi Delta Kappa; Paul Ciborowski, chair, Committee on Childhood and Adolescence, American Mental Health Counselors Association; Sally Klein, elementary school teacher, California; Anne Kopmeier, family therapist; Karen Meek, director of guidance and counseling, Oklahoma State Department of Education; State Representative C. Arthur Ollie, Iowa; Nicholas J. Penning, director of legislation, American Association of School Administrators; Bella Rosenberg, assistant to the president, American Federation of Teachers; Dr. Richard Smith, Department of Counseling and Psychological Services, Georgia State University; State Assemblyman John Vasconcellos, California; Charlene Wallace, guidance supervisor, Des Moines Public Schools; and Julie B. Wertz, elementary school counselor, Colorado.

Thanks also to the American Association for Counseling and Development and National Conference of State Legislatures staff for their advice, support and suggestions, and to the staff in each state department of education who contributed information for the 50-state survey on counseling mandates.

Introduction

Children are the future of our families, our communities, our nation. We will one day depend upon them personally, politically, and economically. It is, therefore, in the best interest of *all* people to see that our youngsters develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to become healthy, productive adults. It is in our best interest to make the United States a nation of children achieving their potential.

As we struggle to compete in an international marketplace, education has become a center of policy discussions at the state and national levels. And as we strive toward *educational excellence*, experts differ on what this phrase actually means, how to measure it, and how best to achieve it. The American Association for Counseling and Development's Task Force on A Nation at Risk cautions that narrowing our definition of excellence to test performance may actually disenfranchise more students and contribute to even higher numbers of adolescents dropping out of school. They stress that personal and social competency must necessarily precede, as well as accompany, academic competency. Other reports have suggested some alternatives for achieving excellence such as lengthening the school day, offering a more flexible curriculum, offering a more rigid curriculum, and decreasing the number of children in each classroom. While each of these strategies has its merits, common sense tells us that we must provide children with the support they need personally and socially as well as academically.

The problems facing today's youth are complex and must be tackled from many directions if they are to be resolved. Policymakers at all levels are creating ways to approach the whole child such as fostering collaboration between child-serving agencies, often with the school as a focal point. Schools are being restructured to provide students with the attention and direction they need to keep up with the academic and personal demands put upon them by a society marked by constant change.

The many reports stemming from the past decade of education reform have addressed these issues at length. Topics such as at-risk youth, parental involvement in education, and interagency collaboration have emerged as top priorities on educational agendas. One common ingredient in all of these is the concept of early intervention--the need to try to *prevent* problems before they become crises; to teach young children coping strategies before they become high school dropouts or statistics on teenage pregnancy.

Elementary school counselors are trained to use early intervention strategies to help children achieve their potential by working with the whole child. They act as a bridge between teachers and parents, schools and social service agencies, families and children. Although specifically trained to perform these functions in an educational setting, school counselors have not been adequately included in the discussions of restructuring schools or in helping formulate state policy concerning comprehensive guidance and counseling in elementary schools. One reason for this oversight is a lack of information on the part of all parties involved.

The purpose of this document is twofold: to inform legislators, counselors, and other education professionals about elementary school counseling and the policies that have been formed in support of this profession; and to open the lines of communication between counseling professionals and state-level decision makers.

This publication is divided into five chapters. *Chapter one* examines some of the barriers to learning that today's youth face and the role that elementary school counselors can play in helping children overcome these barriers and achieve their true potential. *Chapter two*

describes the principles of comprehensive school counseling programs, the tasks elementary school counselors perform, and the benefits of counseling to children and society. *Chapter three* presents the findings of research studies in the area of elementary school counseling and its relationship to academic achievement; dropout rates; and children's behaviors, attitudes, and skills. *Chapter four* explores the roles of state legislators in developing policies for elementary school counseling and provides examples of state policies and funding strategies. *Chapter five* lists recommendations for the development of effective elementary school counseling policy.

I

The Challenge: Children Achieving Potential

All adults involved in education policy today find themselves faced with this challenge: how to provide *every* child with a quality education appropriate for helping the child reach his/her greatest potential. Why must we consider strategies such as preventive elementary school counseling programs to help reach this goal? What obstacles exist for young children that make it difficult for them to function in our current educational system?

Why Do Elementary School Children Need Counseling?

Academic success is not an isolated component of a child's life. It is affected not only by the child's level of intelligence, but also by a number of other factors that combine to make up the whole child. A child's life can be divided into four segments: family, society/peers, school, and self-concept. To say that any of these segments exists independently of the others would be naive. What we need to know is how all of them affect a child's academic performance.

What could be happening within each of these areas to create barriers to learning?

Every day, 2,989 American children see their parents divorced.

Every 26 seconds, a child runs away from home.

Every 47 seconds, a child is abused or neglected.

Every seven minutes, a child is killed or injured by guns.

Every 53 minutes, a child dies because of poverty.

Every day, 100,000 children are homeless.

Every school day, 135,000 children bring guns to school.

Every eight seconds of the school day, a child drops out.

Every day, six teenagers commit suicide.

Source: Children's Defense Fund, 1990.

- (1) **Family:** Divorce, parental substance abuse, working parents, illiterate parents, incest, lack of attention, lack of positive reinforcement.
- (2) **Society/Peers:** Violence in media, gangs, drugs, poverty, threat of nuclear war, premarital sex, peer reinforcement of family-caused insecurities.
- (3) **School:** High pupil/teacher ratios, pressure to excel at an early age, violence at school, lack of individual attention, lack of nonjudgmental child/adult relationship.
- (4) **Self-Concept:** All the aspects of a child's life combine to create a self-concept. But to overcome a low self-concept developed before beginning school, a child needs an abundance of positive influences. By having a strong self-concept and by making positive decisions, a child can tackle the problems mentioned above and make progress.

None of these areas is meant to be comprehensive. Yet, one or several of the influences mentioned do exist for many children of elementary school age, and they can set the stage for future problems if they are not dealt with as early as possible in a child's life.

Children with a lot of these problems will be labeled at risk and provided special services. But many will exhibit symptoms masked as shyness, arrogance, eccentricity, or oversensitivity. Those who don't cause trouble, who pass tests but don't excel, may be at risk of not reaching their potential and may be suffering inside. Yet, these children slip through the cracks when crisis intervention is the main focus.

Many recent reports have addressed at-risk youth and the best methods for helping these youngsters. They are defined as youth who are in danger of leaving school without the skills needed to continue their education or become productive, self-sufficient members of society (MDC, Inc., 1988, p. 2). These reports repeatedly call for early intervention to head off the problems that appear so uncontrollable when a child turns 15 or 16 and is failing or dropping out of high school.

The argument for elementary school counseling is one of early intervention and prevention but in a more comprehensive manner than what is asked for in the at-risk youth reports. All children are at risk, not necessarily of failing, but of not reaching their true potential. As much as we need to see that those who are being unproductive become productive, *we also need to see that those with potential to excel will excel because our future depends on having not only a workforce of literate adults but also a society of creative thinkers, artists, entrepreneurs, and strong leaders.* The qualities required for success can be strengthened or weakened in the early years. We see what is being done to weaken them and are suggesting a way to help make our children strong.

Elementary School Counselors and Children Achieving Potential

One common factor many reports on educational reforms share is the recognition that early identification and intervention of children's problems are essential to change some of the current statistics regarding dropouts, teenage pregnancy, suicide, substance abuse, and other self-destructive behaviors. If we wait until children are in middle or high school to address the reasons behind the statistics, we lose the opportunity to help them achieve their potential. In fact, by the time they reach high school, we have already lost too many of our young people to suicide and substance abuse!

Comprehensive school counseling is based on preventing children's problems from occurring through a systematic program of counseling and guidance services. Not all problems can be prevented. However, their early identification and early intervention before they escalate and interfere with learning and healthy development remain critical goals of counseling programs in elementary schools.

To become a school counselor, a person must have a master's degree and meet other certification requirements as defined by each state. Through their graduate programs, elementary school counselors are trained to work toward preventing the development of children's problems, intervene quickly to correct problems and prevent their escalation, and provide crisis intervention. Qualified counselors must be versed in human development, career development, social systems, mental health, group dynamics and counseling, family therapy, physical and emotional rehabilitation, individual assessment, organizational behavior, human relationships, psychology, and placement and referral. They are truly human development specialists and should play a central role in the education of our youth.

Counselors can make major contributions toward resolving many of the problems previously mentioned in this report.

Young people are challenged by difficult choices that will affect their lives. They must make decisions or cope with situations regarding substance abuse; premarital sex; teenage pregnancy; academic performance; physical, sexual, and emotional abuse; dropping out of school; and suicide. If we have any hope of *preventing* children's problems from occurring or becoming serious enough to interfere with their learning, programs *must* begin during the most critical time in their lives--elementary school.

The call for comprehensive school counseling programs has been heard from many concerned groups:

- The national PTA passed a resolution in 1983 encouraging all state and local PTAs to seek funding for school counseling programs.
- In "Keeping the Options Open: Recommendations," the College Entrance Examination Board in 1986 strongly urged that comprehensive school counseling programs be provided from kindergarten through grade 12.
- In 1986, the National School Boards Association passed a resolution supporting comprehensive school counseling programs.
- To date, all states report having some counselors in their elementary schools; 12 states have mandated elementary school counseling; and 12 more are considering mandates.
- The College Board (Hartman, 1989, p. 18) suggested that "improved guidance and counseling in our schools can contribute significantly to reducing the considerable waste of human talent that now exists."

II

The Role of Counselors in Elementary Schools

Principles of Comprehensive School Counseling Programs

Childhood is not simply a time of innocence but a time when children must confront and master a myriad of tasks such as mastering fundamental academic skills in reading, writing, and calculating; building a positive self-concept and an awareness of abilities, aptitudes, interests, and limitations; learning to get along with peers; becoming aware and tolerant of individual differences; developing an awareness of the world of work; and acquiring new physical skills. These are all part of children's job description for their work during elementary school years. *It is the overriding goal of elementary school counselors to provide a planned program of guidance and counseling services based on these developmental needs and to help all children achieve their greatest academic, social, and personal potential.*

A summary of some of the basic principles of developmental counseling states that a developmental school counseling program

is for all students, has an organized and planned curriculum, is sequential and flexible, is an integrated part of the total educational process, involves all school personnel, helps students learn more effectively and efficiently, includes counselors who provide specialized counseling services and interventions (Myrick, 1987).

School counseling program is an umbrella term encompassing a wide variety of services administrators, teachers, counselors, and other pupil personnel specialists offer in kindergarten through senior high school settings. School counseling programs share similar characteristics with other educational programs such as "student outcomes (student competencies); activities and processes to assist students in achieving these outcomes; professionally recognized personnel; and materials and resources" (Gysbers and Henderson, 1988).

School counseling programs are *comprehensive* in the range of activities and services provided. These include:

- Preventive classroom guidance activities;
- Individual and group counseling;
- Referrals to community agencies;
- Consultation with teachers, administrators, parents, and community leaders;
- Crisis intervention; and
- Assessment, placement, and follow-up services.

A *team approach* is essential to comprehensive school counseling programs. There is an underlying assumption that all school staff must be actively involved in promoting student achievement. Throughout this report, the *team* refers to teachers, parents, and the school counselor, administrator, psychologist, and social worker. At the core of this team are

qualified elementary school counselors, who counsel students and parents and work as consultants to (and collaborators with) all team members.

Guidance describes an instructional process or structured learning activities, which attempt to prevent problems. Such activities assist children in developing greater understanding of themselves and others and emphasize the needs of a group of students rather than those of any one child.

Counseling is a process in which a trained professional forms a trusting relationship with a person who needs assistance. This relationship focuses on personal meaning of experiences, feelings, behaviors, alternatives, consequences, and goals. Counseling provides a unique opportunity for individuals to explore and express their ideas and feelings in a nonevaluative, nonthreatening environment.

What Do Elementary School Counselors Do?

For many people, the word *counselor* brings to mind the image of someone they saw once or twice during their high school years. The stereotypic school guidance counselor of 20 years ago was the person who gave tests, passed out information, helped high school students with their class schedules, filled out college applications, and often acted as a disciplinarian. With this image in mind, many people question the need for counselors in elementary schools. But this is not an accurate picture of who elementary school counselors are and what they do. For many children, the school counselor may be the one person with whom they feel safe and can confide in. Unlike teachers, counselors do not grade students, can often meet with them individually, and do not change classes from year to year.

The following are some of the basic tasks routinely performed by elementary school counselors.

Classroom Guidance

A comprehensive school counseling program involves planned guidance activities for all students. These age-related exercises foster students' academic, personal, social, and career development skills. Such activities are implemented through a collaborative effort by counselors and teachers. The classroom guidance curriculum focuses on topics such as:

- Self-understanding;
- Effective interpersonal and communication skills;
- Problem-solving, decision-making, and conflict resolution skills;
- Effective study skills and positive attitudes toward school;
- Career awareness and the world of work;
- Substance abuse prevention;

- Comprehension and acceptance of differences in people (racial, gender-based, cultural, religious, physical); and
- Divorce.

School counselors take the lead in the development and organization of the guidance curriculum. The implementation of guidance activities, however, requires the support and assistance of teachers, parents, and administrators. Counselors can train teachers to conduct many activities during their classes. Other guidance procedures may be delivered most effectively by other team members. Regardless of who conducts the exercises, the whole team must be aware of their goals so that they can be reinforced. For example, after a work-related guidance activity, parents can discuss the personal satisfaction they experience from their work and leisure time. Or after a class field trip to a local factory, small groups of students can analyze different parts of the production process.

Individual and Small Group Counseling

In many situations, counselors work with students when they experience problems. However, counseling must be more than the provision of remediation and crisis intervention--if counselors are always putting out fires, they have little time to prevent them from starting. Developmental counseling provides students with coping strategies before a crisis occurs. This may involve seeing students individually or in groups to help them develop and use their resources. Counseling can also be provided for parents to address specific problems that may interfere with their children's success in school.

Group counseling has become an invaluable part of most elementary school counselors' work. Working with students in groups acknowledges that peer influence is an extremely powerful factor in children's development. Groups provide them with an opportunity to give and receive feedback, which contributes to their understanding of themselves and others. It also allows them to practice interpersonal and personal skills in a safe, reinforcing environment. In addition, a group approach enables counselors to have an impact on a greater number of children, making the most efficient use of the professionals' time.

Of course, a group approach is not best suited for every child. There are children who benefit most from individual counseling, or a combination of individual and group work. For some children, the nature of their problem requires more confidentiality. Others may have extreme difficulty in relating to their peers, be overwhelmed in group situations, be personally dysfunctional, or need individual attention.

Students are referred for counseling by:

- Teachers
- Parents
- School psychologists
- Themselves

Students often need help in many different areas of their lives. The following four areas are based on recommendations in *The Professional Development Guidelines for Elementary School Counselors: A Self Audit* (American School Counselor Association, 1990).

- (1) *Coping with family issues*: Includes divorce/single-parent homes; death, loss, and grief; loss of parent's job; substance abuse; physical, sexual, emotional abuse;

poverty; homelessness; change of residence/school; incarceration; and both parents working.

- (2) *Dealing effectively with interpersonal issues:* Includes communication skills, coping with peer pressure, accepting responsibility for actions, respecting the rights of others, understanding and accepting individual differences, and getting along with others.
- (3) *Becoming effective and responsible learners:* Includes attitudes about school, academic competition, academic failure, school phobia, individual learning styles, responsible school behavior, and conflicts with teachers.
- (4) *Coping with personal adjustment issues:* Includes stress management, depression, suicide, eating disorders, addictions, and health problems.

Consultation

Consultation in school counseling programs focuses on the total learning environment of the school (Myrick, 1987). Teachers use counselors as a resource, seeking consultation on specific students' problems and on general issues such as addressing the needs of culturally diverse students in the classroom. Many teachers can benefit from a counselor's assistance in developing new ways of responding and relating to children.

Elementary school teachers in Arkansas presented testimony to the legislature's Education Standards Committee stating their most pressing need was dealing with children's problems and requested that counselors be assigned to their schools.

A major part of the counselor's role is to collaborate with teachers and parents, not to criticize them. In fact, counselors can provide support and encouragement to teachers and parents who may be feeling frustrated, discouraged, overwhelmed, or unappreciated.

Counselors work with teachers and administrators to help create the kind of school environments that stimulate growth and learning. Their emphasis is on making the educational process more personal and increasing teachers' and administrators' understanding of the importance of fostering acceptance of and valuing individual differences in learning styles and rates of learning; how adults' expectations, biases, and behaviors affect students; and ways of helping children cope with success and failure.

Michelle, a second grade teacher, attended a workshop on cooperative learning. She was excited about trying some of the techniques she learned but was unsure of how to arrange the students into groups. She contacted the school counselor. Together, they clarified her goals and plans, facilitating classroom implementation of her ideas.

Troy was a shy 11-year-old boy. The teacher told his parents that, although his grades were low, he had the potential to do better. Troy often complained of stomach aches and missed school because of illness. This compounded his academic problems. His parents met with the school counselor to discuss what they might do to break this negative cycle.

Typically, consultation involves:

- Conducting professional development workshops and discussions with teachers and other school personnel on subjects such as substance or child abuse;

- Assisting teachers to work with individual students or groups of students;
- Providing relevant materials and resources to teachers, especially relating to classroom guidance curriculum;
- Assisting in the identification and development of programs for students with special needs;
- Participating in school committees that address substance abuse, human growth and development, school climate, and other guidance-related areas;
- Designing and conducting parent education classes;
- Interpreting student information, such as results of standardized tests for students and team members;
- Consulting regularly with other specialists (e.g., social workers, psychologists, representatives from community agencies).

Coordination

Before guidance and counseling activities can take place, much planning, thinking, and coordinating are required. Research in the area has shown that systematic coordination of guidance programs is essential for effective delivery of services (Kameen, Robinson, and Rotter, 1985).

Ten-year-old Carmen was extremely depressed and had been seeing a therapist at the community mental health center. The therapist was concerned that Carmen was not responding well to treatment. With permission from Carmen and her parents, the therapist called the school counselor.

The counselor consulted with Carmen's teacher and observed her behavior in school. The therapist and counselor then discussed possible interventions that could take place at school, including how the counselor's work could supplement that of the therapist. Carmen's teacher became more alert to Carmen's needs and worked with the counselor on establishing a more positive relationship with her.

The Virginia School Counselors Association notes that elementary school counselors must perform the following five coordination functions:

- (1) Coordinate the use of school and community resources in collaboration with other team members;
- (2) Assist parents in gaining access to services their children need--e.g., a child psychologist or a local housing agency--through a referral and follow-up process;
- (3) Serve as liaison between the school, home, and community agencies so that efforts to help students are successful and reinforced rather than duplicated;
- (4) Plan, coordinate, and evaluate the guidance program's effectiveness; and
- (5) Coordinate the school's testing program, which usually includes interpreting test results to parents, students, and school personnel.

Stephen's teacher suspected that he was being neglected at home. Stephen had often been seen on school grounds after hours and had been accused of stealing other children's lunches. The teacher referred him to the school counselor who, because neglect was suspected, was obligated by law to refer the case to the local Department of Social Services.

The community social worker and the school counselor coordinated the services needed by Stephen and his family, including financial assistance for housing and enrollment for him in the school's extended day care program. The counselor also spoke with his mother every few weeks, keeping her up-to-date on Stephen's progress in school.

In addition, counselors coordinate a variety of guidance-related activities including those related to special events throughout the year such as National Career Guidance Week and Human Rights Week. They also maintain an active role in the development and implementation of extracurricular programs designed to promote students' personal growth and skill development (e.g., student council, safety patrol, peer helpers' programs).

Working with Parents

One common recommendation noted in the major proposals for education reform is the need to involve parents more in their children's education. A considerable amount of elementary school counselors' time can be spent doing just this. It is also important to recognize that parents are not always the main adult responsible for a child's development. A large number of children look to grandparents, older siblings, or other relatives for guidance. Although the term *parent* is used throughout this report, it includes all adults who play a significant role in children's home and school lives.

Many school counselors offer parenting classes that focus on providing adults with valuable techniques for helping their children meet their academic, personal, and social potential. Counselors also conduct workshops on specific issues such as normal growth and development, development of study habits, counteracting negative peer pressure, preventing substance abuse, helping children cope with divorce, and managing disruptive behaviors. Many counselors put out newsletters letting parents know what is happening in the school, offering ideas for keeping children active in constructive ways over holiday breaks, and giving tips to improve study habits.

As mentioned earlier, counselors are also receptive to the specific needs of parents whose children may be experiencing problems (or parents whose problems may be affecting their children adversely). Counselors hold individual, family, and group counseling sessions on a short-term basis and also coordinate referrals to other specialists in the school system and community agencies.

Through these activities, elementary school counselors become liaisons between the school and home (ERIC/CAPS, 1985) and are often seen as both the child's and the family's advocate by many parents.

Peer Facilitation

Students often share their problems with peers rather than adults. Counselors provide structured opportunities for children to serve as peer helpers. The power of peer influence cannot be minimized and, in fact, should be capitalized upon. Peer helpers can be selected by school staff and trained by professional counselors in communication and basic counseling

skills through a carefully planned program. Counselors are responsible for budgeting adequate time for meeting with the peer helpers on a weekly basis for continued training, supervision, support, and personal growth. Counselors also continually monitor and evaluate the training and impact of the peer facilitation program.

Peer facilitators talk with other students about their personal problems and refer them to counselors or other adults for help. They are also trained to work well in group settings, teaching basic communication skills to other students and helping facilitate guidance discussions. In addition, peer facilitators tutor students in academic areas, serve as readers for nonreaders, and assist in special education classes. They are also effective in greeting new students and their parents during orientation programs. Overall, recent research shows that both peer facilitators and the students they are matched with benefit from the relationship.

Making Appropriate Referrals

Counselors establish and maintain close working relationships with staff of a variety of school and community agencies. These agencies include departments of health and social services, mental health centers, juvenile courts, and advocacy groups. To help students and their families cope with an array of problems, counselors identify school and community resources and establish policies and procedures for interagency communication.

A teacher noticed that Laverne was occasionally weepy in class and had become withdrawn. When asked what was wrong, Laverne said, "Nothing." The teacher referred her to the school counselor who, after some individual counseling services and discussions with her parents, discovered that Laverne's father had been unemployed for about four months. The family was now being threatened with eviction from their home.

The school counselor gave Laverne's parents the names and telephone numbers of people who could help them obtain emergency housing funds and referred her father to employment counseling services. Laverne attended several sessions with the counselor and then joined a school counseling group.

Some typical tasks counselors may be involved with while helping students and their families gain access to the services they need include:

- Identifying and assisting students and their parents with special needs by referring them to resources in and outside the school;
- Maintaining contacts with outside resources;
- Developing, publishing, and distributing a list of community resources, referral agencies, and hotlines for parents, students, and colleagues;
- Developing a student self-referral system;
- Following up on referrals.

Assessment

Counselors help students identify their skills, abilities, achievements, and interests through counseling activities and the guidance curriculum. They also interpret standardized test results for parents, faculty, and students; relate the results to strengths and limitations in

the school's curriculum; and assist in planning and implementing changes in the curriculum and school's procedures.

Counselors use a variety of assessment instruments to identify the social/emotional needs of students and make recommendations to teachers based on these assessments.

Specialized Populations and Needs

Working with students from culturally diverse populations and students with disabilities requires special attention. Counselors' activities can promote:

- Students' and school personnel's acceptance of differences;
- Policies, procedures, and behaviors that reflect freedom from stereotypes;
- Examination of schools' testing programs to ensure that they reflect equitable standards for all students; and
- Outreach to parents and families of students from culturally diverse populations.

Career Awareness in Elementary School Counseling Programs

Many people think of career education as focusing on career and occupational choices and believe that it takes place in middle and high schools. While it is true that some career decisions are made in high school, the seeds of these decisions begin long before someone turns 18. Career development is actually a lifelong process integrating the roles, settings, and events of a person's life (Gysbers and Moore, 1981). In this sense, the word *career* encompasses all the roles in which individuals are involved (student, worker, family member, citizen). As such, career education is an integral part of students' school experiences as they grow and develop.

In general, the guidance curriculum focuses on facilitating interpersonal relationships and decision-making and problem-solving skills--all of which can increase a student's future effectiveness in the workplace.

Guidance and general classroom activities can focus specifically on the world of work. An untold number of opportunities exist for children to relate school subject matter to career themes. Teachers can link mathematics lessons to the working world by having a model supermarket in the classroom. Part of the science curriculum can focus on the professional functions of people in science-related fields. During a current events lesson discussing, perhaps, the building of a new airport, students can learn about the interdependence of jobs that are needed to accomplish the goal.

At the elementary school level, students are in the process of forming basic values, attitudes, and interests regarding their future world of work. An effective school team helps children develop positive attitudes toward work, take pride in their own efforts, become aware of the many different career opportunities, and understand and acquire good work habits.

III

Research in Support of Elementary School Counseling

As discussed throughout this report, counselors focus on the development of positive self-concepts in children. There have been numerous studies that show low self-esteem as a critical factor in the development of deviant or potentially destructive behaviors (Leung and Drasgow, 1986; Yanish and Battle, 1985; Lorr and Wunderlich, 1986; Eskilson et al., 1986; and Kaplan, 1975, 1976).

The number of studies addressing the promotion of mental health through primary prevention has recently increased (Givson, 1989). Many of these studies reported positive changes in attitudes and behaviors as the result of classroom guidance activities and small group counseling sessions (Cobb and Richards, 1983; Myrick and Dixon, 1985; Myrick, Merhill, and Swanson, 1986; Bleck and Bleck, 1982; Chandler et al., 1984).

The impact of elementary school counselors on children's ability to cope with the myriad of complex social problems they are faced with may best be examined by reviewing these issues separately.

Academic Achievement/Underachievement

The following list briefly reviews the results of several studies regarding methods of improving academic achievement:

- (1) Early intervention with low-achieving elementary school students made a positive difference in their achievement (Jackson, Cleveland, and Meranda, 1975; Esters and Levant, 1983).
- (2) Elementary school counselors have a positive effect on academic achievement (Gerler, Kinney, and Anderson, 1985; Downing, 1977; Peck and Jackson, 1976).
- (3) Encouraging teachers to set appropriate standards of performance for each individual promotes student achievement (Burkman and Brezin, 1981).
- (4) Three years after Florida hired elementary school counselors, students who were underachievers in reading advanced 1.1 years in seven months (Barrientos and Glossbrenner, 1989).
- (5) In a study of 117 underachieving fourth graders, no immediate, significant differences were noted between experimental and control group students after the experimental group was provided with 2.5 years of counseling. But a follow-up study of the participants as high school seniors (Jackson, Cleveland, and Meranda, 1975) showed significant differences in class rank in favor of the counseled students.
- (6) Groups that received elementary guidance and counseling differed significantly from those that did not, not only in academic achievement but also in making responsible choices of courses of study (Adams, 1974; Doyle, 1976).

- (7) Children who participated in counseling groups for children of divorced parents showed better school performance (Freeman and Couchman, 1985; Freeman, 1984).

The Appalachia Educational Laboratory (1984) found, in three school districts in Virginia, that more than 60 percent of staff felt that elementary guidance had contributed to improved test scores and more than 90 percent of parents thought that elementary counseling helped the children.

Dropout Rates

The following list describes the results of several studies regarding methods of dropout reduction and increasing attendance:

- (1) The U.S. Office of Education discovered 47 percent fewer dropouts and 50 percent fewer failures in schools that have adequate counselor/student ratios (American School Counselor Association, 1979, 1981).
- (2) School programs that assist children in developing positive self-concepts and/or in improving their self-esteem should pave the way to reduced dropout rates. Poor academic performance and early negative experiences in school tend to reinforce children's negative self-concepts, poor attitudes toward school, and a belief that school is not for them. This process is cumulative, and counseling and guidance intervention must occur early in the process to prevent dropping out from being the end result (Ruben, 1989).
- (3) Self-esteem and other psychological variables have been shown to correlate with dropout statistics. (Wehlage and Rutter, 1986).
- (4) A number of authors have determined that the characteristics of potential dropouts can be recognized as early as the third grade (Lloyd, 1978; Walters and Kranzler, 1970; Wehlage, 1988).
- (5) Weekly group guidance sessions provided to 60 elementary students identified to be at high risk of dropping out resulted in significant improvement in attendance, school attitude, and self-esteem (Barrientos and Glossbrenner, 1989).
- (6) A longitudinal study (Gerler, 1980) showed that classroom guidance programs have a positive effect on school attendance.
- (7) Numerous studies have supported the premise that elementary school counselors can have a positive impact on children's classroom behaviors and attitudes toward school, which may prevent them from dropping out (Gerler and Anderson, 1986; Cobb and Richards, 1983; Downing, 1977; Wirth, 1977; Deffenbacher and Kemper, 1974).

Behaviors, Attitudes, and Skills

The following study results demonstrate the effects of guidance and counseling on students' behaviors, attitudes, and skills:

- (1) Classroom guidance activities significantly influenced improvement in ratings of children's behavior, conduct grades, and school attitude scores (Gerler and Anderson, 1986; Cobb and Richards, 1983; Myrick and Dixon, 1985; Myrick, Merhill, and Swanson, 1986; Bleck and Bleck, 1982; Chandler, et al., 1984).
- (2) Evaluations of the elementary student counseling centers in the San Diego School District showed a reduction of 80-90 percent in suspensions and referrals to the principal (Miller, 1989).
- (3) Students participating in an elementary school counseling group for young procrastinators (grades three through six) significantly improved their homework completion scores when compared with those of fellow procrastinators waiting to be in the group (Morse, 1987).
- (4) A peer facilitation program in which elementary counselors trained fifth graders to work with second and third graders with behavior problems had a positive impact on the younger students' problem behaviors and attitudes toward themselves and others (Bowman and Myrick, 1987).
- (5) Students (fourth through sixth graders) who had been referred to small group counseling by their teachers for exhibiting hostile and aggressive behaviors scored significantly lower on measures of aggression and hostility than a control group at the conclusion of the intervention (Omizo, Hershberger, and Omizo, 1988).
- (6) Students exposed to a developmental guidance unit on coping skills for being home alone exhibited increased knowledge about procedures to use when alone. In addition, parents expressed increased confidence in their children's ability to care for themselves (Bundy and Boser, 1987).
- (7) Parents who participated in effective parenting groups led by school counselors became more trusting of their children (Jackson and Brown, 1986).

IV

State Legislatures and Elementary School Counseling Policy

State Legislators and Education Policy

State legislators are key players in the formation of education policy. Three ways they can affect policy are by allocating funds, creating mandates, and influencing public opinion.

The primary role of legislators in developing education policy is the allocation of state dollars. Every educational program costs money, and policymakers have the power to increase or decrease state education expenditures. In addition to determining the total dollars that a state will provide for education, legislators develop state funding formulas that determine how much money goes to each district and can also specify general program areas for which that money should be spent. Lastly, dollars can be reallocated as educational priorities change. Local boards of education make specific spending decisions while state boards and state departments of education set standards and oversee the implementation of policies.

The extent to which the legislature influences the decisions of these agencies depends upon the educational governance structure in the individual state. Mandates can be set forth in legislation or in resolutions that require or recommend certain programs to be implemented. Legislators can also support various education improvement strategies by taking advantage of their high visibility on state and local levels. Strategies such as making speeches, attending conferences and local meetings, and using the media can bring an issue to the forefront of public attention.

Whether approaching policy through any or all of these methods, it is important for policymakers to have clearly defined goals for legislation to be effective. For instance, a mandate not accompanied by funding can be ineffective, burdening schools rather than improving them. Groups lobbying for legislative support should also reach a consensus about what needs to be accomplished and work for policies they feel will lead to desired results. In addition, advocates need to be prepared to answer questions regarding current policies, such as accreditation standards, when giving testimony before the legislature.

When everyone involved in policy development knows what is needed, effective policy can result. An example relating to school counseling demonstrates this. Many states do not have an abundance of adequately trained elementary school counselors available to hire, and universities are not all equipped with programs to prepare counselors for work in this field. Legislation mandating a trained counselor in every school could be in vain if this issue is not taken into account; but with proper planning and an appropriate start-up period, states can ensure that counselor education/certification programs are implemented and that trained counselors are available to fill newly created positions.

"I certainly look forward to the time when elementary guidance will be fully supported financially by the state.... We need a fully supported guidance program to assist us in preparing our students for the future."
W. W. Herenton, Superintendent, Memphis City Schools (Cryer & Deanes, 1985).

Legislative Interest in Elementary Counseling

Legislators are being pulled in hundreds of directions in the area of education alone, many of which appear to be immediate avenues for solving some of the current problems being addressed. Yet, it seems clear that short-term quick fixes aren't bringing lasting improvements to our education systems. Elementary school counseling, when approached correctly, is a preventive measure that appears to result in long-term, positive outcomes.

Recently, education reform and the restructuring of schools have been on the lips of every policymaker who has education-related responsibilities. These discussions revolve around issues such as at-risk youth, agency collaboration, parental involvement, and generally, the low level of academic achievement attained by many students. Legislators are being asked to help deal with these issues. Comprehensive elementary school counseling programs are a way to address many of these educational roadblocks.

There are many concerns today regarding education, all of which are relevant to legislators. State dropout rates in 1986 totalled 28.5 percent nationally (*USA Today*, 1989), and many students graduating from high school have not attained the minimum level of knowledge expected of a 12th grader in some academic areas. Hence, these youth are entering adulthood unprepared to go on to higher education or enter the job market; to participate as citizens; and to raise their own children academically, socially, or financially.

All of this can lead to "unemployment, a need for public assistance, treatment or institutionalization for mental health reasons, involvement with the judicial system, and possibly imprisonment for civil or criminal convictions" (Washington's Fair Start Bill, 1989). These dependencies cost the state, and therefore the taxpayers, a lot of money. Preventive approaches such as elementary counseling can lessen those costs in the long term. In fact, research has shown that "every dollar spent on early prevention and intervention can save \$4.74 in costs of remedial education, welfare and crime" (MDC, Inc., 1988, p. 40). We are spending five times more than we need to in trying to correct problems that could be avoided.

State Elementary Counseling Policies

As pressure on state policymakers to improve education increases, state budgets are quickly spent on education reform initiatives. School counseling, particularly elementary school counseling, becomes one item on a long list of fixes--all of which are important to better educational achievement and all of which are being lobbied for at the state level. While legislators and their staff can spend time researching various educational improvement methods, their time is limited. Attention will be given to those approaches that stand out because they have received attention in other states, are known to work quickly (though their results may be short term), or have been presented through a strong lobbying effort.

One way the Florida Elementary Guidance Task Force caught the attention of legislators was by including dollars and cents in its presentation supporting elementary school counselors. Its 1971 position paper quoted that year's costs for certain interventions in areas where counselors can be used for prevention:

Every year in the United States over 100,000 children ages 7-17 are held in jails or places of detention. In Florida the Division of Youth Services reports that the state pays an average of \$23.78 per resident per day in training school and \$13.98 in halfway houses for a total of over eight million dollars a year.... The

elementary school counselor can help prevent delinquency through programs of early identification, appropriate referrals, and through the implementation of programs for behavioral change.

More than half of all school dropouts have average or above average intelligence but are underachievers. Last year 48,789 Florida pupils including 9,550 first graders failed to earn promotion. It cost the state approximately \$35.5 million to have them repeat that grade.... The elementary school counselor can develop and organize guidance services which help correct problems that interfere with learning.

These numbers paint a convincing picture of why state policymakers need to be aware of elementary school counseling and how counselors not only can help children but also can be an asset to the educational system as a whole from academic, personal, social, *and* budgetary standpoints.

"I do not see how [the governor] and the legislators could even conceive of a superior school program that did not include elementary counselors." Teacher, Maryville, Tennessee (Parker, 1985).

Counseling in elementary schools has long-term, far-reaching potential. School counselors are professionals trained to work with teachers not only for improved achievement in a student's personal/social life but also for improved academic achievement.

A number of legislatures have mandated counseling or encouraged their state education departments to implement a mandate. As seen in the 50-state chart in Appendix A, all states have some counselors in elementary schools, yet only 12 have mandates for counseling. More important, only eight support counseling programs with state funding. As previously mentioned, mandates are not necessarily helpful and in fact can be burdensome without financial assistance. In states without mandates, the number of counselors in elementary schools varies with local support. Counselors are plentiful in states such as Florida and the District of Columbia, but other states such as Minnesota and Utah have few. In these latter instances, services may be concentrated in districts that may or may not have the greatest need for counselors. *In truth, all students can benefit from the prevention and intervention provided by elementary school counselors, and policies at the state level help equalize these services across districts.*

To understand how policy is developed regarding elementary school counseling, a number of state efforts serve as good examples. The following sections look at states with counseling mandates (Arkansas and Virginia), with no mandate but with strong state financial support (Florida), and where efforts are being made to solicit support for elementary counseling (Texas and Washington).

Arkansas

In 1983, the Arkansas General Assembly helped create a mandate for elementary counselors when it passed Act 445, the Quality Education Act. This legislation directed the State Board of Education to develop new minimum accreditation standards for public schools. The 15-member Education Standards Committee made recommendations regarding which standards would be adopted. The Joint Interim Committee of the Legislature then reviewed these recommendations and forwarded them to the state board. As a result, the accreditation standards of 1984 included a section on guidance and counseling, which reads as follows:

- (1) Each school shall provide a guidance program to aid students in educational, personal and vocational development.
- (2) Each school shall provide the necessary facilities, supportive personnel and privacy for counseling.
- (3) Each school district shall provide access in the elementary and secondary schools to a certified school counselor.... The ratio for the elementary level shall be not less than one (1) counselor for every six hundred (600) students by June 1, 1987, and one (1) counselor for every four hundred and fifty (450) students beginning with the 1989-90 school year.

It is interesting to note that Arkansas' mandatory ratio is 1:450; the ideal recommended ratio for districts in the accreditation standards is 1:300.

Virginia

One model elementary school counseling program involving state legislators comes from Virginia. Appendix B illustrates the evolution of the Virginia elementary school counseling mandate, showing how a long-term effort combining the forces of a strong counseling community and support on the state level can result in a comprehensive, successful, statewide program.

The process took 12 years, from 1975-1987, and, while the legislature made its first resolution in support of elementary counseling in 1977, strong legislative support began in 1981 when the Joint Legislative Subcommittee was formed to study the issue. Finally, in 1987, after numerous resolutions and various incremental legislative successes, the Virginia Board of Education amended its accreditation standards to include a 1:500 counselor/student ratio and a recommendation that 60 percent of a counselor's time be devoted to counseling students. This last measure is significant because it recognizes that, previously, a counselor's time was often filled with administrative and other noncounseling responsibilities, taking time away from needed student contact hours.

Florida

The two previous examples refer to efforts that resulted in mandates for elementary counselors in the schools. Florida worked with its state legislature not for a mandate, but for funding for elementary counselors and for a law helping define their role.

In 1971, concerned professionals formed the Elementary Guidance Task Force in Florida to try to gain state funding to support counselors. The task force included a school board member, a state PTA leader, a counselor/educator, a member of the Florida Elementary School Principals' Association, and others. Associated with the task force were legislative consultants (three state legislators and three staff) and resource personnel from the Department of Education.

The task force developed a position paper and sample legislation. The position paper emphasized the various areas of a student's life in which counselors can intervene. It mentioned social problems and school problems including drug abuse, vocational and career development, integration, family transitions, juvenile delinquency, emotional disturbance, school discipline cases, dropouts, and nonpromotion of students. Also discussed were the

needs of parents, teachers, and principals regarding the problems of school and society and the effect of these problems on young students.

During the 1972 session, Senate Bill 239 and companion House Bill 2978 were presented for passage into law. The final bill that was signed into law provided funds for the hiring of certified elementary counselors. Each district would receive funding for one counselor. The additional dollars would be dispersed according to average daily attendance figures for each district.

In 1972, the state allocated \$2.5 million, which funded 233 counselors. Today, Florida funds 1,250 counselors in its elementary schools.

One strength of Florida's initiative was the support received from all branches of the education and mental health communities. The proposed legislation received backing from many organizations including the Florida Association of Mental Health, Florida Association of School Superintendents, Florida Congress of Parents and Teachers, Florida division of the National Council for School Social Work, Executive Board of the American Association of University Women, Executive Board of the Florida Association of School Psychologists, and a number of local school boards. As this list demonstrates, the scope of support for elementary counseling is wide and should be exploited fully by those wanting to increase a state's commitment to this profession.

Florida has also passed legislation supporting the appropriate use of a professional school counselor's time. Counselors in every state can relate to the problem of having to spend too much time on clerical and administrative work, leaving little time for counseling activities. Section 230.2313 (3) of the Florida Statutes, known as the "75-25 Legislation" addresses this concern. It reads:

School counselors shall spend at least 75 percent of work time providing direct counseling related to students, and shall devote not more than 25 percent of work time to administrative activities, provided that such activities are related to the provision of guidance services.

This policy allows schools to make maximum use of a counselor's expertise.

Local districts were given the responsibility to implement the legislation. To assist them with this charge, the Florida Association for Counseling and Development created a model for school counseling in Florida that included specific definitions of activities defined as "direct counseling related," "guidance related administrative," and "non-guidance."

Texas

Texas is one state working to develop elementary school counseling policy. Recently, the Education Study Committee on Dropout Prevention in Texas included a section on elementary school counselors in its "Interim Report to the 71st Legislature Joint Special Interim Committee on High School Dropouts." The report cites the current use of elementary counselors in some Texas schools where "elementary counselors play a vital role in involving parents with both school activities and student problems." Counselors in one Dallas district "teach parenting skills that promote student achievement."

The report recommended that elementary counselors be provided to school districts as follows:

Every elementary school campus in districts with larger than 3,000 ADA [average daily attendance], or in areas which are characterized by greater than 30% low socioeconomic status populations, shall employ a full-time guidance counselor. That counselor's primary role shall be identification of at-risk students in the school and development of guidance programs to meet the needs of teachers, parents and students to improve student self-esteem, attendance, behavior, and academic achievement at the elementary level. Districts with 3,000 ADA or less shall employ part-time guidance counselors for each elementary school campus and/or may contract with area regional educational service centers for guidance counselor services to meet the needs of at-risk students identified at the campus level.

Although this report focuses on identifying at-risk students and developing programs for them, counselors who work in schools part time are limited in the amount of preventive activities they can provide, finding much of their time taken up with crisis intervention.

This section of the recommendations was not adopted by the committee.

Washington

The Washington School Counselor Association has been working for legislative support of elementary school counseling for 20 years. Current actions are being organized by the HARK (Helping At-Risk Kids) Coalition. It is made up of members of several organizations concerned with child welfare such as the Washington Association for Counseling and Development, the Washington School Counselor Association, the Washington Education Association, the Washington state PTA, the Elementary School Principals Association of Washington, the Washington Association of School Psychologists, the Washington Association of School Social Workers, and the School Nurse Organization of Washington. It is important to note that this group consists not only of counseling professionals but also professionals from all points of the educational spectrum.

Efforts by the HARK Coalition are strong on the state level. Legislative lobbying and public education are being used to "generate support for legislative proposals aimed at benefiting children." HARK's best legislative effort to date has been Senator Cliff Bailey's Fair Start Bill (1989 SB 5249).

The \$88 million bill had some important ingredients. First, a list of barriers to learning, similar to those discussed earlier in this report, were emphasized to show that these problems are not isolated within any age group. Children in first and second grades are strongly influenced by environmental factors as much as, if not more than, high school students. Next, the long-term effects of poor learning were noted, effects that are not only devastating in a personal sense but also *expensive for state government*. Unemployment, public assistance, institutionalization, and involvement in the criminal justice system all dig deep into state budgets.

The bill suggested how these barriers to learning and productive adulthood can be intercepted:

The legislature finds that the provision of counseling and related prevention and intervention services at the elementary school level will enhance the classroom environment for students and teachers and better enable students to realize their academic and personal potentials.

The legislature finds that it is essential that resources be made available to school districts to provide early prevention and intervention services to students, their families, and classroom teachers; to enhance the opportunity for students to realize academic and personal success; and to reduce the number of students at risk of performing below their ability levels in school.

Had this legislation passed, the resulting Fair Start Program would have provided grants to applying districts to assist them with prevention and intervention programs in elementary schools. Districts would have been allowed to hire a team of professionals to work in the school according to the students' needs. In addition to counseling, comprehensive services would have been promoted through the support of cooperation between groups such as the Departments of Public Instruction, Health, and Social Services. Such cooperation helps prevent duplication of services and provides continuity of services for children and their families.

The Fair Start Bill is again being debated in the Washington Legislature during the 1990 session.

Federal Efforts

Mention must also be made of efforts to gain support from Congress for elementary school counseling. Legislation supported by the American Association for Counseling and Development was introduced to the 101st Congress on February 7, 1990. Called the Elementary School Counseling Demonstration Act, this bill (HR 3970) calls for \$5 million to be appropriated during the next five fiscal years with the purpose of supporting elementary counseling services "by providing grants to local educational agencies to establish effective and innovative elementary school counseling programs that can serve as national models."

Counseling advocates at the state and local levels will be tracking the progress of this legislation. Its passage would provide a way for some districts to gain preliminary financial support for elementary school counseling programs.

Some Policy Alternatives

The logic for supporting elementary counseling at the state level is solid, but the dollars are not always available to sustain the theory. Many states just can't squeeze millions from their budgets or additional taxes from their citizens. If the money is not available for full financial backing, how else can states assure that children receive the benefits of school counseling programs?

Research shows that effectiveness of counseling increases greatly when the counselor/student ratio is near 1:300 and when a counselor is assigned to one school only. According to Tennessee's "Study of Elementary Guidance and Counseling" (1985), "Counselors with fewer students who are in a single school full time...provided assistance to larger percentages of staff members and students than...counselors with more students who may service more than one school." The low ratio makes counselors accessible to educators, students, and parents, allowing them to build strong relationships. The stronger these relationships, the greater the ability of the counselor to work effectively. "The effect of counselor-student ratio and number of schools served cannot be overemphasized," the Tennessee report states.

Matching Grants

The matching grant approach is one way to get a program started. A state commits a specified dollar amount to a grant fund and schools or districts apply for funding. The grantee then commits its own resources to match the state funds on a 50:50 basis (or other agreed-upon ratio). One positive outcome of this approach is that once a program is set in place, parents and other community members can see firsthand how worthwhile elementary school counseling is and can work to find the dollars to continue the program.

In the case of elementary school counseling, support has often grown once counselors are placed in some schools. Tennessee's 1985 study serves as one example. Here, parents from schools with counselors wholeheartedly supported them; and in schools without counselors, 90 percent of administrators said they wanted them hired. This level of support has also been received from teachers and principals.

In an end-of-the-year survey, 85 percent of the teachers in Los Angeles who were served by elementary school counselors were enthusiastic about the counseling programs and wanted them continued. The remaining 15 percent of teachers wanted counselors to spend more time in their schools. (Parker, 1985).

The drawback of a matching grant program is that some programs do start and end with the grant--an outcome that can be quite disappointing to all involved, especially the children. It is important, therefore, for advocates to work toward maintenance of elementary school counseling in a state if it is initiated through this method.

Business-Education Partnerships

Another funding approach is the business-education partnership. Recently, businesses have shown a well-placed interest in improving education in America's schools. The future of any business lies in a qualified workforce. In response to this need, businesses have become involved in education initiatives on many levels. A state or district could certainly court major businesses to "adopt" an elementary school counseling program through contributions of dollars or supplies. In return, businesses would receive publicity for supporting youth and contributing to education, in addition to the intangible, personal rewards of knowing they have helped the children of their community.

Two examples of partnerships in support of elementary school counseling programs exist in California and Iowa. The programs are based in San Diego and Des Moines and involve participation of the Kiwanis club and McDonald's restaurants, respectively.

It has been almost 10 years since the Kiwanis club of San Diego became involved with elementary school counseling. The Kiwanians have donated more than \$60,000 and 10,000 hours to the program, which sets up counseling centers in elementary schools to help children learn more about self-awareness, decision making, and problem solving. There are counseling centers in 95 of the San Diego Unified School District's 107 elementary schools. Every student uses a center about five or six times a year.

This program has received attention both on the national and local levels. According to one article, "It continues to receive accolades from such notables as former US Secretary of Education William J. Bennett and US Senator Pete Wilson, along with major awards from the San Diego County Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Commission and the Kiwanis California-Nevada-Hawaii District" (*Kiwanis Magazine*, 1989).

Kiwanis leader Edwin Swain Miller is one of the program's strongest advocates:

I am convinced that working with persons *after* their lives have gone wrong is working at the wrong end of the problem. The solutions for personal problems involving youth are found to be more effective if applied in early grades through programs of prevention (*Kiwanis Magazine*, 1989).

In Iowa, a pilot school counseling program in 10 Des Moines elementary schools called Smoother Sailing is receiving praise from teachers, administrators, parents, students, and leaders in the Des Moines community. Supported by local McDonald's restaurants the first year and other area businesses in its second year, this program helps elementary school children develop coping skills for life. The unique ratio of one counselor to 250 students allows the elementary school counselor to provide a comprehensive program that addresses student needs more adequately. Business contributions (\$400,000) funded the hiring of the counselors in the 10 pilot schools during the 1988-89 school year and provided 80 percent of the funding for 1989-90. The funding for 1989 90 will be matched in 1990-91, the third year of the pilot project.

The program has been so successful that school district officials and Des Moines business leaders are exploring ways to finance the 1:250 counselor/student ratio in all 41 of the Des Moines elementary schools at the end of the three pilot years.

Retired Juvenile Court Judge Don L. Tidrick supports Smoother Sailing. "Twenty years of juvenile court experience has...persuaded me that the tremendous personal problems of children...beset them at a time when they have not yet developed any skills with which to counter. [This] program is positioned at the right place at the right time in a child's life" (Smoother Sailing brochure, 1989).

Others Sources of Support

Graduate students who have taken their beginning counseling classes and retired professionals who are available on a volunteer basis can serve as resources for school districts implementing elementary school counseling programs. It should be emphasized that interns and volunteers cannot be used in place of qualified counselors but can work under the direct supervision of the school counselor, allowing the counselor more time for direct contact with children.

V

Conclusion

A troubled child makes a poor learner. As Mary Hatwood Futrell, former president of the National Education Association, once stated, "Just as a child who is hungry cannot learn, so too a child who is wracked with anxiety or mired in depression or burdened with self-hatred cannot learn" (*Washington Post*, 1985). Students need specific information and often counseling about the problems they carry with them to school. These problems are caused by stressors such as divorce, neglect, abuse, and poverty, in addition to pressures to achieve academically. Early exposure to services such as comprehensive elementary school counseling programs can build an emotionally healthy foundation for children and result in improved academic achievement, reduced dropout rates, effective decision-making and problem-solving skills, and better self-concepts.

We must *all* take responsibility for our children, for their future is our future. Teachers and classrooms are the focal point of a child's school life. Teachers help children learn and elementary school teachers strongly influence children's attitudes toward both school and themselves. Yet teachers, with their focus on academic development, have neither the time nor training to meet adequately the social, personal, and career development needs of all students. Parents try to provide their children with support in all areas of their lives. But often, with the ever-increasing financial pressures and ever-changing family structures existing today, they do not always have the time or energy to help children develop strong and healthy social, emotional, and academic skills.

In developing policies and programs to address the problems our young people face, we must make the best use of all our resources. Professionally trained elementary school counselors are one of those resources. These counselors act as a bridge between the emotional, social, and intellectual domains of students' lives and are charged with viewing children as whole people.

Recommendations

Following are recommendations for developing state policy regarding carefully planned elementary school counseling programs:

- Legislators interested in expanding school counseling programs should encourage the formation of a legislative study committee to determine the best ways to support elementary guidance and counseling statewide.
- Counseling professionals and educators who support such programs must become organized and active on the state level.
- Pilot projects are needed to serve as models for states and *must* include a thorough evaluation plan.
- Three- to five-year start-up periods are a sensible time frame to use when considering implementing a state mandate for elementary counseling. This provides time for universities to prepare qualified elementary school counselors to fill new staffing needs; for policymakers on the state and local levels to develop needed