

PLANNING AND DEVELOPING ADVISORY PROGRAMS FOR THE
PERSONALIZATION OF EDUCATION: A HANDBOOK TO GUIDE SCHOOL LEADERS
OF LARGE HIGH SCHOOLS IN KANSAS

by

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B.A., Fort Hays State University, 1988
M.S., Fort Hays State University, 1993

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

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Department of Educational Leadership
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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to research and create a comprehensive handbook for planning and developing advisory programs for the personalization of education. This is known as personalized learning. Personalized learning refers to the structures, policies, and practices that promote relationships based on mutual respect, trust, collaboration, and support (Breunlin, Mann, Kelly, Cimmarusti, Dunne, & Lieber, 2005). *Planning and Developing Advisory Programs for the Personalization of Education: A Handbook to Guide School Leaders of Large High Schools in Kansas* was developed using the research and development methodology (R & D) developed by Gall and Borg (2007). A prototype of the handbook was prepared and then evaluated by experts in the area of the personalization of education. A Preliminary Field Test was electronically sent to all building principals of high schools in Kansas with student populations of 1000 students or more. Revisions were made to the handbook based on feedback received. The revised handbook was then distributed to three professionals, nominated by their peers, for the main field test. Feedback from the main field test was used to create the final product.

The conclusions from the research project indicated: (1) there is a strong need for administrators and educators to personalize the learning environment through advisory programs; (2) large high schools were in need of a resource that was relevant in their respective schools; (3) the need for a handbook such as this to address key components such as transition, support interventions, and academic counseling; and (4) that a comprehensive handbook that included a step-by-step process, discussing critical components for administrators on how to personalize education utilizing advisory programs could address numerous concerns in large high schools.

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Major Professor
Dr. Trudy Salsberry

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Dedication

Through the process of writing this dissertation, I have gained a new-found admiration for those who have accomplished a project such as this. I have also gained an even deeper respect for the professional people that guide and direct individuals such as me. I am humbled and grateful. There are a number of people that have guided me, directed me, worked with me, believed in me, motivated me, challenged me, and helped me to persevere. This is a testimony to what has been researched and written in this dissertation. It truly takes a team of professionals to work with each individual.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

This chapter discusses the current issues regarding the lack of personalization in high schools and a means to address this through *Planning and Developing Advisory Programs for the Personalization of Education: A Handbook to Guide School Leaders of Large High Schools in Kansas*. Chapter One provides (1) an overview of the issues, (2) a statement of the problem, (3) purpose of the study, (4) a description of the target audience, (5) the research questions, (6) the significance of the study, (7) the scope and limitations, (8) a description of the methodology, (9) the organization of the study, (10) a list critical definitions to the study, and (11) a summary.

Overview of the Issues

According to Copland and Boatright (2004), Tom Vander Ark of the Gates Foundation suggested that comprehensive American high schools--

are not failing – they are obsolete. They foster anonymity and stifle learning by systematically inhibiting those things that are most important; powerful sustained relationships; students’ ability to address complex problems individually and as members of a team, to communicate in various ways to teachers and administrators. (p. 3)

The lack of personalization in America’s large high schools is problematic and Duke and De Roberto (2009) have characterized them as places in which:

- Students do not feel connected.
- Students are not receiving appropriate guidance geared to the individual.
- Students are not receiving appropriate support on an individual basis.
- Students are not feeling safe.
- Students are not being known by faculty and staff. (p. 4-5)

Personalization is defined as a learning process in which schools help students assess their own talents and aspirations, plan a pathway toward their own purposes, work cooperatively with others on challenging tasks, maintain a record of their explorations, and demonstrate their learning against clear standards in a wide variety of media, all with the close support of adult mentors and guides (Clark, 2004). Personalization is achieved through a structured, caring environment in which students receive personal attention and instruction (Rourke & Boone, 2009).

However, Wehlage, et al. (1989) suggest that if students perceived they were known by one adult in the school, and if the school had a supportive environment, the students tended to have better attendance and were less likely to drop out. Simpson and Boriack's (1994) study of a special advisory period for 70 chronically delinquent students showed marked decrease in absenteeism during the implementation period of personalizing the educational environment.

Creating smaller learning communities was intended to help teachers know and work with each other, students, and families on a more personal scale, under arrangements, intentionally aimed at promoting trust, individualization, and a renewed focus on good teaching and learning (Levine, 2010). One year later, Levine (2011) also described the common features of *conversion*, which were referred to as strategies used to assist in transforming large high schools into small learning communities. These features consisted of:

- Teacher advisory (Advisory Programs) or adult advocacy systems - faculty members follow the academic and social development of individual students and serve as a coach for them.
- Academic Teaming – conversion into small units allow small groups of teachers to share the same students, often on a grade level team.

- Multi-year groups – allow teachers to stay with students for two or more years.
- Freshman transition activities – provide exposure to career options and college and ease the transition into high school.
- Alternative Scheduling – includes block scheduling and time for tutorials and advisory classes (p. 173).

Advocates for personalization have long argued that small schools offer a more personalized academic setting that promotes stronger relationships between students and teachers in service of higher academic achievement (Wallach, 2010). Due to the large size of the high school, many students may feel invisible and not known as individuals. This can negatively affect achievement and graduation for these students. A study by McClure, Yonezawa, and Jones, (2010) linked personalization efforts at schools and academic achievement. Students in this study indicated that they did not feel connected and many indicated they were not equipped to advocate on their own behalf. Therefore, many students did not receive appropriate guidance and support throughout their high school career. In this study, large high schools were defined as those schools with at least 1,000 students (Bernstein, Milsap, Schimmenti, & Page, 2008).

According to National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES), the average freshman graduation rate for 2001-2002 was 72.6% (McCallumore & Sparapani, 2010). Prior to entering high school, ninth grade course failure and attendance had a substantial impact on the probability of dropping out. In some large city school systems, more than 50% of students leave high school without a diploma (Neild, Stoner-Eby, & Furstenberg, 2008)

Gardner, Ritblatt, and Beatty (2000) explored the relationship between school size and student dropout rate. Their study compared 67 randomly selected high schools larger than 2000 with the same number of randomly selected small schools between 200 and 600 students.

Results from the study suggested smaller schools had significant lower dropout rate than larger schools (Werblow & Duesberry, 2009).

Academic counseling was another component that addressed the need to provide appropriate guidance for students. This generally referred to academic guidance, but can also entail career guidance and post-secondary guidance. It can also serve as a support mechanism from a personal level. Students also reported not receiving appropriate guidance regarding academic/career/post-secondary counseling due to the size of the school. The most frequent sources of stress for counselors was not having enough time to see students in addition to too much paperwork, not enough time to do their jobs, and too large of a caseload. (Calfa, Guzman, Van Horn Kerne, Lambert, & McCarthy, 2010).

Utilizing the expertise of counseling office staff assisted students in developing a personal plan for not only course selection in high school, but for plans after high school based on skills, interests, beliefs, and preferences. Each student develops a personal plan. Learners would benefit from being taught to use individual learning-style homework and study strategies to help them succeed (Lauria, 2010).

Transferring to a new school creates a transition period that is frequently marked by declining academic performance, increased absences, and increased behavior disturbances, according to McCallmore and Sparapani, (2010). Transition is defined by Mizelle (2000) as programs addressing the needs of students and their parents in addition to facilitating communication between middle school and high school educators. Transition assistance can be a component of personalizing the education through advisory programs. Students often enter high school not prepared, insecure, overwhelmed, and facing many pressures. By implementing transition assistance, students receive an orientation session, perhaps lasting all day. Students are

informed of the importance of a class schedule. Students are introduced to all aspects of the operation of the school, which can alleviate some anxiety and allow students to gain insight as school begins.

Using the High School and Beyond (HSB) data set, Pittman and Haughwout (1987) studied the input of school size on dropout rates among relationships. Results of their analysis of over 744 public high schools suggested a positive correlation between school size and student dropout rate. Students attending the largest high schools were nearly twice as likely to drop out as students attending small schools (Werblow & Duesberry, 2009). According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (Chapman, Laird, Ifill, & KewalRamani, 2011), of the students who dropped out of school in 2009, 73% said their parents tried to talk them into staying, while only 37% said that school personnel tried to talk them into staying. And of the students who dropped out, 20% did not feel like they belonged in school, 10% did not feel safe. Thirty-eight percent dropped out because of poor academic standing, while 43% were missing too much school (Dalton, Glenvie, & Ingels, 2009). In addition to these statistics, school crime was more likely in larger schools. While 38% of small schools reported incidents, 60% of medium sized schools, and 89% of large high schools reported criminal incidents. Violent crime was more likely to be reported by the larger schools in this study (Burns & McCarthur, 1998). As an antidote for these problems, and according to Tocci and Allen, (2005), advisory programs:

- Develop close and caring relationships that build trust between staff and students.
- Provide academic support that helps students further develop key skills and knowledge.
- Enrich the curriculum with activities that support learning and development in areas that are not addressed by regular coursework.

- Prepare students for college by offering activities that aid in the college search and application process.
- Build school culture by helping create and sustain a positive, supportive community among staff and students (p. 8).

Advisory programs allow for the personalization of education to be implemented. These programs provide opportunities for faculty/staff to gain skills in personalizing the education through various professional development opportunities embedded in advisory programs. Advisory programs create small learning environments that assist, equip, inform, communicate, and support students on a personal level. They also ensure that each student has an adult advocate in the building. Support and intervention through advisory programs are components that provide students with multiple opportunities to seek assistance. Support can be broad in nature, but the goal in mind is to provide services for students needing support. This can be as simple as having an adult advocate in the building. Support can also entail academic, behavior, and social aspects. Communicating and providing these resources assist in personalizing the education.

Statement of the Problem

School leaders need guidance in providing comprehensive programs to address the lack of personalization. Advisory programs are a way to meet those needs, help with transitions, support strategies, intervention strategies, and counsel students in many areas. Related to the lack of personalization in large schools are other issues such as students dropping out of school, students not feel connected, students not feeling safe, and students not having an advocate in the school building. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, 2,895 students in grades 9-

12 in Kansas public schools, dropped out of school during the 2008-2009 school year (Stillwell, Sable, & Plotts, 2010, A-1).

Advisory programs are most essential for personalization because they provide the infrastructure for all the components necessary for the personalization of large high school as referenced by ASCA and the use of their standards:

- Opportunity for professional development for the certified staff involved.
- Time to focus on the individual student.
- Help for students with all needs.

Advisement is integral to personalization. Advisement is a process that brings the students continuously into contact with persons, places, and actions that facilitate development of the students' talents and interests (Keefe, 2007).

There are numerous handbooks in existence today that describe what an advisory program is by definition. Websites such as www.essentialschools.org, www.advisoryprograms.wikispaces.com, and www.betterhighschools.org are just a few. These books also describe the intentions of the advisory program. But currently, there is not an existing handbook or resource that provided for educators to assist them in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the personalization of the education process through advisory programs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this Research and Design (R & D) study is to develop a handbook to assist educators in large schools on personalizing education through the use of advisory programs. In the age of performance and accountability, attention should be placed on the achievement and the success of the individual student. This dissertation guides educators to

engage and encourage the building of relationships, which, in turn, will facilitate the personalization of education through advisory programs.

This comprehensive guide for personalization through advisory programs will consist of processes related to orientation/transition, support/intervention, and academic/career/post-secondary counseling. Personalizing education through advisory programs has the potential to create more positive, personalized school cultures that result in more caring relationships among teachers and students, and result in fewer students “getting lost”.

The smaller the school, the more teachers are presumed to be better able to discuss students’ progress and to compare information. Advisories, adult-student mentoring programs, and enhanced adult-led extra-curricular programs are a few ways small and large schools try to enhance adult-student relationships (McClure, Yonezawa, & Jones, 2010). The product resulting from the dissertation guides administrators and educators in implementing basic steps to ensure all students are receiving a personalized education.

Target Audience

The target audience for the handbook includes educational leaders, specifically building principals, interested in personalizing the educational process in their schools in order to individualize the education and focus on learning for each student maximize learning by implementing advisory programs. Large high schools were defined as those schools with at least 1,000 students by (Bernstein, Milsap, Schimmenti, & Page, 2008). Therefore, the audience primarily includes secondary building principals with student populations of 1000 or more students, although it could apply to any leader or educators desiring to personalize education.

There are approximately 45 schools within the state of Kansas with a student population of 1000 or more students in grades 9-12.

Research Questions

The overall purpose for this R & D dissertation is to research, develop, create, and validate a comprehensive handbook: *Planning and Developing Advisory Programs for the Personalization of Education: A Handbook to Guide School Leaders of Large High Schools in Kansas*. This study is directed by the following over-arching question: What are key components that will allow school leaders to personalize education for each student through advisory programs? The framework for identifying successful advisory programs has been defined by Ziegler (1993) as those with efforts focused on higher school retention rates, a better school climate, increased staff-student contact, better student behavior, better resources for subject teachers in the person of the advisor-coordinator who knows the student well, more and better parent-teacher contact, and a better use of guidance counselors as consultants to advisors. The following sub-questions will be addressed:

1. In what ways can school leaders effectively create, implement, and evaluate effective Advisory Programs to personalize education for each individual student?
2. What are the critical components in successfully personalizing the education of a large high school?

Methodology

This study follows the educational Research and Development (R &D) methodology outlined by Borg and Gall (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 2007). This research methodology is used to develop a comprehensive handbook *Planning and Developing Advisory Programs for the Personalization of Education: A Handbook to Guide School Leaders of Large High schools in*

Kansas. The research process consists of the following steps: 1) review and analysis of related literature, 2) needs assessment and proof of concept, 3) development of prototype, 4) preliminary field test, 5) initial handbook revision, 6) main field test, and 7) final handbook revision.

Significance of the Study

This research and handbook, *Planning and Developing Advisory Programs for the Personalization of Education: A Handbook to Guide School Leaders of Large High Schools in Kansas* will be an important contribution to the body of knowledge concerning the implementation of an effective program for the personalization of schools through Advisory Programs. Personalizing the education for each student is essential to address the number of students dropping out of school. Utilizing advisory programs to equip and support educators is beneficial to all people involved in the process. Parents of children in smaller schools gave more favorable reports about school practices, on average, than did parents of children in larger schools. The average number of school practices reported to be done "very well" decreased with each category as school size increased above 300-599 students. For example, parents of children in schools with 300 - 599 students reported an average of 3.2 school practices done "very well", compared to 2.8 practices reported by parents of children in schools with 600-999 students, and 2.6 practices reported by parents of children in schools with 1,000 or more students, thus showing that school size is related to parent perception regarding school practices. (Heaviside, Rowand, Williams, & Farris, 1996). These statistics revealed that the average number of school practices reported as done "very well" increased with the smaller the number of students.

It is important that administrators, and all faculty/staff, have the ability to build quality relationships with students in the building and this can be done by personalizing education through advisory programs. It is essential in the several areas previously mentioned, including

transition into high school, academic/career/post-secondary counseling, and support services. It is also important to the school climate and culture as well as the need to personalize the educational process through advisory programs. The mission should be to invest in each student as an individual and demonstrate care and compassion towards all people.

Fielding (2006) stated:

If schools are to continue to exist well into the 21st century they need to be more fulfilling, more creative and more humanly attentive places than they have been thus far in their very checkered histories, both for those who teach in them and for those who are required to attend them (p. 4).

To be more precise, educators should be focused on each individual student. This handbook is crucial to guide educators through the stages of planning and developing steps to initiate the personalization of education through advisory programs in order to provide individual attention to each student.

Scope and Limitations

The intent of this study is to create a step-by-step comprehensive handbook for planning, creating, implementing, and evaluating the personalization of education through advisory programs. The handbook includes information about how school administrators and staff can work together to implement strategies to effectively personalize the educational process for each student through advisory programs. The handbook provides strategies for implementation to assist educators in working with individual students and tailor an educational plan for each student. The study is designed to help leaders of those schools having student populations of 1,000 students and higher because typically students in smaller schools are already known and acknowledged as individuals. Over the last several decades, there has been criticism of the large

comprehensive high school as an alienating and bureaucratic structure that hinders the development of learning or trust among all the key stakeholders (Levine, 2011). This handbook focuses on large high schools in the state of Kansas. Finally, the reviewer ratings in the field tests are not intended to have any type of statistical significance. The averages only reflect patterns of opinions and the comments provide the range of opinions. The researcher uses the results as a guide but also exercises professional judgment in the production of the final product.

Organization of the Study

Chapter One includes an introduction, overview of the issues, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, target audience, research questions, significance of the study, scope and limitations, methodology, organization of the study, definitions, and summary.

Chapter Two consists of a review of literature on the personalization of schools. This included the major components of an effective program: Personalization Strategies, Leadership Components, Transition Assistance, Support and Intervention, Academic Counseling, and Advisory Programs as a Solution.

Chapter Three describes the Research and Design process used to validate the handbook. The steps associated with this process are described. In addition, listed in this chapter are the multiple field tests, responses from the panel of experts, and actions considered by the researcher.

Chapter Four contains the revised version of the stand-alone handbook, *Planning and Developing Advisory Programs for the Personalization of Education: A Handbook to Guide School Leaders of Large High Schools in Kansas*.

Chapter Five summarizes the conclusions and implications of the study, suggest usage and the dissemination for the advisory program handbook, and made recommendations for further study.

Definition of Terms

Academic counseling –

The American School Counseling Association (ASCA) standards consist of:

- 1) The foundation is the basis of the model, and it addresses the philosophical underpinnings of the counseling program.
- 2) The delivery system includes guidance curricula, individual student planning, responsive services, and systems support.
- 3) The management systems are the systemic monitoring process that ensure the implementation of the program.
- 4) The accountability system includes reports, performance evaluations, and program audits that measure and communicate with stake holders about program results and related data (Dimmett & Cary, 2007).

Academic counseling generally refers to trained professionals counseling students on their academic plans and course selection for secondary schools as well as for post-secondary education. (Hughes & Karp, 2004).

Advisory Programs -

Advisory Programs are one of the strategies used to "personalize" education. By creating personal connections students can begin to feel safe and supported. (Makkonen, 2004).

At-Risk -

At-Risk students are: students who would potentially drop out of school or engage in self-destructive behaviors that interfere with academic success. Behaviors include absenteeism, performing below academic potential or participating in activities that may be harmful to self and/or others such as substance abuse, threats and intimidation, and

physical violence are some behaviors that place students at risk (Johnson & Perkins, 2009).

AVID – Advancement Via Individual Determination

A California program that empowers students to take responsibility for their own learning and develop the academic and interpersonal skills allowing them to take rigorous college-prep courses (Swanson, Marcus, & Elliott, 2000).

AYP – Adequate Yearly Progress -

Target scores high enough to classify a sufficient number of students in a school (or district) as proficient or above on state assessments in response to NCLB (Popham, 2005).

Climate -

School climate is the social atmosphere of a setting or "learning environment" in which students have different experiences, depending upon the protocols set up by the teachers and administrators (Moos, 1979).

Culture -

Beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that characterize a school (Phillips & Wagner, 2003).

Kuder Career Search (KCS) –

An instrument that may be thought of as three distinct assessments: a) the preference Record, b) Kuder career clusters, and c) person-match with job seekers (Zytowski, 2001).

MTSS - Multi-Tiered Systems of Support -

A system designed to support and serve everyone involved in continuous school improvement through ongoing collaboration. The MTSS framework outlines supports to

improve learning for all students based on their specific needs (Dulaney, Hallam, and Wall, 2013).

NCLB - No Child Left Behind -

The main federal law affecting education from kindergarten through high school stating that all students regardless of their personal identities, sociocultural backgrounds, ethnic affiliations, home language and intellectual abilities received the best education imaginable (Gay, 2007).

Personalization -

A learning process in which schools help students assess their own talents and aspirations, plan a pathway toward their own purposes, work cooperatively with others on challenging tasks, maintain a record of their explorations, and demonstrate their learning against clear standards in a wide variety of media, all with the close support of adult mentors and guides (Clark, 2004). Personalization is achieved through a structured, caring environment in which students receive personal attention and instruction (Rourke & Boone, 2009).

PLC - Professional Learning Community -

Professional Learning Communities are characterized, in part, by collaborative teams whose members work interdependently to achieve common goals (Eaker, Dufour, & Dufour, 2002). The term professional learning community describes a collegial group of administrators and school staff who are united in their commitment to student learning (Hord, 1997).

Self Directed Search -

The Self-Directed Search (SDS) assessment provides information not only about a

person's interests, but also about other aspects of vocational personalities, including self beliefs and aspirations (Gottfredson, 2002).

Strong Interest Inventory -

An instrument or tool that can help you make a satisfying decision about your career and education (Donnay, 1997).

SIT- Student Improvement Team –

A team approach for developing a support system to assist students within the general education classroom (Burns, 1999).

SLC - Smaller Learning Community -

The notion of breaking large high schools into smaller units as a way to increase personalization, relevance and rigor of coursework, and teacher collaboration (David, 2008).

Transition –

Transition programs address the needs of students and their parents and facilitate communication between middle school and high school educators (Mizelle, 2000).

504 Plan -

A disability, which is identical to that in the ADA, is broader because eligibility extends beyond learning to other major life activities, such as walking, eating, and breathing. A mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more of major life activities. (Zirkel, 2009).

Summary

Chapter One presents the outline of an R & D proposal to research, develop, and validate a comprehensive handbook for school administrators and staff who want to personalize the educational process through advisory programs in large high schools of 1000 students or more. Chapter One also discusses the issues faced by administrators in large high schools and contains relevant terms associated with this handbook.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

Introduction

Throughout Chapter 2, the focus shares existing literature on several key areas of emphasis for the personalization of a large high school through advisory programs. These areas of emphasis include: (1) history of advisory programs, (2) need for personalization, (3) leadership and personalization, (4) the need for transition assistance, (5) the need for support and intervention, (6) the need for academic counseling, and (7) advisory programs as a solution. Chapter 2 lists and describes the respective components associated with the handbook, *Planning and Developing Advisory Programs for the Personalization of Education: A Handbook to Guide School Leaders of Large High Schools in Kansas*.

History of Advisory Programs

In 1959, James B. Conant commented in *The American High School Today* that in satisfactory schools he had visited there was almost invariably a good guidance program (Hampel, 1983). Making the most of a good guidance program provoked educational leaders to reconsider the role of counseling, specifically in large schools, to address alienation, absenteeism, and failure.

In 1975-76, a conservative, cautious faculty at Wichita East (KS) High School, initiated a pilot project with 18 staff volunteers. Volunteers including teachers, counselors, and an administrator became the first official advisory program in the United States (Johnson, Morton, & Obley, 1979). This led to other schools implementing the same concept until finally the state of Florida passed legislation in 1984 to fund pilot and model teacher-advisor programs (Galasbi, 1997). Smaller learning communities were established in response to growing national concerns about students too often lost and alienated in large impersonal high schools. In the 2007 edition

of *Diplomas Count, Education Week*, Dedmond reported that nationally more than one-third of the students lost from the high school pipeline failed to make the transition from 9th to 10th grade. To address this concern, schools and districts across the country have struggled to develop freshman transition activities and courses to address this critical transitional time for students (2008).

Need for Personalization

The term "personalization of high schools" can be defined as "the desire to create learner-centered but provider-driven education" (Johnson & Liber, 2008, p. 9). Efforts related to personalization include constructing small learning environments; fostering continuous, long-term relationships between adults and students, and creating advisory systems that systematically organize counseling, academic support, and family connections (Darling-Hammond & Friedlaender, 2008). Personalization has been a goal in high school reform as evidenced by the recent work on small learning communities (Wallach, 2010). A trend in high school reform called for large comprehensive high schools to replicate characteristics of a small school through conversion from large to small. A national evaluation of conversion high schools found that small schools (often referred to as SLCs), experienced positive changes in the level of personalization and sense of community. Personalization can be achieved through a structured, caring environment in which students receive personal attention and instruction (Rourke & Boone, 2009).

Current educational systems consist of multiple assessments, high expectations, and numerous activities: acknowledging students as individuals has become the focus. In a study by Fry and Dewit (2010/2011), teachers emphasized how important it is not to get so caught up in the minutiae of the profession and forget to create a safe and welcoming environment for

students. Ultimately, caring relationships support students' learning because teachers who care help students meet their high standards. Students often need to feel the material they learn is applicable to their lives and world around them. Bernstein, Milsap, Schimmentil, and Page (2008) found that students want to feel valued as individuals as well as feel important. Students desire a sense of belonging that will make their experience seem fulfilling. The approach to personalization is in response to growing national concerns about students too often lost and alienated in large, impersonal high schools as well as concerns about school safety, and low levels of achievement and graduation for many students.

On a larger scale, personalization creates a positive climate within the school building so students feel valued and acknowledged as individuals, and respected as human beings. Berry (2010) has pointed to a teacher's own test scores (e.g., on the Scholastic Aptitude Test) and personal traits such as energy and enthusiasm as predictors of effective teaching. In a personalized school environment, relations among teachers and students are founded on intimate, personal knowledge about one another's lives outside as well as inside the classroom (McLaughlin & Talbert, 1990). Kaser and Halbert (2008) stated: The desire to create learner-centered but provider-driven education means "We believe unequivocally that quality learning for every learner in a more personalized and responsive system must be at the core of today's school mission" (p. 56).

Personalizing the school environment is making sure that each and every student is valued as an individual. With an emphasis on getting to know students, teachers and students reported that students felt at home, that teachers knew students well, and that the administrators were good role models for the teachers regarding student interaction (Truit, 2007).

The view that “personal learning” is fundamentally a learner-driven model of education where the traditional provider-centric role of institutions is challenged is evident in schools today. This has become more obvious by IEP’s, 504 Plans, and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). These are all examples of “personal learning”. The personalization of the school is the critical piece surrounding student achievement and school improvement. Excellent teachers put students first, help each student meet high expectations, and advocate on behalf of students and families. Most important of all, effective educators truly believe all children can learn (Fry & Dewit, 2010/2011). Dyer (1996) stated:

Let’s be honest – school reform is going to be tough work, but there will be no school reform if we omit personalization. What do we mean by personalization?

- 1) Every student will have a personal adult advocate.
- 2) Each student will have a personal plan for progress.
- 3) Teachers must teach to the learning styles of their students.
- 4) No high school should be larger than 600 students. (p. 1)

In a learner driven model and because students have easy access to information, the education delivery systems of the future will demand intensely individualized learning (Moore & Berry, 2010). Personalization can be achieved through teams of teachers working with shared groups of students - usually number no more than eighty - and sometimes over multiple years - and through advisories in which each teacher takes responsibility for about 15 students for whom he or she serves as advocate, counselor, and primary family contact (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Covey stated (1991), “The relationship is a building block essential to the success of the teacher and the student. We need reinforcing relationships, people, and programs: that hold us

accountable and responsible” (p.49). Personalization is achieved when teachers and students have the time and the desire to develop a relationship (Creswell & Rasmussen, 1996).

Schools such as Seaford Delaware Middle School achieved a 15% gain in reading scores and a 14% gain in math scores. By implementing a school wide emphasis on changing the school’s climate, personalizing the learning also contributed to the improvement seen at Seaford Middle School (Rourke & Boone, 2009).

Many popular terms and phrases have been surfacing in educational circles related to student achievement and school improvement, such as professional learning communities, smaller learning communities, and multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS). These phrases have several things in common: collaboration, communication, and the process of creating communities within a system. While keeping these three components in mind, the focus should still be on learning. Increasing numbers of schools are trying a variety of models, programs, and curriculum strategies to address the issue regarding the personalization of education. However, most of these components are focused on teaching. The focus should be on learning. They are also focused on the school and not on the student. They are focused on the "one size fits all" instead of on the individual.

Personalization has an impact on the learning environment and the entire culture of the school and creates an environment in which students feel like teachers truly care.

Personalization creates an environment in which students themselves want to achieve because others care for them. Students in personalized high schools often see their daily work as a way to confirm their sense of progress towards personal goals (DiMartino & Miles, 2006).

All of the suggestions mentioned such as transition, academic/career/post-secondary counseling, and support services are focused on preparing faculty. Individualizing the learning

environment for each student are important components for advisory programs. Relationships, not programs, change children. A great program simply creates the environment for healthy relationships to form between adults and children. According to Healey (2009), young people thrive when adults care about them on a one-to-one level and when they also have a sense of belonging to a caring community.

Leadership and Personalization

A school leader that takes personalized education to its full potential should be less concerned with what knowledge is acquired and more interested in how that knowledge is used. School leaders must develop structures and relationships that nurture the strengths and energies of each student (Littky & Allen, 1999).

Principals must be fully engaged in the development and maintenance of the advisory programs to show staff members that their principal wants the advisory programs to succeed (DiMartino & Clarke, 2008). Principals should focus on providing adviser programs, with each student having an adult advocate who knows him or her well (Dimartino & Miles, 2006). It also is essential that principals model this behavior by being engaged and providing support. Administrators should encourage faculty and staff to acknowledge and recognize students as individuals. Administrators should also want to provide appropriate support and encouragement and must model their own expectations. If principals want to create a personalized environment for both students and staff members, then they must recognize accomplishments and make appreciation a natural part of their leadership style (Kinney, 2009).

For principals to strategically improve high schools so that teachers operate at the highest levels, leadership for learning must be the top priority (Kassissieh & Barton, 2009). The leader must continually find those successes and help people continue to use successes as building

blocks for the challenges coming up. If the principal or school leader does not have the vision necessary, leadership needed to accomplish goals will be missing. The leader's role is to provide direction through modeling and vision, to motivate through love and inspiration, to build a complimentary team based on mutual respect, to be effectiveness-minded and focused on results rather than on methods, systems, and procedures (Covey, 1991).

The job of educators is to continue to seek ways to make the school feel as personal as possible (Rourke & Boone, 2009). Personalization is directly related to the teaching staff. Administrators have to remind some teachers to treat each student as an individual. Many times educators assume that the students are the only ones who need to change (Payne, 1998).

The personalization of the educational process has always been important. As schools have become larger in size, it has become more difficult to put the focus on the individual. Large high schools are often seen as impersonal, bureaucratic institutions that limit trust and learning between all the key stakeholders thus it is not hard to understand why reformers seek to break large high schools into small units (Levine, 2010). School leaders must take an individualized approach to supporting achievement. School leaders are using many strategies to personalize the learning environments including creating smaller learning communities, developing student advisories, assigning teachers with the same students for multiple years, and helping each student develop a personal graduation plan (Wise, 2008).

Personalization is an important condition that encourages leaders/teachers to remain in the profession in a climate of openness, shared decision-making, and collaboration in the school (Neito, 2009). Creating a safe, orderly climate that promotes student achievement and meets the individual needs of its students is a goal of every educator (George, 2000). School culture enhances school effectiveness and productivity. Teachers and students are more likely to

succeed in a culture that fosters hard work, commitment to valued ends, an attention to problem solving, and a focus on learning for all students (Deal & Peterson, 2002). Creating a safe climate should be done while keeping the focus on learning. Students are very perceptive and are able to comprehend the validation felt at the school they attend. The climate and culture of the school building are two components that assist in performance and achievement as well. School climate and structure play a significant role in students' success in high school (Quint & Thompson, 2008). Leaders create the conditions and culture for the target changes to take place that lead to improvement in student achievement (Taylor, 2010).

As an example, Dominion High School leaders in Loudon, Virginia, took the necessary steps to implement an advisory program because they realized they needed to change the way they were doing things at their particular high school. After conducting a review of relevant research and hearing about the personal experiences of several staff members, the council developed a comprehensive plan to enhance motivation, promote engagement, and increase the level of personalization which included designing and implementing an advisory program (Brewer, Quirin, & Bryan, 2008). This plan included initiatives aimed at building relationships, working with students on an individual level, and personalizing the educational process.

Getting staff involved and buying into the process is crucial. Leadership should provide coaching, modeling, support, and feedback to staff members; listening to their concerns; and, participating in formal and informal ongoing professional development (Mellard, Prewett, & Deshler, 2012). According to Fullan (1985), there are seven components associated with this process that will gain faculty and staff buy in. Those components acknowledge:

- 1) Change takes place over time.

- 2) The initial stages of any significant change always involve anxiety and uncertainty.
- 3) Ongoing technical assistance and psychological support assistance are for coping.
- 4) Change includes learning new skills through practice and feedback – and it is incremental and developmental.
- 5) The most fundamental breakthrough occurs when people can cognitively understand the underlying conception and rationale with respect to “why this new way works better”.
- 6) Organizational conditions within the school (peer norms, administrative leadership) and in relation to the school (external administrative support and technical help) make it more or less likely that the process will succeed.
- 7) Successful change involves pressure, but it is pressure through *interaction* with peers and other technical and administrative leaders. (p. 396).

The principal or school leader has the responsibility to lead by personalizing his/her approach as it relates to the responsibilities held and the expectations established. Principals in personalized high schools reinforce advising as the most ancient and reputable form of teaching (Clarke & DiMartino, 2004). Administrators seek teachers and support staff having hearts that truly care about youth and want to be a part of something great. Educators and policy makers increasingly recognize that in middle schools, a combination of strong academic preparation, close monitoring, and good support is pivotal to success in high schools (Gewertz, 2009). These three areas are embedded within advisory programs so that students will be prepared academically through the efforts and professional development of the faculty and staff.

Students need to feel support from the school leaders with the issues surrounding them, including, academic support, social support, and transition into life after high school. This is where personalization has to occur. Creating a personalized school takes a commitment by the administration, the staff, and the students. A personalized school is one in which each individual person, whether student or teacher, matters a great deal and has a program that is good for him or her (Keefe, 2007). Personalization is a learning process in which students assess their own talents and aspirations; plan a pathway toward their own purposes; maintain a record of their explorations; and, demonstrate their learning against clearly defined standards (Clark & DiMartino, 2004).

Need for Transition Assistance

Transition is one of the critical elements that students entering high school face. According to Johnson (2003), “A basic understanding of transition is that it is the process of change that may require substantial preparation, planning and adjustment” (p. 2). Transition programs address the needs of students and their parents and facilitate communication between middle school and high school educators (Mizelle, 2000). It is imperative that the first step in this process allows for students to get started. Too many times, students enter high school and are not prepared or equipped to be independent learners. This is an issue for small schools but for big urban districts with student enrollment over 1,000 students, it can be slippery work to catch and hold students who are falling through the cracks at a point that derails too many graduations, the transition from 8th to 9th grade (Gewertz, 2009). Transition is a process of moving from the known to the unknown. Collectively, researchers agree that the first year of high school is pivotal in terms of adjustment and achievement (Donegan, 2008). Students entering high schools are introduced to more complex organizational structures than those of

primary schools. Ninth grade is a treacherous year for students, particularly those in large urban districts. Even students who were doing moderately well in the middle grades can be knocked off the path to graduation by the new academic demands and social pressures of high school (Neild, Balfanz, & Herzog, 2007). There are significant increases in academic struggles and behavior problems early in 9th grade. When supports for time management, social skills, and maintaining an academic focus were provided, students experienced an easier transition and were more likely to have success in ninth grade and beyond (Oakes & Waite, 2009). They were exposed to many teachers with different expectations and standards. Because of this experience of feeling isolated and anonymous, students sometimes found high schools unfriendly and bureaucratic environments. It was important for all teachers therefore to recognize students' needs to be treated as adolescents and not immature individuals (Garreson & Ehrich, 2009). Students who managed the academic demands of the transition to high school had a higher probability of graduating four years later. There remains little questioning of the authority structures of schools, based on traditional adult and normative assumptions. Nevertheless, moves toward individualization, or personalization and choice within education were an essential part of the introduction of market focus into schools (David, 2007).

The positive effects of high school transition programs for students have been successful for all students when the school provided complete support (Smith, 1997). Transitions in schooling were moments of great promise for students, holding the potential for personal growth, new learning, and greater independence and responsibility (Neild, 2009). Understanding the orientation allows the transition process to assist in the personalization of education. This makes for a successful beginning to each individual's high school experience. An experience, which when personalized, is rewarding and provides the appropriate instruction and guidance to the

individual.

Many high schools partner with local middle schools to implement transition programs for all incoming students. Schools such as Frederick County (Maryland) Public Schools, Brunswick Middle School and Brunswick High School are examples. Brunswick guidance counselors met with eighth graders to share information about high school courses and the academic and social expectations in high school (Oakes & Waite, 2009). Other programs involved informational parent meetings, student shadowing programs, panel discussions, and high school course advising sessions. Schools such as this represent a growing trend. Schools again are becoming creative in terms of finding ways to ease the stress and anxiety when entering high school. If high schools successfully implement structural reforms to support incoming freshman, they provide some of the necessary conditions for success in the 9th grade; when they complete these reforms with specific instructional and curricular reforms, students can only strengthen their academic achievement and long-term success in high school. A key lesson learned from these studies is that structural changes intended to increase personalization and strategies to improve and better tailor curriculum and instruction worked together to improve student outcomes (Herlihy, 2007).

The need to transition 9th grade students into the high school provides the necessary planning and organizing to offer these activities that assist in the orientation and transition to high school.

For adolescents and many academically successful students, the transition to high school is especially challenging. These struggling students exhibit high absentee rates, several course failures, and difficulty in accumulating enough credits to advance past ninth grade. Large high schools are being converted to small schools or learning communities.

High schools are offering mentoring, coaching, and a host of professional development activities for new and experienced teachers. Often these programs seek to address the academic, social, and logistic details of the transition to ease future effects including high school dropouts. (Cohen & Smerdon, p. 177)

These parent meetings, programs, panel discussions and course advising sessions, when implemented, all play important roles in the process. The communication that takes place with the parents at the beginning of the year sets the tone for the activities that will occur in the transition process. When parents feel acknowledged and informed, they feel at ease as their student enters high school. Transition establishes various panels and discussions used to inform and guide. Transition initiatives consist of the teachers. Some of the activities include upperclassmen that incoming students can get to know and take even more anxiety out of transitioning into a large high school.

It is a goal to address the transition issue, to involve all stakeholders in the education of each and every child, to establish a climate that collaborative in nature and strives to meet the needs of the individual student while growing professionally as a teacher, and to make the primary focus one of learning. The investment made by schools, particularly larger middle schools, to aid students in making a transition to high school was critical, according to Smith (1997). Transition was the component that sets the stage for the personalization of education by communicating with parents and students that they are valued and cared for as individuals.

Need for Support and Intervention

Support and intervention are two components that are needed for the personalization of education. Once students transition into high school, the work is not complete. Support and interventions have many facets. Programs can be academic, they can be social, and/or

career/postsecondary guidance. At some point all students should make a connection with at least one person in a position of authority. It is not reasonable to believe that faculty can address every issue that the individual student may have. The faculty member may be able to direct students to someone that can assist in their situation. Providing support and interventions also includes the At-Risk student population. According to Johnson and Perkins (2009):

At-Risk students are: students who would potentially drop out of school or engage in self-destructive behaviors that interfere with academic success. Behaviors include absenteeism, performing below academic potential or participating in activities that may be harmful to self and/or others such as substance abuse, threats and intimidation, and physical violence are some behaviors that place students at risk. (p. 123)

The philosophy of educating students alongside their peers is honorable, yet sometimes challenging to implement (Karge & Lasky, 2009). Multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) assist in this process and are closely related with advisory programs and the personalization of secondary schools and can be the conduits used to personalize the school. MTSS is endorsed by KSDE (Kansas State Department of Education) as the response to the USDE initiative of RTI (Response to Intervention). Faculty members are provided with the most up-to-date professional development, which assists in this process. MTSS is a concept and method that assists in the goal of educating the individual child. Through the MTSS model, faculty are able utilize expertise that has been demonstrated to help understand, evaluate, and guide students appropriately to make sure suitable academic placement and support are implemented. Each school building is responsible for establishing its own MTSS model and establishing the various tiers embedded that help identify the most appropriate educational setting for each individual student. These tiers progress from providing school wide interventions for all students,

additional support for students with additional concerns, and then more intensive support for individual students for whom previous interventions have not proved effective (Karge & Lasky, 2009).

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a method of identifying students with learning disabilities that many schools are adopting. It involves having multiple levels, circles, or tiers of interventions ranging from whole-group instruction to small group intensive intervention. Ultimately, RTI is a method through which educators can identify students with learning disabilities while supporting students who are struggling academically in the general education classroom (Murawski & Hughes, 2009). Response to Intervention can address both academic and behavioral issues, apply to general as well as special education, be adapted to specific circumstances, and look differently from school to school (Scherer, 2010).

The benefits of MTSS/RTI and relationships should result in enhanced services to the students over the year. If addressed properly, students that meet the criteria will be identified and submitted to administration, counseling, and special education to determine the next step in the process. Educators can then evaluate what type of support may be needed to assist the individual in their education. It may be as simple as directing this individual to the Professional School Counselor (Dimmit & Cary, 2007) in the school system. The PSC will implement school counseling programs to provide the foundation for academic, personal/social, and career growth as each student progresses through school into adulthood. In other words, the individual may not need special education services. They may just need an advocate. Something as simple as this can work wonders within the school setting. With reduced family stress and enhanced social support, there may also be a reduction in the symptomology of the student and prevention of a formal referral for special education services (Kratochwill, McDonald, Levin, Scalia, &

Coover, 2009). Services provided by PSC's may address academics and may address behavior. Prevention of behavioral problems in school settings is essential. Therefore, it is important for teachers to have be aware of strategies and personnel available for use in support of such learners. The importance of meeting individual learner needs as the basis for comprehensive behavior change (Murray, Baker, Murry-Slutsky, & Paris, 2009). The main focus is to work with the student as an individual. By doing so, a process is put in place to deter inappropriate behavior from occurring and from escalating.

Support and intervention does not just apply to students with disabilities or students that may be at risk. Support and intervention strategies are also important as it relates to students that are identified as being gifted. The general attitude toward gifted students was that these students were smart enough to get along without extra or special attention. They may be gifted, but they are still children (Benson, 2009). If education is to focus on developing student abilities and providing an educated work force, then it must focus on the growth and achievements for all students - where "all" truly does mean all.

It is critically important that teachers and advocates for gifted education come to the table to insist that the philosophy undergirds the changes. Simply stated, many students enter schools with lower achievement because of extenuating circumstances, such as poverty or cultural and linguistic differences. RTI promises an exciting means of nurturing talent and the potential for growth before a student qualifies. (Hughes & Rollins, 2009, p. 14)

There is also an element that exists regarding the education of gifted students. Teachers may take for granted that gifted students are all self-motivated and therefore do not attempt any initiatives with this sub-group of students. Assistance and support includes participating in

identification, acting as an advocate, providing group and individual counseling, recommending resources engaging in professional development regarding gifted services, and promoting an understanding and awareness of gifted students' unique needs (Wood, 2010), further underlining and emphasizing the importance of personalization. When speaking about multiple intelligences, Gardner (1995) stated:

I would be happy to send my children to a school with the following characteristics – differences among youngsters are taken seriously, knowledge about differences is shared with children and parents, children gradually assume responsibility for their own learning, and materials that are worth knowing are presented in ways that afford each child the maximum opportunity to master those materials and to show others (and themselves) what they have learned and understood (p. 200).

Need for Academic Counseling

The need for academic counseling is also a component of the personalization of education that can be addressed. Academic counseling is best described through the following ASCA standards:

Academic counseling –

The American School Counseling Association (ASCA) standards consist of:

- 1) The foundation is the basis of the model, and it addresses the philosophical underpinnings of the counseling program.
- 2) The delivery system includes guidance curricula, individual student planning, Responsive services, and systems support.
- 3) The management systems are the systemic monitoring process that ensure the implementation of the program.

4) The accountability system includes reports, performance evaluations, and program audits that measure and communicate with stake holders about program results and related data (Dimmett & Cary, 2007).

This generally refers to educated professionals counseling students on their academic plans, for course selection while secondary schools as well as for post-secondary education (Hughes & Karp, 2004). Academic counseling assists students by utilizing resources to match skills, interests, talents and abilities and matching those areas with course selection and an individual program of study. Academic counseling works in conjunction with the transition process. The Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) recently went to the Kansas State Board of Education strongly recommending that all districts implement individual plans of study (IPS) for students in grades 8-12. The foundational elements of the IPS are the career interests identified by the student through an authentic career interested inventory or assessment (Tobias, 2014). Student services personnel must be relentless in their efforts to assess the needs of each student; to identify the barriers and obstacles that interfere with student success; and to work with students, parents, the student support team, and faculty to develop strategies for overcoming those barriers (Dufour, Guidice, Magee, Martin, & Zivkovic, 2002). Without the proper information and support, incoming ninth graders can perceive high school as an impersonal and unsupportive place and turn to non-constructive behaviors to find fulfillment (Oakes & Waite, 2009). It is important the students and parents are involved when creating the student's academic schedule. Because parental expectations and role models influence career aspirations and educational decisions; examining family dynamics, roles, and values with students in elementary, middle, and high school settings can be beneficial in helping students master the competencies in the comprehensive developmental guidance programs in order to reach their

goals (Gibson, 2005). Other information includes courses that are required in relation to the number of credits needed to graduate. The reality of the situation is that most students enter high school and think after attending for four years, a diploma is issued, and then they walk through a graduation ceremony. Some students have no idea about credits, required courses, and the fact that a diploma is something that is earned. For many individuals, school-based counseling services are one of the few sources of formal career counseling that they will encounter prior to entering the world of work (Domeve, Shapka, & Keating, 2006). Counseling students academically during this transition process when entering high school, will prepare them to transition to life after high school.

Career/post-secondary counseling is an additional area to be addressed. The more information offered to students to expose them to life after high school, the more completely the job is being done. Career and post-secondary counseling is broad in theory with the realization that all students will not be going to a university right after high school. Students have several options that include attending private colleges, community colleges, joining the military, and going directly into employment. However, it is the job of educators to prepare students for all of these opportunities, as stated by Reese (2010):

Without structured guidance activities, students may drift through high school without learning about all the career opportunities available and without gaining the skills that can help them take advantage of these opportunities. They may also be in danger of failing to continue on to postsecondary education, or even worse, dropping out of high school. (p. 17)

Academic/career/post-secondary counseling also includes alternative programs for overage students, early college and dual enrollment programs, and high quality career and

technical education and effective schools arm struggling students with individualized supports to get them back on track (Wise, 2008). In effect students' academic, career, and personal-social development are tied together and should not be seen as separate and distinct processes.

As students engage in career development interventions geared at identifying their interests, skills, and aspirations, these activities also help students develop decision-making skills, understand the consequences of their decisions, and identify and begin to implement short - and long-term goals. Career development interventions can also serve to help students identify appropriate social, interpersonal and work-related skills. In effect, career development can be seen as self-development. Clearly, career development as a key component of the school counselor's responsibilities needs great attention to ensure that students receive the services that they need to be adequately prepared for their futures (Rivera & Schafer, 2009).

Mentoring programs are a popular strategy to help students make important academic transition and build relationships with teachers and administrators (Stanley & Plumber, 2008). The more active staff are involved in the process the more accurate the process. Building relationships then becomes the opportunity to work with the PSC's to assist in identifying the various strategies and opportunities students have to focus on careers. Human behavior is the product of countless numbers of learning experiences made available by both planned and unplanned situations in which individuals find themselves. The learning outcomes include skills, interests, knowledge, beliefs, preferences, sensitivities, emotions, and future actions (Krumboltz, 2009).

High school graduates, and not the education system, should be choosing the post-secondary and career paths to pursue. Too often, the K-12 staff members makes the choice for children, tracking them into dead-end courses, instead of providing them with the skills

necessary to succeed in college and careers and the guidance students need to make good decisions about the future (Duncan, 2011).

Advisory Programs as a Solution

The term advisory program is used to describe a program within the school that assists in the personalization of the educational process. Advisory programs are an approach that can be used to personalize education. Other strategies include *Smaller Learning Communities* (David, 2008), *Professional Learning Communities* (Eaker, Dufour, & Dufour, 2002), and *AVID* (Swanson, Marcus, & Elliott, 2000). All of these programs and initiatives exist to encourage personalization to some extent to serve a population of students that may be under-served but they are not adequate to meet the needs by themselves. Personalization starts with advisory programs. Students learn best when they are engaged in meaningful, relevant, and authentic learning tasks (Murphy, 2009). Advisory programs provide opportunities for faculty/staff to gain skills in personalizing the education through various professional development opportunities.

By creating personal connections students can begin to feel safe and supported. Advisory programs consist of assigning teachers to a small number of students for whom they are responsible for over a three or four-year period (Makkonen, 2004). Advisory programs are aimed at working with the individual student and personalizing his or her education. It is a model that facilitates the overall participation of the staff and provides strategies aimed at prompting a focus on learning. Effective implementation of advisory programs has the power of raising student achievement by embracing all students. Effective implementation of advisory programs raises student achievement when they build connections among people and between students and their courses of study. In other words, an advisory program is one of the best

investments a school can make to increase learning for all students, especially the most marginal (Champeau, 2011).

Advisory programs are unique to each individual school because the focus at one school may not be the focus of the other school. The programs assist in encouraging and outlining ways to personalize the process of education on a continuous basis while seeking to create connections between the school, staff, and students. Espe (1993), described advisory programs as follows:

Advisory is more than a program. It can be expanded to develop quality teacher-student relationships and to become an integral part of the curriculum, as in schools that use advisory time to review portfolios with students and assess progress individually and holistically. (p. 16)

Advisory programs can be configurations in which an adult advisor meets regularly during the school day with a group of students to provide academic and social-emotional mentorship and support, to create personalization within the school, and to facilitate a small peer community of learners (Shulkind & Foote, 2009). Students need close monitoring, which is foundational with advisory programs because faculty mentors work with individual students to provide them with support and guidance.

There are two main themes that are embedded within the definition of advisory programs: (1) being connected to students and the school community and (2) personalizing the educational process. The teacher's role in personalized, student-centered instruction was to know the students' learning styles and to adjust instruction accordingly (George, 2000). Student achievement and school improvement can be addressed by personalizing the educational process and can strengthen the bond in the world of education. Students feel respected and valued. Students feel acknowledged and are able to see, feel, and grasp that people care about them and

in return, will respond appropriately. At the same time, advisory programs provide all the elements to assist teachers in expanding their abilities and utilizing their talents to play an instrumental part in the personalizing of the school environment. Creating a personalized environment that provided each student with an advocate and a plan for success was a key element in preventing students from becoming disengaged from school (Kinney, 2008). Advisory programs are critical when the focus is improving the quality of teachers in high schools (and at all levels) through induction and mentoring programs (Cohen & Smerden, 2009). Schools must carefully reexamine their programs, practices, relationships, and structures to ensure that they are creating a school environment that recognizes the value and develops the potential of each student, (Kinney, 2008). Schools should enthusiastically accept what matters to students and figure out how to harness their interests. Amy Biehl High School has redefined the value of a high school diploma by providing a challenging curriculum and cultivating close relationships with students and families (Wehrli, 2009) through the implementation of advisory programs.

One component of advisory programs is that they assist in the personalization of schools by creating an environment with the sole purpose of making sure each and every student has one person who can serve as his/her advocate in the school setting. A simple program allows complex learning and a simple program makes possible the adaptations in teaching that arise from authentic personalization (Sizer, 1999).

Through a personalized learning environment, students experience an increase in belonging to a community. Specifically, there is a strong sense of cohesiveness, group identification, and pride that changes the learning culture (Ellerbrock & Kiefer, 2010). Schools need to: 1) transition students from middle school/junior high school into high school, 2) provide

for support systems that are in place to assist the individual student, and 3) offer a counseling program that provides relevant and appropriate guidance to make the high school experience individualized and personalized. These components play an important part in personalizing the education and creating an environment in which students can be more successful.

Shared leadership at the school is promoted through teams of teachers that are responsible for specific groups of students (Rourke & Boone, 2009). An example of such an advisory program is found at Huntington Beach High School in Huntington Beach, California. Huntington Beach established an adopt-a-kid program in 1996, which matched adult volunteers on campus with one or two students of their choosing from the list. The adults were to listen, provide information when needed, and to provide support or advice when asked (Shore, 1996). The adopt-a-kids program or advisory program was implemented to help students feel less anonymous.

Arkansas City High School, Arkansas City, Kansas, also began an informal advisory program in 2007 that matched juniors and seniors with freshman who were struggling. Every student was also involved in a three-tiered system of support that was monitored by staff members. The formal RTI program detailed assessment data, academic progress, and effective strategies and interventions to aid the student (Rourke & Hartzman, 2009). The ultimate goal was for every student to have someone he/she could trust and talk to, someone who knew them and cared about them (George, 2000). Trust, respect, mutual obligation, and concern for others welfare can have powerful effects on educators and learners' interpersonal relationships, as well as learning academic achievement (Osofsky, Sinner, Wolk, & Miles, 2003). Furthermore, at Wuthrow University High School in Cincinnati, Ohio, individual attention continued as the

intervention teams monitored at-risk students during the second semester of their freshman year and continued to follow them through graduation (Rourke & Boone, 2009).

These are three examples of schools that have successfully implemented advisory programs to assist in the personalization of education. In the age of performance and accountability, the pressure is intense not to let one student fall through the cracks. No Child Left Behind mandates 100% of students to meet standards or better by 2014 (Gay, 2007).

Advisory programs exist to create connections by establishing parameters that assist educators in working with students on a personal level. The quality of relationships and the openness of the adults to reach out, stimulate, and connect with students are what make a school a human, dynamic, and exciting place (Macklin, 1996). There is a need to explore the impact of other role models outside the family circle. The roles most frequently encountered as needs were: the teacher, not just as a provider of skills essential for survival in a technological society, but as a confidant, counselor, and resilient role model (Werner & Smith, 1989).

Most advisory programs focus on personal, academic, and career-related themes. All of which affect students every day. Students are more engaged in topics that are relevant to their lives (Osofsky, Sinner, Wolk, & Miles, 2003). Although limited opportunities exist, school-based youth-adult partnerships can positively affect youth development outcomes and educational change (Mitra, 2009).

Partnerships of caring and personalization are typical of advisory programs. Other core areas related to advisory programs include (1) promoting opportunities for social development, (2) assisting students with academic problems, (3) facilitating positive involvement between and among teachers and administrators and students, and (4) providing an adult advocate for each student in the school (Anfara, 2006). Advisory programs are one model used to personalize a

school. Advisory programs should work with the counseling department at the high school.

Advisory programs consist of the professionals within the school, and are essential in assisting in personalizing the relationship with the individual students, advocating for the students, informing the students, and at times providing direction to appropriate personnel in which more detailed and thorough information and counseling is received. Through the use of the advisory programs, the career development process is personalized and individualized to assist the student in the career counseling area.

Advisory programs are focused on several themes to assist in the implementation of this process including: 1) transition, 2) support and intervention, and 3) academic/career/post-secondary counseling. However, there are many different purposes an advisory program can be designed to meet; therefore, no two advisory programs will look alike (Osofsky, Sinner, Wolk, & Miles, 2003). Schools remain one of the best places for connecting youth and adults in positive ways, giving students the sense that they are valued and cared for, and reinforcing the message that whether they succeed or fail actually matters to someone (Hyslop, 2006).

Quality advisory programs engage the faculty and staff by collaborating on ways to work with individual students. "Educators always want to keep in mind one simple thing. Students are not products. They are people with motives, wills, capacities, needs to be satisfied, longings, and desires" (Bonigni & Moylan, 2009, 22-27). Students have emotions and interests that are unique. The focus on the individual is now a central theme of the schools as well as the transition into school. Schools are striving to offer a place where students feel valued, acknowledged, and respected as individuals. Respecting another means listening intently and supporting wholeheartedly without compromising anyone's integrity or the school rules (Shore, 1997).

Advisory programs exist to equip the faculty to meet the needs of the students to prepare them for the various opportunities for life after high school. By involving the entire faculty, students are exposed to the many different personalities and viewpoints, as well as specific areas of expertise that will work to enhance the education they will be receiving. In this manner, professional learning can become a process, rather than an event.

Through the advisory program teachers are able to have time to collaborate and share interventions or other strategies. Teachers are able to learn something one week throughout the collaboration time, which is a part of the advisory programs, try it, and come back and reflect on the effectiveness of this strategy. The ongoing opportunities for dialogue and collaboration are integral to create a culture of learning and continuous improvement (Buchholz, et.al, 2009). All the while, educators should keep in mind that the focus should be on learning. The opportunities that teachers have to work collaboratively with one another, and implement strategies, should all be done to address student learning.

The establishment and implementation of advisory programs requires detailed planning, participation, and support from all parties involved. Local board of education, the central office administrators, and the faculty should all be included as well. The most difficult part is educating all of the parties in regard to the core principles concerning these programs. Not all people understand. Support and understanding regarding advisory programs are the most critical aspects, if not the most important aspect, of implementing advisory programs.

School administrators and teachers have long understood the advantages of positive relationships between educators and students. School staff members must focus on building personal relationships with students. Teachers must give students the unequivocal message that they are valued (Rooney, 2008). Trust, respect, mutual obligation, and concern for others'

welfare can have powerful effects on educators' and learners' interpersonal relationships as well as learners' academic achievement and overall school progress (Manning & Saddlemire, 1996).

A key component of improving schooling environments has been improving personalization; that is, tightening connections between students and their learning environments (McClure, Yonezawa, & Jones, 2010). Personalization matters because young people who were engaged emotionally, cognitively and behaviorally in their education were less likely to show signs of alienation, and more likely to be connected to school (Fredricks, Blumenfield, & Paris, 2004; Hallinan, 2008).

When these strategies act together – with advisory periods as a unifying venue – students own their own education, learning is relevant, and achievement accelerates (Champeau, 2011). Advisory programs are programs that again seek to involve the entire faculty at a grass roots level. The implementation process includes meeting as a small team within an allotted time with allotted material that encourages discussion and provides insight to assist teachers in working with students. Staff members study research on classroom best practices and adapt these practices according to the needs of the students. Students, teachers, administrators, and community members must share in the leadership of creating and sustaining a culture of inquiry by placing students at the center of the educational experience (Brandell, 2007). All students are assigned to a respective advisory program. The advisors meet with these students. Some of the students are doing perfectly fine and need no interventions. Some students who are struggling a little bit academically are then sent to work with someone in the guidance and counseling office to make sure they are placed in the appropriate classes. Some students may be struggling with social issues or even issues outside of school that are having an impact on their academics. A process is in place to have students such as this meet with a professional school counselor or an

administrator and seek interventions to assist the student. Putbrese (1989) surveyed 3400 middle level students to assess the effects of advisory programs and reported a reduction in student smoking and alcohol use, due to the interventions associated with personalization. When schools take the initiative and personalize the process, students respond because of the various interventions.

The advisory program proved to be essential in helping teachers handle disciplinary issues before they become problems that need administrative intervention (Ziegler, 2005). Severe cases, such as abuse and neglect, can be more extreme and in these cases, the professional personnel within the advisory programs may be the only advocate that the student has. For instance, juvenile offenders are the students most likely to feel unsuccessful and disconnected from school. This is important for schools and school psychologists to address at all grade levels. It is essential to consistently advocate for students success and connection, especially for youth involved in juvenile delinquency (Sandar, 2010). Some students may be on a crash course on several levels. Levels could include attendance/truancy, legal issues, and drug/alcohol use. Coming to school may be the last shred of structure and a caring environment. Educators can be a huge gift to students living in poverty. In many instances, education is the tool that gives a student life choices. A teacher or administrator who establishes mutual respect, cares enough to make sure a student knows how to survive school and gives that student the necessary skills in providing a gift that will keep affecting lives from one generation to the next. Never has it been more important to give students living in poverty this gift (Payne, 2008). Students such as this are forwarded on to the SIT (Student Improvement Team). The SIT team works with the student and checks all options that this student may be in need of support. Being tested for the Special Education program is a possibility. It may mean putting the student on a 504 Plan. 504 Plans

are similar to being on an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). 504 Plans include physical ailment that may impede on the educational process. In this instance, accommodations and modifications are made that resemble being on an IEP. 504 Plans are implemented on an individual basis as well. A 504 Plan is an anti-discrimination plan that prohibits discrimination based on disability, long term illness, or various disorders that substantially reduce or lessen a student's ability to access learning in the education setting of a learning, behavior, or health related condition (Durheim, 2003). 504 Plans continue to get more individually specific with more privately diagnosed impairments such as bipolar disorder, auditory processing disorder, dysthymia, oppositional defiant disorder, multiple chemical sensitivity, and food allergies (Holler & Zirkel, 2008). It may mean that more drastic interventions need to happen which include the parents/guardians, grade level principal, counselor and parents.

The exploration of case-based instruction is closely linked to the study of authentic instruction in teacher education. Phrases such as *support, involved, helping, open, friendly, welcoming, and truly listening*, shows emphasized caring (Patterson, Webb, & Krudwig, 2009). These are all genuine acts that assist in personalization, which allows the team to suggest and possibly create interventions to assist him/her and equip the student to be successful in school. But it also shows students that someone cares about them. Research and evaluation evidence also showed the benefits of out-of-school complementary learning opportunities in family involvement, after school programs and summer learning programs (Nelson, 2008). Advisory programs play a crucial and important role as a means to focus on the individual child and seek to find ways to make their educational experience as individual and meaningful as possible. The culture and method in which schools strive to provide opportunities and avenues are crucial. Advisories, adult-student mentoring programs, and enhanced adult-led extra-curricular programs

are a few ways small and large schools try to enhance adult-student relationships (McClure, Yonezawa, & Jones, 2010). To help support their household financially some students hold jobs and others watch their younger siblings. Students are homeless. When school personnel are sensitive and supportive, school can be a place where students in homeless situations receive much needed structure, reliable relationships, physical and emotional nurturing, and motivation (Dill, 2010). Some come from unbelievable circumstances. Students are involved in advanced courses, elite athletic teams that travel extensively, and some students are striving to achieve high ACT/AP test scores to be competitive on the global scene.

More and more is required of the schools to take the place of the attention that students need to feel, especially from their home environment. This focus allows the school to provide direction and guidance to the individual to meet specific needs. Schools continue to offer flexible options to assist students in meeting needs at the individual level.

Some schools have taken steps to establish a guidance advisory system that involves parents in helping students plan and complete goal-focused programs of study that begin in middle grades and continue through high school graduation. These systems give students a greater sense of belonging to something that has meaning in their lives now and in the future (Bleyaert, 2009). Others have been able to use their respective student information systems to communicate with parents/guardians and students instantly. A counseling advisory system works directly with advisory programs because each student is treated as an individual. Within this system should exist an exercise that allows each student to take the Self Directed Search or Strong Interest Inventory (Gottfredson, 2002; Donnay, 2007), or other tools such as Kuder Career Search (KCS), (Zytowski, 2007) to assist in the educational process at the individual level. These particular items are forms of personal assessments that are used to assess the

individual strengths, weaknesses, interests, likes, and dislikes. Data are then gathered using the responses and the results indicate careers/education that the individual may want to pursue. The involvement of the counseling advisory system is critical. It is essential that students play a significant role in this process. Ziegler and Mulhall (1994) in a three-year longitudinal study at a Canadian advisory program found an increase in decision-making, the sense of belonging to the school, and in teacher-student relations.

Once interest inventories have been completed, students are able to identify and understand all aspects of their talents, abilities, likes, dislikes, interests, and transform into advocating for themselves the path they may choose. Interest inventories provide much information such as assisting students in developing an individual program of study. Results consist of the skills combining career goals with personal values to help determine exactly which career path you may choose. Results may confirm that the path the student is on may be totally appropriate and they are right on track and need no real intervention other than checking in with their advisory program/faculty advocate on occasion. Interest inventories provide data that leads to self-discover, offers insight that may have not been visible before, and assists the student in making relevant decisions based on themes revealed. Academic, career/postsecondary counseling should be required throughout this process to ensure that the education is being real and relevant by utilizing several career search sites. Youth engagement in high schools is developing a multidimensional, critical approach to improving engagement for all students (Yonezawa, Jones, & Joselowsky, 2009). Still, despite student capabilities, the efforts of educators over the past decade to personalize American high schools have rarely engaged students directly. That is because it has been done in terms of curriculum and academic programs. Although teaching is also one of most critical components of instruction, emphasis

should be on learning and the various learning preferences associated with each individual student. Each individual student has had a favorite teacher that made a significant impact. Caring matters, more so when it appears in informal, improvised and, therefore, more authentic encounters between teachers and students than when it appears in the formal structure of a course designated for that purpose (McClure, Yonezawa, & Jones, 2010). In other words, it is the relationship and the caring that made a difference. Danielson (2007) stated:

Teachers who excel in Domain 2 create an atmosphere of excitement about the importance of learning and the significance of the content. They care deeply about their subject and invite students to share the journey of learning about it. These teachers consider their students as real people, with interests, concerns, and intellectual potential. In return, the students regard their teachers as concerned and caring adults and are willing to make a commitment to the hard work of learning. They take pride in a job well done. As such, these teachers are remembered for years with appreciation. (pp. 28-29).

The classroom teacher and administration create the culture of the building, in particular the culture of the classroom. Principals directly shape and mold a school's culture including unique beliefs, traditions, and norms within each school that impact attitudes, motivation, and performance (Lumpkin, 2008). However, successful teachers motivate the students want to learn. They create an environment in which students want to be there. They create a culture where students are valued and respected and treated as individuals. They create a classroom in which the focus is on learning. When students are in these environments, they are engaged and they feel others care for them. Encouraging acts of caring helps children feel empowered and develop a sense of moral sensibility. Acts of caring can be part of communal learning and problem solving. For that reason, caring helps young learners to form healthy interpersonal

relationships (Johnson & Thomas, 2009), which is another aspect of the advisory program. The program actually assists teachers throughout this process by putting them, as teachers, in a position that they are exposed to cues that help them to make the experience more individualized.

Advisory programs offer opportunities for faculty to gain more skills understanding the building environment and creating a culture that fosters caring and instructs individually. Efforts in the past have been focused more on teaching than on learning. However, if students aren't learning, teachers aren't teaching. Students are quickly able to determine whether their teacher is genuine and sincere and they are able to do this quite quickly. It is easy for educators to say they care, or to strive to respect the student as an individual. The bottom line is it has to come from the heart. Authentic care, on the other hand, emphasizes relationship building between the teacher and the student. To engage in authentic care means that teachers care about their student's academic achievement and also care about who they are as individuals, and want to learn about their communities and their families (Shiller, 2009). Advisory programs can be effective models, but they are just a models. The delivery and mastery of the effective model is visible and on display from the heart of the individual doing the instructing.

School reform initiatives improve when professionals collaborate to exchange ideas, provide support, offer critiques, and share expertise. Most discussions of school-based learning communities have focused on teachers collaborating at the grade level or department level or teachers and administrators collaborating on school wide decisions. Just as teacher professional communities have been found to improve teaching and learning, youth-adult partnerships can improve educational outcomes (Mitra, 2009). The role of the learning community is vital within advisory programs. Advisory programs provide the time, the place, the parameters, and the expectations to come together as a faculty to grow and develop as

professional educators. Advisory programs are the ignition that sparks the engine concerning the personalization of education. They are instrumental in inspiring educators to learn from one another as well as experts in the field, to develop professionally. Advisory programs can be personal and unique as well varying from school to school. By collaborating amongst themselves, teachers are able to pick, choose, or try various strategies to be better teachers. Even experienced teachers may learn new strategies and tips from teachers with less experience. Advisory programs engage teachers into smaller learning communities. These communities support one another individually, and they critique one another. At the heart of this small learning communities approach is the understanding that it is exceedingly difficult to encourage and maintain student learning if students do not first feel a sense of belonging.

Evaluating advisory programs should take place annually, at the least. Factors related to program implementation and outcomes can be assessed using simple evaluation instruments. Evaluating the program through simple strategies can assist in providing useful data. According to Boulametis and Dutwin (as cited in Goff, 2011) the program model most often used is the goal-based model, also called the objective attainment model and objectives-oriented approach. The goal based model or approach requires the evaluator to first identify the purpose or goal of some activity or program then focus on the evaluation upon the extent to which those purposes or goals are achieved. (p. 2). The handbook contains several examples that could be used to evaluate programs including: 1) the Advisory Period Calendar Sample, which the committee will use to analyze the specific areas to be addressed, 2) the Pre-Post Awareness Survey Sample, which provides the responses of students and provides data to assist in the evaluation of the advisory program, and 3) the Advisory Period Accountability Chart Sample, which provides a

glimpse into the amount of time allocated for each specific initiative identified. All demonstrate varying degrees of evaluation and accountability.

Other forms of data can be used to evaluate the success of advisory programs (e.g., attendance, discipline, dropouts, graduation rate, referrals). Having students complete a short survey will assist in evaluating advisory programs. Table 2.1 lists multiple factors that could be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the program among personnel. Table 2.1 lists factors and variables to keep in mind when evaluating aspects of the advisory programs.

Table 2.1 Possible Program Implementation Variables to be Assessed in the Project.

Program factors	Environmental factors	Mediating variables
Teacher Training	Teacher buy-in	Time allotted
Supplemental handouts	School culture	Teacher-student rapport
Student materials	Other school-wide initiatives	Professional development

Review of Existing Resources

Many resources already exist for school leaders. Three examples are described as follows:

The Advisory Guide: Designing and Implementing Effective Advisory Programs in Secondary Schools (Poliner & Lieber, 2004). This book helps secondary educators design and implement an advisory program. It is a resource for anyone involved in advisory for study groups and committees.

The Advisory Book (Crawford, 2008). This book provides step-by-step instructions for implementing the meeting components including modeling and practicing. It also contains frequently asked questions and answers.

Professional Development Kit: Launching a Successful Advisory Program (Niska & Thompson, 2007). This book is not a program or curriculum but rather a well-organized and thoughtful framework for engaging activities and organizes to develop and/or identify the advisory program. This book contains all the materials and activities needed to carry out a faculty study.

These resources discussed the desired benefits of advisory programs and briefly discuss how to implement such programs. Other resources exist that discuss goal setting, life skills, career explorations and other tools for school learning, but not how to attain the results. Websites such as www.essentialschools.org, www.advisoryprograms.wikispaces.com, and www.betterhighschools.org are sources that mention advisory programs, but only on the surface. The handbook resulting from this study provided implementation guides with the necessary components to achieve the benefits associated with the personalization of education through advisory programs.

Planning and Developing Advisory Programs for the Personalization of Education: A Handbook to Guide School Leaders of Large High Schools in Kansas differs from existing

publications, because in addition to discussing the benefits, it discusses actual components necessary in personalizing the learning environment. The need for personalization, the need for transition assistance, the need for support and intervention, and the need for academic counseling are included.

Table 2.2 Components of Advisory Program Resources

This table presents components in several sample schools discussed throughout the literature review. The components of these programs were broad concepts and do not discuss in detail what this prototype will provide.

	Personalization	Transition Assistance	Support and Intervention	Academic Counseling
Seaford High School, Seaford Delaware	x			x
Dominion High School, Loudon, Virginia	x		x	x
Brunswick High School, Maryland	x			x
Huntington Beach High School, California			x	x
Arkansas City High School, Kansas	x		x	x
Wuthrow University High School, Ohio		x		x
The Advisory Guide	x		x	x
The Advisory Book	x		x	x
Profession Development Kit	x		x	x
www.essentialschools.org	x		x	x
www.advisoryprograms.wikispaces.com	x		x	x
www.betterhighschools.org	x		x	x
Dissertation Proposal	x	x	x	x

Summary

The need for personalization through advisory programs can be accomplished addressing the following areas: 1) a history of advisory programs, 2) need for personalization, 3) need for leadership and personalization, 4) need for transition assistance, 5) need for support and intervention, 6) need for academic counseling, and 7) advisory programs as a solution. These areas of emphasis utilizing advisory programs were essential and provided the appropriate time and professional development needed to assist faculty and staff in the implementation of the personalization of education.

Whether it is Seaford, Delaware, Huntington Beach, California, or Arkansas City, Kansas, schools across the country are utilizing advisory programs as a way to personalize the educational process. This handbook provides essential and necessary components that provide a more detailed approach to get the desired benefits. This handbook equips administrators to implement these components to assist in the personalization process.

Chapter 3 - Research Methods

Introduction

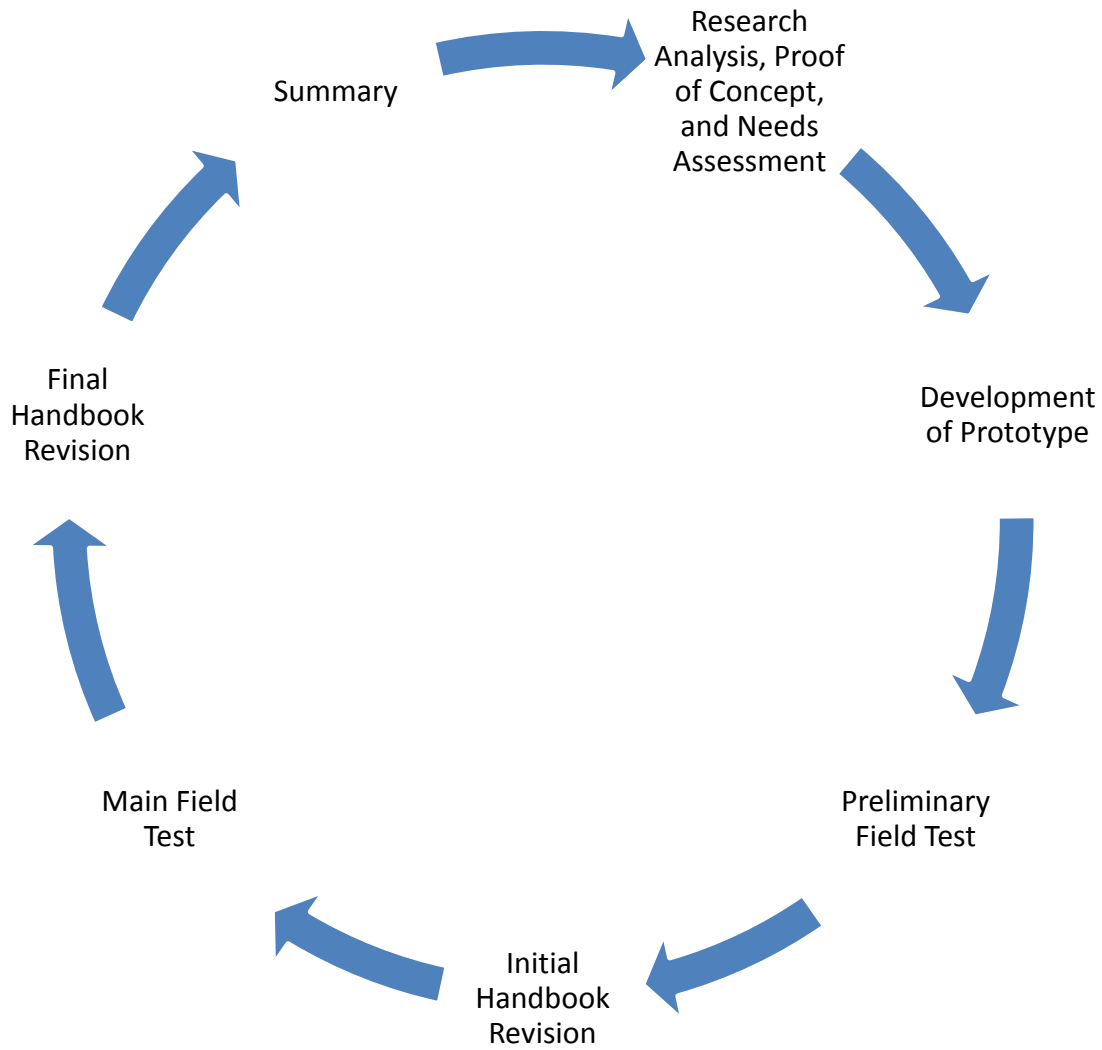
Chapter 3 consists of the research methodology describing the steps to develop, create, and validate a comprehensive handbook entitled *Planning and Developing Advisory Programs for the Personalization of Education: A Handbook to Guide School Leaders of Large High Schools in Kansas*. Chapter three consists of the following sections: 1) literature review, 2) needs assessment and proof of concept, 3) development of prototype, 4) preliminary field test, 5) initial handbook revision, 6) main field test, 7) final handbook revision, and 8) summary. These sections describe the process to be used in the creation of this handbook.

Literature Review, Needs Assessment, and Proof of Concept

The methodology used follows the research and development (R & D) methodology as described by Gall and Borg (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 2007). The R & D methodology was used to develop, create, and validate a specific product known as *Planning and Developing Advisory Programs for the Personalization of Education: A Handbook to Guide School Leaders of Large High schools in Kansas*. The handbook provides several key components regarding the personalization of education through advisory programs.

Figure 3.1 Visual Flow Chart

This figure is a visual representing a flow chart describing the step – by – step process associated with the research methodology used in *Planning and Developing Advisory Programs for the Personalization of Education: A Handbook to Guide School Leaders of Large High Schools in Kansas*.



(McCarty, 2014).

The steps for the entire process are visualized in Figure 3.1 and were adapted using the research and development methodology (R & D) developed by Gall and Borg (2007). The first step was an extensive literature review. The literature review provided support and focused on key areas associated with advisory programs. This included utilizing holdings from a major library (both electronic and print). A Needs Assessment Survey (Appendix A) was developed to determine the components needed for successful advisory programs. Questions were formulated in order to gather support and affirmation for creating a handbook such as this. A Proposed Outline/Proof of Concept (Appendix B) for the handbook was created and sent to an expert panel on April 8, 2013. The proposed outline assisted with the validity of the product. The expert panel (Table 3.1), drawn from state level administration, district level administration, and building level administration reviewed these items. The panel was selected on the basis of characteristics the panel members possessed that made them most capable of providing the necessary information. The Needs Assessment Survey results were compiled and documented (Table 3.2). The panel of experts made no suggestions regarding the tentative outline (Proof of Concept) derived from the literature review.

The Needs Assessment Survey was completed in the second stage in the Research and Design process for the development of a comprehensive handbook for school leaders called *Planning and Developing Advisory Programs for the Personalization of Education: A Handbook to Guide School Leaders of Large High Schools in Kansas*. The Needs Assessment Survey asked key questions related to personalization. The tentative outline (Appendix B) was electronically mailed at the same time with the Needs Assessment Survey. The outline provided critical information and included strategic components associated with the handbook. All documents were electronically mailed on April 8, 2013. Informed Consent Forms (Appendix C)

were included to verify their willingness to participate and to assure the conditions of confidentiality, option to withdraw at any time, and provide contact information should questions about the research arise.

Table 3.1 describes the panel of experts. The panel of experts consisted of a state level administrator, a district level administrator, and a building level administrator. The table also lists the qualifications of each expert, meeting the expectations for completing the Needs Assessment Survey. The Proof of Concept and Needs Assessment Survey were electronically mailed on April 8, 2013. Informed Consent Forms were included to gain their input.

Table 3.1 Proof of Concept Experts

Name	Qualifications
State level administrator (PE1) (4-26-2013)	1. Current State Level Administrator 2. Past Deputy Commissioner 3. Past Associate Superintendent 4. Past Secondary Building Principal 6A School 5. Past Assistant Secondary Principal 6A School
District level administrator (PE2) (4-8-2013)	1. Past Superintendent 6A School District 2. Past Assistant Superintendent 6A School District 3. Past Secondary Building Principal 4A School 4. Past Assistant Secondary Principal 4A School 5. Current Director of Curriculum 6A School

Building level administrator (PE3)
(4-19-2013)

1. Building Secondary Principal 6A School
2. Past Building Secondary Principal 5A School
3. Past Building Secondary Principal 4A School
4. Past Associate Secondary Principal 4A School
5. Past Choral Director 4A School

Table 3.2 Panel of Expert Responses

Questions/Statements from Proof of Concept/ Proposed Outline	Responses from Panel of Experts
Q1: There is a need for personalized instruction in a large high school.	PE1 – Strongly Agree PE2 – Strongly Agree PE3 – Strongly Agree
Q2: Students need more guidance related to class schedule, course relevancy, and career information.	PE1 – Strongly Agree PE2 – Strongly Agree PE3 – Strongly Agree
Q3: Transitioning into a large high school is a Critical component to the success of each individual student.	PE1 – Strongly Agree PE2 – Strongly Agree PE3 – Strongly Agree
Q4: Personalized instruction increases student achievement.	PE1 – Strongly Agree PE2 – Strongly Agree PE3 – Strongly Agree
Q5: Implementing personalization strategies requires professional development for faculty and staff.	PE1 – Strongly Agree PE2 – Strongly Agree PE3 – Strongly Agree
Q6: Advisory Programs are a strategy that will benefit students and personalize the learning environment.	PE1 – Strongly Agree PE2 – Strongly Agree PE3 – Strongly Agree

The panel of experts (PE1, PE2, and PE3) all agreed with the content Proof of Concept and Proposed Outline (Appendix B) in its current form. An outline defining and describing the necessary components of the handbook was developed for the initial panel of experts. The Proof of Concept and Needs Assessment reflected consensus on the following. Based on questions 1-

6, the experts agreed administrators, teachers, and students had a need to engage in advisory programs for the purpose of personalizing the education (PE1, PE2, PE3). And based on questions 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6, experts agreed students need individualized, personalized attention (PE1, PE2, PE3). One expert expressed that the proposed handbook would especially help people plan and develop advisory programs for the personalization of education to guide school leaders of large high schools (PE3).

Development of Prototype

The prototype was developed from compiling key information from the literature review, and the panel of experts' responses to the survey. The prototype provided detailed information to guide educational professionals in large schools, in the implementation process of a personalization process through advisory programs. The chapters developed for the handbook were drawn from the previous stage:

- Definition of terms
- Chapter 1: A passion for personalization
- Chapter 2: Leadership
- Chapter 3: The need for transition assistance
- Chapter 4: The need for support and intervention
- Chapter 5: The need for academic/career/post-secondary counseling
- Chapter 6: Advisory programs as a solution to personalization
- Chapter 7: Conclusion
- References

- Resources

Preliminary Field Test

The preliminary field test consisted of sending out the prototype of the proposed handbook to all Building Principals with a student population of 1000 students or more within the state of Kansas. Participant information was gathered using the enrollment numbers grades 9-12 in high schools in the state of Kansas, as of September 20, 2012, and provided by the Kansas State High School Activities Association (2012).

After the initial data for participants was gathered and processed, the prototype of *Personalizing Education through Advisory Programs: A Handbook for School Leaders of Large High Schools in Kansas*, was sent to all building principals of identified schools on January 8, 2014. The Building Principals were asked to review the proposed handbook regarding *Personalizing Education through Advisory Programs: A Handbook for School Leaders of Large High Schools in Kansas*, and provide feedback by answering the survey items on Appendix D. The survey items were developed based on needs associated with personalization found in the literature review related to building level leadership that might have a positive impact in terms of personalizing the learning environment. An introductory letter (Appendix E), informed consent form (Appendix C), the survey (Appendix D), the electronic copy (prototype) of *Personalizing Education through Advisory Programs: A Handbook for School Leaders of Large High Schools in Kansas*, and contact information sheet (Appendix F) was sent electronically to each principal. Forty-five building principals of high schools in Kansas with student populations of 1000 or more students in grades 9-12 received the listed documents. Nine building principals (BP) responded. Electronic e-mails consisting of the introductory letter (Appendix E), the informed consent form (Appendix C), the survey (Appendix D), and the prototype were sent on January 8,

2014 at 11:23 a.m. A reminder was sent on January 14, 2014, at 7:44 a.m.; and on January 17, 2014, at 3:28 p.m. Principals were asked to review the prototype, complete the survey, and return the completed survey within the time defined for the Preliminary Field Test. Principals were asked to complete the survey by Friday, January 24, 2014. A final request/reminder was e-mailed on Friday, January 17, at 3:28 p.m. allowing four additional days to complete the survey. Feedback was gathered from Preliminary Field Test participants through their responses to the survey and included in Table 3.3 and Table 3.4 below.

The survey consisted of comments representing three specific themes: concept specific information; content specific information; and general observations and comments. There were 10 items that asked the reviewer to rate the quality of the prototype from an implementation and concept perspective on a five point Likert scale. Below is a table (Table 3.3) on the ratings given for the responses to the Preliminary Field Test. The processes for these tables were based on the Research and Development framework from Gall et. all (2007). The responses were coded as 1) Strongly Disagree, 2), Disagree, 3) No Opinion, 4) Agree; and 5) Strongly Agree. Each BP was asked to respond to the 10 questions and all did. These ratings were compiled by including all responses and an average rating was listed.

Table 3.3 Compiled Preliminary Field Test Ratings (Means)

Survey Statement	Rating from Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1)
Q1-The content of the Advisory Program Handbook is based upon correct interpretation of relevant research and literature	4.7
Q2-The format of the Advisory Program Handbook facilitates reader use.	4.7
Q3-The Advisory Program Handbook is comprehensive and an effective tool to help schools and school leaders understand the personalization process.	4.7
Q4-The Advisory Program Handbook can help school leaders integrate the personalization of schools concept into the existing local school program.	4.6
Q5-The Advisory Program Handbook provides accurate information that is helpful for school leaders seeking to personalize the educational process.	4.6
Q6-The background and frameworks identified and defined in Advisory Program Handbook will be helpful to school leaders.	4.7
Q7-The Advisory Program Handbook will assist school leaders in identifying specific components to implement a product such as this.	4.4
Q8-The glossary of the Advisory Program Handbook consists of relevant terms and accurate definitions.	4.7
Q9-The resources section is logically organized and contains useful information.	4.3
Q10-The content in <i>Personalizing Education through Advisory Programs: A Handbook for School Leaders of Large High Schools in Kansas</i> is of interest to both novices (to the personalization process) and experienced practitioners.	4.4

The preliminary field test stage provided more suggestions and comments in order to guide decisions for the final handbook content. These responses are presented verbatim and modified only when needed to protect the confidentiality of the participants. These comments

received from this stage, and the researcher's actions are listed below. Modifications were made to the prototype.

Table 3.4 Preliminary Field Test Comments and Researcher's Actions

Questions/Comments from Building Principals	Researchers Action
Q1 - The content of the Advisory Program is based upon correct interpretation of relevant research and literature.	
BP1: Strongly Agree. BP2: Strongly Agree. BP3: Strongly Agree. BP4: Strongly Agree. BP5: Strongly Agree; document appears to be well researched. BP6: Strongly Agree. BP7: Agree. BP8: Agree. BP9: Agree.	Acknowledged. Acknowledged. Acknowledged. Acknowledged. Acknowledged and appreciated. Acknowledged. Acknowledged. Acknowledged. Acknowledged.
Q2 - The format of the Advisory Program Handbook facilitates reader use.	
BP1: Strongly Agree. BP2: Agree. BP3: Strongly Agree. BP4: Strongly Agree. BP5: Agree; maybe create hyperlinks for easier navigation.	Acknowledged. Acknowledged. Acknowledged. Acknowledged. Acknowledged; This was considered, but no action was taken.

BP6: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP7: Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP8: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP9: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
Q3 - The Advisory Program Handbook is comprehensive and an effective tool to help schools and school leaders understand the personalization process.	
BP1: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP2: Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP3: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP4: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP5: Agree; good guide to help leaders promote relationship building between student and teacher.	Acknowledged; the goal of this handbook remains the same - to provide a relevant document to principals of large high schools.
BP6: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP7: Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP8: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP9: Strongly Agree; (but the handbook is a bit long. Although all the information may be needed for a dissertation, the actual handbook needs to be streamlined for easy use by the reader).	Acknowledged; no action taken. The researcher created the handbook with a dual purpose and possible future publication after the dissertation.
Q4 - The Advisory Program Handbook can help school leaders integrate the personalization of schools concept into the existing local program.	
BP1: Agree.	Acknowledged.

<p>BP2: Strongly Agree.</p> <p>BP3: Strongly Agree.</p> <p>BP4: Strongly Agree.</p> <p>BP5: Agree; I believe I could take the manual and use it as a guide to create and facilitate an advisory program in my school.</p> <p>BP6: Agree.</p> <p>BP7: Agree.</p> <p>BP8: Strongly Agree.</p> <p>BP9: Strongly Agree.</p>	<p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged; the researcher was pleased that handbook is applicable and relevant.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p>
<p>Q5 - Advisory Program provides accurate information that is helpful for school leaders seeking to personalize the educational process.</p>	
<p>BP1: Agree.</p> <p>BP2: Strongly Agree.</p> <p>BP3: Strongly Agree.</p> <p>BP4: Strongly Agree.</p> <p>BP5: Strongly Agree; good research to answer the “why” questions by teachers.</p> <p>BP6: Agree.</p> <p>BP7: Agree; Many of the suggestions are consistent with the recommendations made in the Breaking Ranks series from NASSP.</p>	<p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged. Researcher created components throughout handbook that anticipated teachers’ questions/concerns.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged. Researcher expressed agreement with this comment as evidenced by the components within the handbook.</p>

BP8: Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP9: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
Q6 - The background and frameworks identified and defined in Advisory Program Handbook will be helpful to school leaders.	
BP1: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP2: Agree.	Acknowledged
BP3: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP4: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP5: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP6: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP7: Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP8: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP9: Agree.	Acknowledged.
Q7 - The Advisory Program Handbook will assist school leaders in identifying specific components to implement a product such as this.	
BP1: Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP2: Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP3: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP4: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP5: Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP6: Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP7: Agree.	Acknowledged.

BP8: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP9: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
Q8 - The glossary of the Advisory Program Handbook consists of relevant terms and accurate definitions.	
BP1: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP2: Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP3: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP4: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP5: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP6: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP7: Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP8: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP9: Agree.	Acknowledged.
Q9 - The resources section is logically organized and contains useful information.	
BP1: Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP2: Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP3: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP4: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP5: Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP6: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP7: Agree.	Acknowledged.

BP8: Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP9: Agree.	Acknowledged.
Q10 - The content in Personalizing Education through Advisory Programs: A Handbook for School Leaders of Large High Schools in Kansas is of interest to both novices (to the personalization process) and experienced practitioners.	
BP1: Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP2: Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP3: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP4: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP5: Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP6: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP7: Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP8: Strongly Agree.	Acknowledged.
BP9: Agree.	Acknowledged.
What is the greatest strength of the Advisory Program Handbook?	
BP1: It is easy to read and follow. It will be very useful.	Acknowledged. Researcher is grateful and hopeful regarding the intentions of this research.
BP2: It provides a good overview of advisory program support for students.	Acknowledged.
BP3: It is a simple and informative read and provides clarity about the topic.	Acknowledged.
BP4: We have an Advisory (Advocacy) period, we have 2037 students. Our current program is weak and in need of refocus. The	Acknowledged. Researcher noted that resources are mentioned and many more exist.

<p>handbook will be a benefit when we start the process of re-energizing our Advocacy period.</p> <p>BP5: well researched and practical application.</p> <p>BP6: no response.</p> <p>BP7: The handbook is written from a practitioner’s perspective. It is not overly laden with research and vague suggestions for implementation. Very practical and hands on.</p> <p>BP8: It provides a logical, and integrated approach to developing and implementing an advisory program for students that is researched based.</p> <p>BP9: Demonstrating how an advisory program could be implemented into a small block of time weekly and why it is needed.</p>	<p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged. The researcher, however, would like to point out the fact that this handbook provides a snap shot regarding the extensive literature review associated with dissertation. No action was taken.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p>
<p>What is the greatest weakness of the Advisory Program Handbook?</p>	
<p>BP1: N/A</p> <p>BP2: Reads more like a dissertation than a handbook.</p> <p>BP3: This is not a weakness, but the more scenarios from practicing schools, the better received it will be.</p> <p>BP4: It reads as an “educational document”.</p>	<p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged. The researcher would like to state that this handbook is part of the dissertation process. No action taken.</p> <p>Acknowledged. The researcher agreed and added a page with several resources and schools practicing Advisory Programs into existing handbook on pages 93-95.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p>

<p>BP5: Might be easier to navigate through if it gets out of dissertation mode...to be a practical manual for leaders.</p> <p>BP6: No response.</p> <p>BP7: It may not be particularly useful in smaller schools, but I don't think that this is the intended audience.</p> <p>BP8: It might have been helpful to see some of the program components in graphic form (e.g. flow charts). I always appreciate a graphic representation of the narrative/explanation.</p> <p>BP9: Its length may prevent some from investigating it. It should also stress that many other ideas may be used to help students feel comfortable in large schools.</p>	<p>Acknowledged. The researcher agreed and noted that this is part of the dissertation process. No action taken.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged. The researcher noted that the handbook is designed for large high schools in Kansas with a student population of 1000 or more.</p> <p>Acknowledged. The researcher added a page with several resources and schools practicing Advisory Programs in the existing handbook found on pages 93-95.</p> <p>Acknowledged. No action taken regarding the length.</p>
<p>What information should be added to the Advisory Program Handbook?</p>	
<p>BP1: No response.</p> <p>BP2: More resources to help teachers in the advisory role.</p> <p>BP3: How to deal with common pitfalls.</p> <p>BP4: More stories, scenarios, examples of what works.</p> <p>BP5: perhaps links to additional resources (if it is an electronic manual).</p>	<p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged. Researcher added additional resources to help teachers on pages 93-95.</p> <p>Acknowledged. Researcher mentions faculty that do not "buy in" to concept on page 58 and 90.</p> <p>Acknowledged. Researcher added additional resources as well as schools that are practicing Advisory Programs on pages 93-95.</p> <p>Acknowledged. Researcher added additional resources on pages 93-95.</p>

<p>BP6: no response.</p> <p>BP7: no response.</p> <p>BP8: I felt it was comprehensive in its coverage, but as noted in previous comments, other representations of the content might be helpful.</p> <p>BP9: Its length may prevent some from investigating it. It should also stress that many other ideas may be used to help students feel comfortable in large schools.</p>	<p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged. As stated earlier, the researcher added additional representations, resources, and several schools practicing Advisory Programs on pages 93-95.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p>
<p>Other comments or suggestions?</p>	
<p>BP1: no response.</p> <p>BP2: Good topic...very timely in light of supporting students for college/career readiness.</p> <p>BP3: Very well done. A valuable resource for a valuable topic.</p> <p>BP4: Get published.</p> <p>BP5: Good job!</p> <p>BP6: no response.</p> <p>BP7: no response.</p> <p>BP8: I feel this type of handbook will be helpful to school administrators/practitioners, so thanks!</p> <p>BP9: Our high school has addressed the transition issue by instituting a freshman center with all students integrated into teams around 100-105 students, with all sharing the same core teachers. All freshmen are</p>	<p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged. These items were addressed on pages 45-54.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged. Researcher is hopeful will pursue this.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged. Researcher used these comments to further validate handbook.</p>

<p>required to enroll in at least two clubs. Sophomores thru seniors are then placed in grade-alike seminars with seminar teachers that do much of what you outlined above. One issue we had to overcome, however, was the hesitation some teachers had in designing or implementing any type of activity in which he/she spent time getting to better know the kids. I agree that having at least one teacher know each student well is significant.</p>	
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Initial Handbook Revision

The initial handbook revisions consisted of considering recommendations and suggestions and making prototype revisions as guided by building principals who read and reviewed the prototype *Personalizing Education through Advisory Programs: A Handbook for School Leaders of Large High Schools in Kansas*. Due to the fact that the handbook was modified slightly, the outline and content were tentative. Table 3:3 lists the responses from the preliminary field test. Slight changes were added as a result of the suggestions made by the preliminary test recipients, BP 1 – 9. This consisted of adding additional resources on pages 93-95. In January of 2014, responses from the preliminary field test from BP 1 – 9 were thorough, positive, and assistive in nature. Other comments consisted of:

- This provides a good overview of advisory programs for students.
- Well-researched and practical application.
- Very practical and hands on.
- Dealing with common pitfalls.
- I feel this type of handbook will be helpful to school administrators/practitioners, so thanks!

- Very well done. A valuable resource for a valuable topic.
- Get it published.
- More resources/graph to show what other schools are doing.

Suggestions included:

- Additional resources should be added.
- Another concern was associated with potential pitfalls, faculty that may not “buy in” to the concept of Advisory Programs.
- Handbook read too much like a dissertation.

Therefore, several resources and websites were added to the handbook. Also, a chart was included that displayed what several other schools are doing in their advisory programs. This chart was pulled from the literature review. Potential pitfalls were addressed in Chapter 6 of the handbook. The meaning was not clear, so this particular item was included in this chapter and addressed briefly. And finally, the dissertation aspect of the handbook was kept as germane to the current dual purposes to produce a dissertation and a handbook.

The feedback was overwhelming positive and supportive as indicated from the results of the preliminary field test. This process led to changes as listed above to the handbook.

Main Field Test

The Main Field Test (Appendix G) was sent to a panel of professional educators. The professionals selected were selected based on the knowledge and experience possessed related to the personalization of education and as recommended by the building principals who participated in the Preliminary Field Test.

Table 3.5 Main Field Test Experts

Name	Qualifications
High School Counselor 6A School (MFTE2)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Past Elementary Counselor 4A School 2. Past Elementary Teacher 4A School 3. Past/Current Coach 3A, 4A, 6A Schools
Director of Career and Technical Education (MFTE2) (2-28-2014)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Past Assistant Principal 6A School 2. Past Marketing Instructor 6A School 3. Past Business Instructor 4A School
Building level administrator (PE3) (4-19-2013)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Building Secondary Principal 6A School 2. Past Building Secondary Principal 5A School 3. Past Building Secondary Principal 4A School

The professional educators possess knowledge and experience working with advisory programs and an understanding of the process of personalizing the educational process and were nominated by their peers.

Table 3.5 Main Field Test Experts Comments and Researchers Actions

Questions/Statements from Main Field Test	Researcher’s Action
Q1: The handbook is organized in a logical sequence.	

<p>MFE1: Strongly Agree. Easy to follow along: logically laid out for strongest case for Advisory Program success from personalization through Advisory Program sequence</p> <p>MFE2: Strongly Agree.</p> <p>MFE3: Strongly Agree. This is as thorough of a resource on this topic that I have ever come across.</p>	<p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged. Researcher is confident in regards to the components researched and discussed.</p>
<p>Q2: The writing is clear, descriptive, and easy to read.</p>	
<p>MFE1: Strongly Agree. I am certainly no expert on Dissertation “readership” but this handbook is <u>very</u> friendly. It has logical flow that any school personnel could read, use, and implement without having a terminal degree themselves. It is very sequencing and easy to follow the case for personalization in large schools.</p> <p>MFE2: Strongly Agree. This is a strength of this document.</p> <p>MFE3: Strongly Agree.</p>	<p>Acknowledged. Researcher targeted a handbook that was practical, applicable, and relevant to large high schools.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p>
<p>Q3: The handbook is presented in an attractive format.</p>	
<p>MFE1: Agree. Again, easy to follow format from rationale of personalizing the environment through purpose of Advisory finishing with Advisory solutions.</p> <p>MFE2: Agree. Handbook is written in a professional format and not for easy use and public consumption. The Advisory Period</p>	<p>Acknowledged. In regards to the Accountability Chart Sample, researcher stated that double space is element associated with the dissertation process.</p>

<p>Accountability Chart Sample is double spaced and not user friendly.</p> <p>MFE3: Strongly Agree. As it is presented here, it is presented in an easy to read fashion. If this is published in book form, a striking presentation will quickly draw potential readers due to the relevance of the topic.</p>	<p>Acknowledged. Researcher would like to publish this handbook in the future.</p>
<p>Q4: Overall, the handbook provides useful information.</p>	
<p>MFE1: Strongly Agree. Someone could be a novice with the Advisory concept, but after reading, would have knowledge and resources to implement if desired.</p> <p>MFE2: Strongly Agree. Very useful and helpful. I would reference this document if implementing an advisory system at my school.</p> <p>MFE3: Strongly Agree. This book clearly addressed the questions of why and how to develop an advisory program.</p>	<p>Acknowledged. Researcher specifically targeted a handbook that would speak to all levels of experience in administration.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p>
<p>Q5: The content of the handbook is relevant and practical.</p>	
<p>MFE1: Strongly Agree. Very practical and user friendly!</p> <p>MFE2: Strongly Agree.</p> <p>MFE3: Strongly Agree. This is a topic of great relevance to all high schools, especially larger high schools.</p>	<p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged. Researcher specifically focused on large high schools but concurs that is relevant to all high schools.</p>
<p>Q6: The content of the handbook establishes the need to personalize the educational process.</p>	

<p>MFE1: Strongly Agree. Very much so! Each section identifies the importance of personalization.</p> <p>MFE2: Strongly Agree. The need to personalize students' experiences is well established and clear to the reader. I found myself nodding in agreement with many of the key points related to personalizing the educational process. Well done.</p> <p>MFE3: Strongly Agree. The case is clearly made early on in the reading.</p>	<p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged. Researcher is grateful for the affirmation and confirmation of a product that speaks to administrators of large high schools.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p>
<p>Q7: The content of the handbook provides essential components necessary to assist in personalizing the educational process.</p>	
<p>MFE1: Strongly Agree. Very useful and practical ideas for anyone to implement into school day.</p> <p>MFE2: Strongly Agree. This document is a great resource for schools wanting to implement advisory systems. It is well thought out and helpful. The resources referenced in this document are relevant and helpful as well.</p> <p>MFE3: Strongly Agree. The reading is very clear about essential elements that are key to a successful program. Numerous examples demonstrate these components at work within the school setting. The more examples the better as they serve as points of contact for the reader who wants to talk to those who developed a strong program.</p>	<p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged. Researcher emphasizes that there are multiple resources about <u>what</u> components schools address as it relates to personalization, but very few, if any, resources about <u>how</u> schools address personalization.</p>

<p>Q8: The content of the handbook blends theory, research, and practice into an applicable, practical guide for administrators and educational practitioners.</p>	
<p>MFE1: Strongly Agree. A nice blend of personal anecdotes, theory, and research. Not too heavy either way but a good balance to make the case.</p> <p>MFE2: Strongly Agree. I believe that this is a major strength of this document. The passion for advisory programs is evident and real when reading the information. It is also very helpful and clear on how school leaders can setup and maintain a strong advisory program.</p> <p>MFE3: Strongly Agree. I believe this document serves a very good resource for those looking to initiate an advisory program. It is also a valuable resource to consult when evaluating your own program.</p>	<p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged. Researcher is passionate about advisory programs and personalization.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p>
<p>Q9: What revisions should be made in the writing and format of the handbook?</p>	
<p>MFE1: Format is good from the importance of a personalized environment then purposes of Advisory, etc. There seems to be repetitive information throughout the handbook from section to section but maybe that is the justification of themes woven throughout for effectiveness.</p> <p>MFE2: As stated above, the main revision I would make is the formatting of the rubric.</p>	<p>Acknowledged. Researcher action included additional editing with emphasis placed on repetitive aspects of the handbook.</p>

<p>This is probably due to formatting guidelines and cannot be changed for this purpose.</p> <p>MFE3: Two things come to mind. It would be great to have an extensive list of reference schools that one could contact to consult with regarding successful advisory program. I would be interested in how schools address the issue of relevancy for seniors. Many advisory programs struggle to provide relevancy for seniors. College and career readiness is frequently a part of the senior repertoire. However, many seniors feel like they know where they are going and what they want to do, therefore, they are ready to move beyond those topics.</p>	<p>Acknowledged. Researcher confirms that the rubric is double spaced to meet necessary guidelines.</p> <p>Acknowledged. Researcher added more reference schools listed on page. Researcher intentionally did not focus on seniors, but instead focused on key components needed for all students.</p>
<p>Q10: What suggestions do you have for making the content more clear or understandable?</p>	
<p>MFE1: Maybe it is not appropriate for a Dissertation, but the effectiveness of Advisory is very difficult to quantify. Instead, it is more affective side of education. While that material is touched on, would it be possibly appropriate to include any of these examples to help drive home your point? Also, one of the things touched on was some mentoring relationships briefly. Could that idea be expounded on more? That has been a positive for our kids both as freshman coming in and upper classmen who are mentors. That relationship can also help the teacher in</p>	<p>Acknowledged. Researcher considered suggestions. Researcher points out that building relationships and personalization are a part of mentoring.</p>

<p>activities but also the relationship between kids and teacher.</p> <p>MFE2: None, this is very well written and easy to follow.</p> <p>MFE3: I feel it was quite clear.</p>	<p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p>
<p>Q11: What areas need more clarification?</p>	
<p>MFE1: Since Advisories and personalization exist to improve student achievement ultimately are there numbers of graduation rates, drop-out rates, student engagement in activities, etc., that could be included in Chapter 6 to drive home the point of Advisory effectiveness?</p> <p>MFE2: No suggestions.</p> <p>MFE3: N/A</p>	<p>Acknowledged. Researcher no action taken due to this not be the primary focus of the handbook.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p>
<p>Q12: Additional comments</p>	
<p>MFE1: In our own Advisory setup, it is those personal anecdotes of teachers being vulnerable and getting out from “behind their desk” to connect with kids that really speak to the effectiveness of Advisory. I will certainly look through the list of references to see how they may help our own Advisory setup.</p> <p>MFE2: This is an outstanding resource for educators and school leaders looking to implement or improve an advisory program.</p> <p>MFE3: This resource is very informative, easy to read, and a very practical resource. I think it will command a great deal of attention.</p>	<p>Acknowledged. Researcher agrees that teachers exposing their vulnerability assists in the personalization process.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p> <p>Acknowledged.</p>

Final Handbook Revision

The final handbook revision consisted of editing and acting on some recommendations of the professional educators who participated in the Main Field Test. The editing involved included an intense focus on the repetitiveness of the handbook. In addition to editing, more schools were added to the already existing list of mentioned schools. This information served as the final piece of the R & D process that completed the handbook and created a finished product that could be used for schools wishing to personalize the educational process using advisory programs.

Summary

This research proposal used the steps in the R & D cycle as specified by Gall and Borg (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 2007): literature review, needs assessment, proof of concept, development of prototype, preliminary field test, revision of the prototype, main field test, and revision of the final product. The final product reflects the careful consideration of reviewer comments while retaining commitment to the intent of the product.

Chapter 4 - Completed Handbook

**PERSONALIZING EDUCATION THROUGH ADVISORY PROGRAMS: A
HANDBOOK FOR SCHOOL LEADERS OF LARGE HIGH SCHOOLS IN KANSAS**

By

TERRELL DWAYNE MCCARTY

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2014

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Personalizing Education through Advisory Programs: A Handbook for School Leaders of Large High Schools in Kansas

Preface

The purpose of this handbook is to guide school leaders through the stages of planning, developing, and implementing advisory programs for the personalization of education in large high schools in Kansas. The need for personalization has been an objective of large high schools for the past two decades. Yonezawa, McClure, and Jones (2012) define personalization as the cultivation of a web of positive relationships – among adults and youth in classrooms, schools, and communities – to promote learning. Currently, there are few existing comprehensive resources provided for educators to assist them in the personalization of the education process. This handbook has been developed to answer the following over-arching question: What are the key components of advisory programs that will allow school leaders to personalize education for each student?

This handbook focuses on key components that are essential in personalizing the learning environment in large high schools in Kansas, as well as the necessary steps needed to building capacity within the faculty. It is a practitioner’s guide to implementing these strategies to accomplish personalization. The strategies shared will help in developing processes related to transition, support/intervention, and academic/career/post-secondary counseling. Personalizing education through advisory programs will create a more positive, personalized school culture and create a more caring relationship among teachers and students (Rourke & Boone, 2009).

Over the last several decades, there has been wide-spread criticism of the large comprehensive high school as an alienating and bureaucratic structure that hinders the

development of learning or trust among all stakeholders. Advisories, adult-student mentoring programs, and enhanced adult-led extracurricular programs are a few ways small and large schools have tried to enhance adult-student relationships (McClure, Yonezawa, & Jones, 2010). Large student populations prevent teachers from knowing individual students as people, according to Levine (2011). School leaders need guidance in providing programs to address this lack of personalization and provide a more supportive environment for students. Advisory programs are a way to meet student needs, help with transitions, and to provide support, intervention, and guidance throughout the high school experience. Large high schools are defined as those schools with at least 1,000 students (Bernstein, et al., 2008).

Personalization and relationships are the goals of advisory programs. Espe (1993) described advisory programs as follows: "Advisory is more than a program. It can be expanded to develop quality teacher-student relationships and to become an integral part of the curriculum, as in schools that use advisory time to review portfolios with students and assess progress individually and holistically" (p. 16). Efforts related to this personalization include constructing small learning environments, fostering continuous, long-term relationships between adults and students, and creating advisory programs that systematically organize counseling, academic support, and family connections (Darling-Hammond & Friedlaender, 2008). This approach to personalization is in response to growing national concerns about students too often lost and alienated in large, impersonal high schools as well as concerns about school safety, and low levels of achievement and graduation for many students (Bernstein, Milsap, Schimmentil, & Page, 2008). By creating personal connections, students can begin to feel safe and supported (Makkonen, 2004). In other words, advisory programs can be one of the best investments a school can make to increase learning for all students, especially the most marginal (Champeau,

2011). Educators should be focused on each individual student and this handbook can serve as a guide to educators through the stages of creating, planning, developing, implementing, and evaluating advisory programs as a way to personalize education and provide individual attention to each student. This handbook suggests that advisory programs should include the following components: leadership strategies, transition assistance, support and intervention strategies, and academic/career/post-secondary counseling for all students.

Leadership strategies - A school leader who takes personalized education to its full potential should be less concerned with what knowledge is acquired and more interested in how that knowledge is used. School leaders could consist of building principal, curriculum directors, department chairs, and other personnel with leadership responsibility. School leaders must develop structures and relationships that nurture the strengths and energies of each student (Littky & Allen, 1999). Principals must be fully engaged in the development and maintenance of the advisory programs to show staff members that their principal wants the advisory programs to succeed (DiMartino & Clarke, 2008). Principals should focus on providing adviser programs, with each student having an adult advocate who knows him or her well (Dimartino & Miles, 2006).

Transition assistance--When supports for time management, social skills, and maintaining an academic focus were provided, students experienced an easier transition and were more likely to have success in ninth grade and beyond (Oakes & Waite, 2009). The positive effects of high school transition programs for students have been successful for all students when the school provided complete support (Smith, 1997). Transitions in schooling were moments of great promise for students, holding the potential for personal growth, new learning, and greater independence and responsibility (Neild, 2009).

Support and intervention strategies –There are numerous areas in which schools provide these strategies. Providing support and intervention academically, socially, and from a behavioral standpoint has assisted families. With reduced family stress and enhanced social support, there may also be a reduction in the symptomology of the student and prevention of a formal referral for special education services (Kratowill, McDonald, Levin, Scalia, & Coover, 2009). This allows educators to evaluate what type of support may be needed to assist this individual in their education. It may be as simple as directing this individual to the Personal and Social Counselor (Bowers & Hatch, 2005) in the school system. Therefore, it is important for teachers to have varied strategies available for use in support of such learners; the importance of meeting individual learner needs as the basis for comprehensive behavior change (Murray, Baker, Murry-Slutsky, & Paris, 2009).

Academic counseling--Student services personnel must be relentless in their efforts to assess the needs of each student; to identify the barriers and obstacles that interfere with student success; and to work with students, parents, the student support team, and faculty to develop strategies for overcoming those barriers (Dufour, Guidice, Magee, Martin, & Zivkovic, 2002). Because parental expectations and role models influence career aspirations and educational decisions; examining family dynamics, roles, and values with students in elementary, middle, and high school settings can be beneficial in helping students master the competencies in the comprehensive developmental guidance programs in order to reach their goals (Gibson, 2005).

Advisory programs as a solution--The term advisory program is used to describe a program within the school that assists in the personalization of the educational process. By creating personal connections, students can begin to feel safe and supported (Makkonen, 2004).

Advisory programs can be configurations in which an adult advisor meets regularly during the school day with a group of students to provide academic and social-emotional mentorship and support, to create personalization within the school, and to facilitate a small peer community of learners (Shulkind & Foote, 2009). The ultimate goal is for every student to have someone he/she could trust and talk to, someone who knows them and cares about them (George, 2000).

All of the above components are essential to personalizing the learning environment and were addressed throughout this handbook. Adding these advisory programs will help ensure that all students are treated as individuals, and that no student falls through the cracks.

Each chapter in this book describes the components associated with this initiative of establishing advisory programs and the necessary steps involved to attain personalization and to strive to ensure all students are known on an individual level. Chapter One defines, describes, and discusses personalization and the need to work with students on an individual basis. It encompasses the beginnings and the goals of how to achieve personalization through the implementation of an advisory program. Chapter Two focuses on the leadership needed to plan and develop advisory programs for the personalization of education states that an initiative such as this begins with leadership. Without leadership, structure and organization do not exist as it relates to launching systemic programs that will have an impact on the climate and culture of the school. It also emphasizes professional development that is necessary to support faculty and strengthen the belief.

Chapter Three describes the need for transition assistance. Transition assistance is crucial when it comes to the first area of focus associated with personalization. It discusses various areas of concentration needed to assist in this area. Chapter Four consists of support and

intervention strategies for all students. Strategies such as academic, behavioral, and social are the main areas of support and intervention.

Chapter Five describes the final component, Academic/Career/Post-Secondary Counseling, and focuses on how to personalize the learning environment focusing on personalization. This chapter discusses concepts that provide guidance on the individual level that will assist each student to grasp the personal role he/she will play in preparing for life after high school. Chapter Six details the role that advisory programs play as a solution to addressing the needs listed in previous chapters by discussing several strategies utilized by administration, faculty, and students. Evaluating the success of the advisory programs is included in this chapter as well. Chapter Seven provides a conclusion to the handbook and the achievement of personalization.

Chapter 1: A Passion for Personalization

1.1 Purpose

Here is a short story to illustrate the need for personalization.

It is 7:15 a.m., the first day of school. Dwayne is new to the community and this is the first day of high school. He has no idea what to expect. The halls are filling with students arriving for the first day of school. Students are from all over the world. Dwayne attended open house and there was a good turnout of students. Though it was offered with the best of intentions, it has in no way, prepared Dwayne for the overwhelming feeling of being unknown. Class schedules were issued at open house, but after that, not much else was done to introduce Dwayne to the school. How does Dwayne find his locker? How does he know where his classes are located? How does he go about finding someone to speak with to provide assistance?

Dwayne continues to stand off to the side; not knowing what to do, or where to go. Students seem to know exactly where they are going. They must be upperclassmen. Some students have no idea concerning what to expect. There are so many students, and the building is so big and seems so massive. The halls are clearing and finally, someone approaches Dwayne to ask if everything is okay.

Dwayne is totally overwhelmed. He is in awe. He knows no one, and is not known by anyone. This is the first day of school. Dwayne is not a student. He is a brand new administrator, Mr. Terry Dwayne McCarty, Assistant Principal. The above scenario is true and describes my first day ever as an Assistant Principal at a large high school.

And after surviving that day, I had to reflect on what I could do to create an environment in which students did not have to experience the same thing that I experienced.

I was born in Ness City, Kansas, and moved to Hope, Kansas (population approximately 400), when I was one year old. I lived in Hope for 10 years before moving to Concordia, Kansas (population approximately 6000). Basically, I spent all of my educational years in relatively small schools. My experiences growing up in small schools, and being known, provided me with a possible insight into how to address this issue of the lack of personalization in schools. I thought about what I could do as a new principal to make sure all students felt known.

Now, imagine the feeling of a 14 year-old student attending the first day of school at a large school. Imagine the feeling of not being known, in addition to the feeling of not knowing anybody. These two scenarios help to illustrate the need for personalization – it is a strong, positive way to address that isolation, that lack of personalization.

It is common to be known by everyone in a small school. However, due to the size of large high schools, many students may feel invisible and not known as individuals. Students do not feel connected, and many are not equipped to advocate on their own behalf. This feeling can lead to not receiving the appropriate guidance and support throughout their high school career (Bernstein, Milsap, Schimmenti, & Page, 2008). Personalizing the learning environment and making sure that each and every student is valued as an individual should be the goal of every school, but can be challenging in a large high school. Personalization creates a positive climate within the school building. Making personalization a priority and the focus, so that students feel valued and acknowledged as individuals, and respected as human beings, can address the

problems of isolation. So this is where I went to work and decided that I would put steps in place to make sure all students were known.

Let's talk personalization. The concept of personalizing the learning environment is not a new concept, but finding strategies to implement this process can be challenging. According to Johnson and Liber, (2008), the term "personalization of high schools" can be defined as: "the desire to create learner-centered but provider-driven education" (p.9). The need for personalization is not just actively trying to personalize and individualize the learning environment. Personalization also entails pro-actively adopting strategies to ease the overwhelming feeling of the first day of school in a large school setting.

Duke and De Roberto (2009) have characterized the lack of personalization in America's large high schools as problematic and places in which:

- Students do not feel connected.
- Students are not receiving appropriate guidance geared to the individual.
- Students are not receiving appropriate support on an individual basis.
- Students are not feeling safe.
- Students are not being known by faculty and staff. (pp. 4-5)

Personalizing the education for each student on an individual basis should be the goal of all schools, whatever the size of the school. Personalizing the education for each student on an individual basis in a large school, can be a little more challenging. Personalization can be achieved through a structured, caring environment in which students receive personal attention and instruction (Rourke & Boone, 2009). Part of the challenge of personalization in large schools

is just the size of the building itself. Large schools have many floors, hallways, entrances, and exits. Students enter the building from a variety of doorways and disappear into the large population of students. Students are known by the social group they hang out with; by the extracurricular activity they may be involved in; and are called by name by each teacher when taking attendance.....sometimes.

Students learn to cope and they learn to survive. They learn to navigate through the intricacies of a large school. And yes, many of them graduate with a quality education. But just how meaningful was the education they received? How relevant was the instruction? How applicable were the courses they completed? Did they receive the appropriate support, guidance, and personalized attention? In other words, it might be quality for many, but not for all and everyone could benefit even more in a school that is more personalized.

The concept of personalization is a must in large schools. And this is why a handbook such as this was created. In addition to being a goal of the school, personalization should also be an obligation....a duty. It should be an attitude. It should be the desire of the school, the school leadership, the faculty, the school community, and the community-- to provide the best education possible from a comprehensive standpoint, but more importantly, from an individual standpoint.

As has been mentioned previously, there are many programs, initiatives, strategies, and curriculum that are all focused on personalization. However, many resources only discuss personalization on the surface and do not offer guidance on how to actually achieve personalization or how to implement it. This handbook provides definitions and details about creating, planning, developing, implementing, and evaluating key components necessary in achieving personalization. The handbook is written supported by an extensive literature review.

In addition to the literature review the experiences that I have lived and the opinions that I have formed in more than twenty years as an administrator are also used to support this handbook.

1.2 Beginnings of Personalization

In 1975-76, a conservative, cautious faculty at Wichita East (KS.) High School, initiated a pilot project with 18 staff volunteers. These volunteers; composed of teachers, counselors, and an administrator became the first official Advisory Program (Johnson, Morton, & Obley, 1979). This led to other schools implementing the same concept until finally, the state of Florida passed legislation in 1984 to fund pilot and model teacher-advisor programs (Galasbi, 1997). In the 2008 edition of *Diplomas Count, Education Week*, Dedmond reported that nationally more than one-third of the students lost from the high school pipeline failed to make the transition from 9th to 10th grade. To address this concern, schools and districts across the country have struggled to develop freshman transition activities and courses to address this critical transitional time for students (2008).

1.3 Goals of Personalization

Some goals of personalization are:

- To create a strong sense of community within the school building,
- To create an advisory system where educators serve as academic advisors,
- To aid in the adjustment and transitions to each grade and,
- To increase partnerships between parents, school adults, and students.

Advisory program characteristics to address personalization should include:

- Student groups meeting with their advisors on a regular, scheduled basis.
- Students meeting individually with advisors at least once per week.
- Advisors planning an important role in annual course selection.
- Advisors available to students when a pressing issue or crisis arises.
- Advisors meeting with parents/guardians during the school year.
- Advisors meeting with other staff members as needed.
- Advisors advocating for students in discipline matters.

Personalization seeks to provide the time, the personnel, and the communication necessary for a personalization program to take place. Personalization desires all students be exposed to all information associated, and embedded, within the education process at the secondary level. For the personalization of education to be implemented, opportunities for faculty/staff to gain skills in personalizing education through various professional development should be a must.

Summary

Personalization seeks to create small learning environments that assist, equip, inform, communicate, and support students on a personal level, and ensures that each student has an adult advocate in the building. Support and intervention strategies are components that provide students with multiple opportunities to seek assistance. Support can be broad in nature, but the goal in mind is to provide services for students needing support.

Chapter 2: Leadership

2.1 Belief

The belief of personalizing education in large school can sound daunting. The school leader must hold this belief to be true and be convinced that personalization has merit to move the process forward to personalize the educational process. A school leader that takes personalized education to its full potential should be less concerned with what knowledge is acquired and more interested in how that knowledge is used. School leaders must develop structures and relationships that nurture the strengths and energies of each student (Littky & Allen, 1999).

The leader is the one who has the vision of personalization and, if he/she is a true leader, he/she is bold enough to act on his/her beliefs and convictions. To implement that vision demonstrates strength of character, courage, and conviction. Some might say it goes against the grain of the current trends associated with school performance, student achievement, and school improvement. Having experienced what it feels like to not know anybody, or not be known by anybody, can feel overwhelming and create insecurity. The current educational system is very complex and consists of many components (e.g., assessments, accountability, athletics, activities, curriculum, and instruction). Rarely do you see a focus on the individual besides the students who are already on Individual Education Plans (IEP's). This is when personalization enters the picture. Personalization will enhance all aspects of the current educational system but will do so while focusing on the individual. And yet none of this can be accomplished without the leader having the vision, the wisdom, the strength, the courage, and the support to implement.

The leader should possess the courage necessary to establish personalization as his/her priority. Isn't this what leadership is about? And surely we do not want all leaders to lead the same way, do we? Is that what we want from our students? Leaders who have the strength of vision, the belief to stand up for their convictions, have a desire to be bold, and want to personalize the learning environment are the leaders who truly want to make a difference in the life of each individual student. Again, personalization requires effort. The investment made in the individual student and the education associated with this investment will have a positive impact in all aspects of the educational system. The leadership is crucial in the implementation of an initiative, but in one such as this, the leadership is the difference maker. A school leader who takes personalized education to its full potential should be less concerned with what knowledge is acquired and more interested in how that knowledge is used. School leaders must develop structures and relationships that nurture the strengths and energies of each student (Littky & Allen, 1999). The leader's role is to provide direction through modeling and vision, to motivate through love and inspiration, to build a complimentary team based on mutual respect, to be effectiveness-minded and focused on results rather than on methods, systems, and procedures (Covey, 1991). A wise leader enlists the skills of the teacher leaders within the school that may not possess leadership positions. Empowering teacher and encouraging the teacher leadership can be an effective strategy. By giving these individuals support and recognition, a more unified culture can be established. When schools embrace the strategy of using outstanding teachers to influence the practice of their peers, adequate planning and communication are essential, (Reeves, 2009).

2.2 Planning and Implementation

Once the belief of personalization is established, it is time to begin the planning process. This begins with identifying a core group of individuals who share the same belief that personalization is needed in large high schools. Individuals who are determined to pursue this in a large school setting will express this desire, once the initiative has been openly communicated to the building faculty/staff. The committee in charge of presenting and leading this initiative is vital to the success. Members must be respected educators throughout the building. Members must be dedicated to striving to personalize the learning environment. Having a leadership committee demonstrates that this is not top down leadership. It demonstrates that this is a grass roots concept that faculty and staff believe in and will volunteer their time to propose this to the faculty as a whole. Having a core committee demonstrates the belief in the concept that is essential to get a program such as this, off the ground. They are striving to make the school a better place for the individual student and are willing to volunteer their time, effort, and energy to be a part of leading this effort.

Staff members willing to be a part of this initiative, must be strong in their belief and their desire to make a difference in the lives of students by personalizing the education and treating students as individuals. They also must be willing to put forth the effort in working with other staff members through organized professional development activities, or informal avenues of communication. This is in addition to the normal responsibilities of duties within the classroom. Some people may serve as coaches or sponsors. Commitments of time further demonstrate the amount of dedication the core committee members must be willing to give.

Working to garner support for programs and initiatives such as this require a great deal of effort, commitment and can be very difficult, especially in large high schools. Members of the

committee must be passionate about personalizing the educational process. They must be united and they must possess a clear vision of exactly what they want personalization to accomplish. The team could consist of building leadership, department chairs, and members from not just core curriculum (math, language arts, science, and social studies), but from electives as well (fine arts, business, physical education, etc.). This provides for a diverse perspective.

2.3 Components of Personalization

The goal of the personalization of education can be categorized into three key components. Those three components are: 1) transition, 2) support and intervention, and 3) academic/career/post-secondary counseling. These components are the core of the process of personalization. Once the detail of the components has been decided, the method to address these must be developed.

First, an initial meeting with staff members must be geared towards educating members of the committee about the goals, objectives, and strategies associated with the personalization of education. Meetings should be scheduled with this committee to begin creating a plan to present to the faculty to gain additional support. The meeting with faculty will also be used to communicate the concept of personalization, discuss strategies, and to define and implement the specific areas that will be addressed. There are a multitude of topics that can be covered but ultimately, as previously mentioned, they are all categorized into the areas of 1) transition, 2) support and intervention, and 3) academic/career/post-secondary counseling. These areas are broad in nature, but the numerous topics that should be communicated, fall in to these components.

One of the biggest challenges of the entire process is working to define, discuss, communicate, and explain what the goals and objectives are of personalization and the driving force behind the need to begin this initiative. Implementing initiatives such as this take a great deal of time in a large school. This is due to a variety of factors, such as the large number of staff members comprising a large high school with a student population of 1000 or more students. Another factor is the many other responsibilities associated with education. Finally, finding the time to accomplish the necessary communication with the staff can be almost impossible. Communicating and explaining the concept, building support, encouraging conversations, and providing appropriate time for professional development and collaboration can be very challenging tasks.

2.4 Professional Development and Collaboration

Professional development and collaboration are common vocabulary in schools. Professional development is a comprehensive, sustained and intensive approach to improving teachers' and principals' effectiveness in raising student achievement (McLester, 2013). Collaboration is a joint effort of multiple individuals or work groups to accomplish a task or project (Rouse, 2005). Both terms carry a significant amount of importance and responsibility. Both terms require commitment from the individual and from the school. Both areas are a necessity as it relates to all aspects of education. Professional development and collaboration are also the responsibility of the individual.

Professional development and collaboration allow for faculty and staff to be grow and allow for conversation to discuss the best most effective methods of reaching the students and having a positive impact. It is imperative that the main purpose of personalization be identified

as focusing on the individual student. This is such a crucial concept in a large high school because students feel as though they are not known.

The time given to professional development and collaboration should be utilized efficiently and should involve all faculty and staff. This is not something that can occur overnight and can be quite time consuming when engaging all staff members. This reflects on the committee that is leading the grass roots charge to assist in personalizing the education for each individual student. Professional development is continuous and ongoing. So although the plans may be in place, they are always subject to change. Professional development should include topics such as defining personalization, describing advisory programs, explaining responsibilities expected, and building support.

And again, desiring to achieve personalization is not meant to add additional stress, responsibility, or planning, for staff. The entire faculty/staff (including administration, counselors, support staff, and other staff members) should participate throughout the entire process whether it be professional development, collaboration, or serving as a facilitator in personalizing education. It is something that the committee needs to address internally as they continue to seek opportunities to meet the needs of each individual student. According to Fullan (2006), the spread of professional learning communities is about the proliferation of leadership. Henry Mintzberg, in his book *Managers Not MBAs*, captured this when he observed that “leadership is not about making clever decision....It is about energizing other people to make good decisions and do better things”.

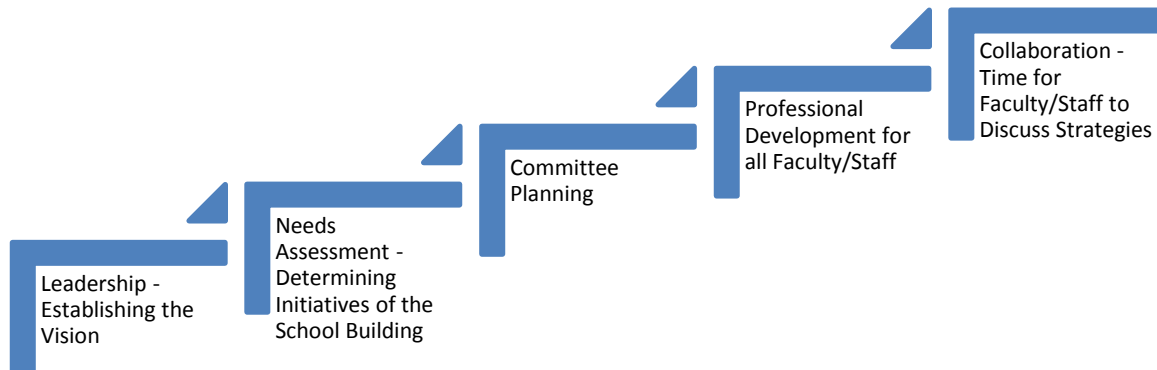
To begin, something as simple as conducting a short survey given to students can assist the committee in establishing targeted areas of focus. This is in addition to other topics that have

been decided by the committee. Once the various topics have been chosen, it is time to discuss and adopt the best possible methods to reach the goal of personalization. Committee members will decide on the manner in which to disseminate the information to the student body. This will require the staff to organize, identify, equip, and prepare to be as effective and efficient as possible. The committee members may attend conferences, workshops, and seminars. Members may participate in book studies. In addition to all of these possibilities, having the time to collaborate will be most beneficial. Organization of a high school is pivotal in terms of adjustment and achievement (Donegan, 2008). This is one of the critical elements that students entering high school face. Earlier, I discussed the first day of school as an administrator, and the feeling of being totally overwhelmed with the number of people in the building. It can also be overwhelming to know no one and to not be known by anyone.

Addressing transition should be an area of focus for large schools. There are a multitude of issues that should be considered when planning a transitional program for students entering a large high school. Faculty are encouraged to collaborate during professional development opportunities to discuss the most urgent areas in which the school communicates proactively the do's and don'ts of the high school experience, specifically, the first year entering high school. Ninth grade is a treacherous year for students, particularly those in large urban districts. Even students who were doing moderately well in the middle grades can be knocked off the path to graduation by the new academic demands and social pressures of high school. (Neild, Balfanz, & Herzog, 2007)

The following flow chart represents a visual model summarizing the process of launching advisory programs, building capacity among faculty staff, and creating structure and direction for the programs.

2.4.1 Process Summary



McCarty (2014)

Summary

Effective leadership is crucial to the success of any initiative. The leadership associated with an initiative such as this plays a significant role. Leadership entails fostering a supporting and encouraging culture for teacher leadership. Leadership also includes showing appreciation for commitment to students while at the same time, asking each teacher to go one step further. Other factors consist of developing a plan to share with personnel to establish the need and the foundation for launching the initiative. Additional factors include educating and equipping staff, providing professional development, and creating time for collaboration.

Chapter 3: The Need for Transition Assistance

3.1 Introduction

Transition is a process of moving from the known to the unknown. Collectively, researchers agree that the first year of high school is pivotal in terms of adjustment and achievement (Donegan, 2008), so for this handbook, the term transition will refer to this first year of high school. A main part of the transitional component is making students aware of support mechanisms in place that are embedded within the school system. When supports for time management, social skills, and maintaining an academic focus are provided, students will experience an easier transition and are more likely to have success in ninth grade and beyond (Oakes & Waite, 2009). Knowing support mechanisms are in place within the school, provides comfort and security for students, because for some students, school may be the only safe place they have in their lives.

The short story that began this handbook was an attempt by one school to transition students and prepare them for the first day of school. Instead of proactively implementing activities to equip, inform, communicate, motivate, and prepare students for school, the only activity that had taken place was an open house, and that was optional.

3.2 Transition Concepts

Schools have a duty and an obligation to fine tune the approach in seeking to personalize the learning environment for each student. And schools should constantly seek ways to do so. Students need to see, feel, know, and believe that the school is doing everything it can to personalize the learning. It is the job of educators in large schools to insure this happens.

Some possible areas for transition include introductions of administration and counselors, tours of the buildings, the importance of the class schedule, the importance of starting high off on the right foot, the transcript, and testing. Opportunities such as athletics, clubs, and organizations should also be discussed. It would also be beneficial for upper class student leaders to assist in not just giving tours, but talking about the high school experience and addressing the issues from a student's perspective. This assists in providing more relevance to the transitional activities. Once expectations are established, transition becomes essential for the duration of the high school careers for each individual student.

Discussing and developing study skills are needed for all students and should be addressed when students transition into a large high school. This is something that may be taken for granted, especially for the older student. Key aspects associated with study skills can be addressed with the faculty and staff within the appropriate professional development. Talking points created for students are listed and then delivered to the student body. Being able to communicate basic strategies to all students is one goal of transition and ultimately, the personalization of education. The positive effects of high school transition programs for students have been successful for all students when the school provided complete support (Smith, 1997).

Students who feel supported, are getting support at crucial times in their lives, will feel reduced stress and will perform better. Students want to be treated with respect and dignity. The more the process of education is personalized, the more students feel validated and known as an individual. There are times when a student just wants someone to listen to them. Being able to have an adult advocate in the building is advantageous. It allows the student to talk to someone that hopefully will not judge or condemn – but rather listen, guide, counsel, and help the student navigate life.

Ensuring all students transition into a large high school successfully is one of the main components to accomplish the personalization of the learning environment. It is important that all students receive the same communication, especially as they begin their high school career. Transitioning students into a large high school provides numerous aspects of the high school process that assists students and give them the foundation they need for a good start.

3.3 Planning Transition

Planning transition takes a great deal of time, effort, focus, and concentration. The planning process must take into account the desired outcome. The committee should identify the importance of transition. Transition should include developing strategies and activities aimed at preparing students for high school and beyond. The students are the focus. The planning consists of developing schedules, areas of concentration, activities, and events that are all coordinated to assist in the transition process. The planning begins long before the first day of school.

Factors that are considered topics to cover when planning effective transition topics could include 1) the importance of the transcript, 2) the relevance of the 4-year course schedule, 3) the impact of getting off to a great start to begin high school, 4) rules and regulations, 5) clubs and organizations, 6) athletic teams to consider, 7) key people throughout the building, 8) lunch and other logistics, 9) testing, and 10) organizational strategies and time management. These factors are all part of the high school experience and all have the potential to have a major impact on the paths that students choose.

As planning for the transitional components begins, decisions are made by the committee as to who is best to facilitate each of these areas. Emphasis should be placed on who will be the

most effective in communicating the respective information to the students. The goal should be to relay relevant information to the students and facilitate discussion to ensure that each and every student has a thorough understanding of the various areas being discussed.

Transition is something that should be done on the first day of school and can be a day that is filled with short informational sessions aimed at the population of students that are targeted. Throughout the day, students are divided into multiple groups and attend these sessions. It is important enough, that instead of students attending classes on the first full day of school, they spend the entire time participating in a day of orientation. Transitioning students into high school is a central theme in the personalization of education process. Although the day that was just described takes place on the first day of school, it is reinforced throughout the school year through constantly reinforcing the concept of transition. This is crucial in personalizing the learning environment. Students have been informed and included since the first day of school as it relates to the mission of the high school they are attending.

Transitioning students continues throughout the first year of high school. All of the areas that were discussed briefly on the day of orientation are discussed in depth during the school year. Each one of the areas should be scheduled at strategic times in the school year. For instance, the importance of the four-year schedule is an item that begins the school year. Students gain insight into the four-year schedule and are included in the decision making process associated with the development of the schedule. This is because students are engaged in the process and develop an understanding of what the four-year schedule means to them as an individual.

As a part of developing the four-year plan, students participate in taking interest inventories and other questionnaires to investigate their strengths, weaknesses, interests, and other information. After completion, meetings are scheduled with the counselor to discuss the results and to help the student build a schedule based on all of these factors. Of course, it is the expectation that parents/guardians participate as well to assist in providing support to help the student reach his/her goal. In the event that some students do not have parents/guardians that have the ability to advocate for their student, faculty/staff are available. This is one of the main objectives of transition. Focusing on transition allows students to build relationships with faculty and staff. The relationship leads to the faculty/staff member being able to serve as an advocate for the student; not necessarily to make decisions, but to aid the students in making decisions based on the factors previously discussed.

Building relationships is a cornerstone to transition and personalization. Relationships create a caring bond and open up communication. In a large school, these relationships are sometimes hard to build for some students. Transition components put faculty and staff into a position that enables them to work with students on an individual basis. Even something as little as calling students by their names can make a tremendous difference. The investment made by schools, particularly larger middle schools, to aid students in making a transition to high school was critical, according to Smith (1997). Transition is the component that sets the stage for the personalization of education by communicating with parents and students that they are valued and cared for as individuals. Students know that they are known on a personal level. They feel a sense of community and belonging. They feel others care for them. They feel validated. And they feel as though they are accepting responsibility for their education. It is not that they are solely responsible, but that they are involved in their own education.

Transition plays a significant role when students are entering into high school. Engaging students as active participants in developing a plan will be aligned to their strengths and interests. It will also allow for students to mature and become more accountable after realizing the responsibility they are now demonstrating.

Summary

The goal of transition is to involve all stakeholders in the education of each and every child, and to establish a climate that is collaborative. Transition is the component that sets the stage for the personalization of education by communicating with parents and students that they are valued and cared for as individuals. Transition is a component that will require a commitment by the committee.

Chapter 4: The Need for Support and Intervention

4.1 Introduction

Providing support and interventions for all students is the second area of focus. Students experience many ups and downs throughout their educational career. Support and intervention strategies are essential because they do have an impact on all students. This helps students to feel known and cared for as individuals because of the support they are receiving and because of the interventions that are being implemented to put each student in a position to be successful as an individual.

Support and interventions have become an active component within a large high school. And, at times, it is an urgent component. The lives of teenagers can be extremely complex. The family structure, the home environment, hormones, social media, and numerous other factors all converge in the mind of a teenager. Many times, it is up to the school to make sense of all of this. It can be difficult. Support and intervention is an area that is vital within the confines of the walls of a large high school and can have a variety of different looks to it.

Support and intervention strategies are an essential part of personalization. It is also important to note, all of the areas that are being discussed within this handbook all mesh together. There are several areas associated with support and intervention. This can consist of academic support or academic interventions. It can consist of social support or social interventions. It can consist of providing an environment in which students feel known. They also become aware of the people that are involved in their life that can help support them in their journey of life.

4.2 Academic Support and Academic Interventions

Academic support and academic interventions are two entirely different areas. Academic support provides a way to enhance learning and even enable learning to take place. It can create opportunities for students to receive a grade check. The time period also allows for students to receive extra help from a teacher in a class in which they may have questions. This type of academic support still allows for the student to assume responsibility, but the consistency of the time frame and the stated mission regarding personalization puts the student into positions where opportunities exist for them to receive necessary support.

Academic interventions on the other hand may be more intense. With the goal of personalization in mind, faculty and staff members perform academic grade checks on the group of students with whom they work. This allows for the faculty members to determine that within their groups, maybe a student or students are in need of academic interventions. There is a process in place for this as well. Initially, the faculty member may choose to communicate with each student on an individual basis to discuss academic concerns. This may be an area in which the faculty member may be able to provide the needed intervention. However, should this be a situation in which the faculty determines the issues may be more large scale, an appropriate referral will be made. This may mean a referral is made to the counseling department, administration, or potentially the SIT (Student Improvement Team). The SIT is a team of educators whose goal is to expand the use of various resources and expertise in the schools and communities to individually address student needs (Burns, 1999). Teams such as this exist in schools to identify students who may be showing signs of struggling. The teams meet to determine strategies that may be available to provide the appropriate support to the individual. The SIT is put in place to provide support for students. And although we are currently

discussing academic support, the SIT can also meet to assist with social support and interventions. The SIT consists of classroom teachers, counseling staff, administration, and sometimes; a social worker. The SIT convenes to discuss the status of the student in question.

Referring a student to the counseling department will entail a meeting for the student to determine the nature and the severity of the concern. Through this meeting, the counselors may arrive at the conclusion that a change needs to occur. This may mean a class change. It may mean a teacher change. It may mean communicating various tutoring opportunities that exist to help the student. The counselor will communicate with parents/guardians the nature of the concern to ensure that all parties are involved in this process.

Academic interventions may consist of scheduling a time for the student, parents/guardians, teacher, counselor, and/or administrator to meet just to make a plan to stabilize the situation. At that time, options are presented and discussed to make plans for the future. All of this begins by addressing each student individually, thus personalizing the learning community. All of this revolves around the individual student. The important thing to keep in mind is that interventions are taking place. The student is being heard and is getting the attention needed to make that particular situation a priority.

4.3 Social Interventions

Many students go through high school and experience a variety of circumstances in which they may need social interventions. More and more responsibility continues to be placed on schools. Therefore, many times the school is helping the student cope and deal with social situations that have nothing to do with school. However, providing support from a social standpoint, and providing interventions from a social standpoint, is a reality in a school setting.

By providing social support, the school is taking on the responsibility of assisting the students to be able to make better decisions. Social support also equips students to be the ones learning to advocate, problem solve, and offer guidance that will help these young people, not just in the present time, but in the future as well. Depending on the level of severity associated with the circumstances, parents/guardians may be included in this area of support.

Through various support and intervention strategies, students gain the necessary support needed to equip them to be successful in their high school career. Interventions are always a possibility. Interventions are not automatic. Interventions are implemented if that is what the team recommends. And again, the interventions are not a “one size fits all” intervention. The interventions must be very specific in nature and they are geared towards meeting the needs of the individual student. They must be personal.

Possible interventions include putting the student on a 504 Plan. A 504 Plan is a part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that prohibits discrimination based upon a disability. A disability, which is identical to that in the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), extends beyond learning to other major life activities, such as walking, eating, and breathing. A disability is a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more of major life activities. (Zirkel, 2009). Other interventions could include recommending that the student be tested regarding possible placement within the special education program, teacher changes, course changes, adjusting the schedule to best meet the needs of that particular student, meeting with a counselor, meeting with a social worker, attending after school learning time, and continuing communication between all of the people involved in the intervention. All of these are real options and are potential scenarios that are aimed at providing the most viable solution that will lead to success for the individual student. Providing appropriate support for all students is part of the Multi-Tiered

Systems of Support (MTSS). This is a systematic approach to helping all students learn and is Kansas' response to RTI. The philosophy of educating students alongside their peers is honorable, yet sometimes challenging to implement (Karge & Lasky, 2009). MTSS can assist in this process and is closely related with advisory programs and the personalization of secondary schools and can be the conduits used to personalize the school.

Faculty members are provided with the most up-to-date professional development, which assists in this process. MTSS is a concept and method that assists in the goal of educating the individual child. Through the MTSS model, faculty are able utilize expertise that has been demonstrated to help understand, evaluate, and guide students appropriately to make sure suitable academic placement and support are implemented. Each school building is responsible for establishing its own MTSS model and establishing the various tiers embedded that help identify the most appropriate educational setting for each individual student. Tiers can range from providing school wide interventions for all students, additional support for students with additional concerns, and then more intensive support for individual students for whom previous interventions have not proved effective (Karge & Lasky, 2009).

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a method of identifying students with learning disabilities that many schools are adopting. It involves having multiple levels, circles, or tiers of interventions ranging from whole-group instruction to small group intensive intervention. Ultimately, RTI is a method through which educators can identify students with learning disabilities while supporting students who are struggling academically in the general education classroom (Murawski & Hughes, 2009). Response to Intervention can address both academic and behavioral issues, apply to general as well as special education, be adapted to specific circumstances, and look differently from school to school (Scherer, 2010). As the ramifications

associated with needed interventions are reviewed, one can begin to grasp the magnitude that a focused faculty and staff can have on the student body, one student at a time. I would also like to continue to emphasize that all of this does not take place within a structured time frame within the school day. The school day simply provides the time frame needed and communication necessary to inform and equip all students in as many areas as possible. All students receive the same information and communication. All students are exposed to the opportunities available to them within the school. All students are informed of specific people within the school that can help them in various situations they encounter.

These situations, circumstances, factors, and scenarios are common occurrences in any high school. However, ensuring that all students are dealt with as an individual and the solutions are personalized is the focus in a large high school. Therefore, providing the components, gaining the commitment from the faculty, and the dedication of the staff are key ingredients needed to accomplish personalization in a large high school. It is the expectation that schools will find ways and methods to address each individual student's situation that will hopefully have the best possible outcome.

Summary

The initiatives discussed in this chapter are a few examples that seek personalization. They are woven in with school improvement and student achievement. The examples also discuss caring about the climate and the culture of the building itself. Providing support to all students on an individual basis means personalizing the learning environment.

Chapter 5: The Need for Academic/Career/Post-Secondary Counseling

5.1 Introduction

Academic/career/post-secondary counseling is the final area of focus related to personalization. This component provides a comprehensive approach to personalizing the educational process. This area utilizes numerous tools to communicate, educate, and guide students as they go through high school.

Being a student in a large school can be a difficult and stressful time. Students are learning to chart their own course, make their own decisions, mature, and become more and more independent. And at the same time, students still need guidance and support. This is where the responsibility falls on school system. It is our obligation to do everything possible as a school to put each individual student in a position to be prepared for life after high school. Comprehensive academic/career/post-secondary counseling programs can help achieve this goal in large high schools.

5.2 Academic Counseling

Academic counseling is an area that can be of tremendous support for personalization when focusing on counseling each individual student. According to the Perking legislation (2004), academic counseling is also referred to as academic advisement. Academic counseling refers to educated professionals who are counseling students on their academic plans for course selection while in secondary schools, as well as for post-secondary education (Hughes & Karp, 2004).

The counseling program offers a time and a means to implement both of the above mentioned definitions in addition to numerous other components and services aimed at preparing

the student for life. These components also allow the counseling department to work with individual students to personalize education and to be able to disseminate other important aspects of academic counseling such as career/post-secondary information. It can include a variety of important information regarding testing whether it be ACT, SAT, AP, or other forms of testing. It can include websites that, in future counseling sessions, can be utilized by students to complete career interest inventories, and other similar instruments. The Kuder Career Search (Zytowski, 2007), and other similar questionnaires assist the student in the educational and career path.

The counseling program creates time for students to strategically plan their course selection based on information obtained through various sources. If students are not able to plan the schedule that is best for them, or if the student has questions, they have become familiar with the PSC's, developing a much more defined objective related to academic counseling. Attention should be placed on the results of the interest inventories that the student has completed and having conversations about the relationship between the findings and career paths. Discussions include the course offerings that will be of importance to the student and ultimately, assist the student in reaching post-secondary goals.

As students realize the responsibility they are gaining by having these conversations, the maturity they are developing, and the excitement they are feeling they become engaged at a level concerning their education that involves more participation. Students are encouraged to set goals, work towards those goals, and ultimately meet goals. PSC's must be relentless in their efforts to assess the needs of each student; to identify the barriers and obstacles that interfere with student success; and to work with students, parents, the student support team, and faculty to develop strategies for overcoming those barriers (Dufour, Guidice, Magee, Martin, & Zivkovic, 2002). An extremely positive tone for the climate and culture of the school building is evident

because education is taking place in and out of the classroom. It is also student-centered and even more so on the individual student. School-based guidance services are one of the few sources of formal career counseling that they will encounter prior to entering the world of work (Domeve, Shapka, & Keating, 2006). It creates conditions in the building where everyone demonstrates respect, responsibility, and pride. Expectations associated with the school are communicated that demonstrates cohesiveness, unity, and care.

The learning outcomes associated with the interest inventories and career inventories include skills, interests, knowledge, beliefs, preferences, sensitivities, emotions, and future actions (Krumboltz, 2009). These are all attributes that create and inspire students to want to, and choose to, assume responsibility for their education. These are also factors that serve as a means to equip students with the ability to develop, mature, gain responsibility, and assume the initiative to advocate for one's self and for others. It takes a magnificent effort to ensure all students are being exposed to the many aspects of the counseling area. Therefore, students benefit. Students are receiving individual attention in their education. Experiences become more relevant and meaningful as students prepare for life after high school.

Receiving appropriate counseling is a challenge in a large high school. The American School Counselor Association (Dimmit & Cary, 2007) has adopted a set of standards to assist in equipping counseling programs to provide professional services to each individual student. Academic counseling assists students by utilizing resources to match skills, interests, talents and abilities and matching those areas with course selection and an individual program of study. Academic counseling works in conjunction with the transition process. Without the proper information and support, incoming ninth graders can perceive high school as an impersonal and unsupportive place and turn to non-constructive behaviors to find fulfillment (Oakes & Waite,

2009). It is important the students and parents are involved when creating the student's academic schedule. Because parental expectations and role models influence career aspirations and educational decisions; examining family dynamics, roles, and values with students in elementary, middle, and high school settings can be beneficial in helping students master the competencies in the comprehensive developmental counseling programs in order to reach their goals (Gibson, 2005). Required courses as well as the number of credits needed are discussed. The reality of the situation is that most students enter high school and think after attending for four years, a diploma is issued, and then they walk through a graduation ceremony. School-based counseling services are one of the few sources of formal career counseling that they will encounter prior to entering the world of work (Domeve, Shapka, & Keating, 2006). Counseling students academically during this transition process when entering high school, will prepare them to transition to life after high school.

Career/post-secondary counseling is an additional area needing addressed. The more information offered to students to expose them to life after high school, the more prepared students are. Career and post-secondary counseling is broad in theory with the realization that all students will not be going to a university right after high school. Students have several options including attending private colleges, community colleges, joining the military, and going directly into employment. However, it is the job of educators to prepare students for all of these opportunities, as stated by Reese (2010):

Without structured guidance activities, students may drift through high school without learning about all the career opportunities available and without gaining the skills that can help them take advantage of these opportunities. They may also be in danger of failing to continue on to postsecondary education, or even worse,

dropping out of high school. (p. 17)

Academic/career/post-secondary counseling also includes alternative programs for overage students, early college and dual enrollment programs, and high quality career and technical education and effective schools arm struggling students with individualized supports to get them back on track (Wise, 2008). In effect, students' academic, career, and personal-social development are tied together and should not be seen as separate and distinct processes.

As students engage in career development interventions geared at identifying their interests, skills, and aspirations, these activities also help students develop decision-making skills, understand the consequences of their decisions, and identify and begin to implement short and long-term goals. Career development interventions can also serve to help students identify appropriate social, interpersonal and work-related skills. In effect, career development can be seen as self-development. Clearly, career development as a key component of the school counselor's responsibilities needs great attention to ensure that students receive the services that they need to be adequately prepared for their futures (Rivera & Schafer, 2009).

Mentoring programs are a popular strategy to help students make important academic transition and build relationships with teachers and administrators (Stanley & Plumber, 2008). The more active staff are in the process the more accurate the process. It then becomes the opportunity to work with the counseling office to assist in identifying the various strategies and opportunities students have to focus on careers. Human behavior is the product of countless numbers of learning experiences made available by both planned and unplanned situations in which individuals find themselves. The learning outcomes include skills, interests, knowledge, beliefs, preferences, sensitivities, emotions, and future actions (Krumboltz, 2009).

With reduced family stress and enhanced social support, there may also be a reduction in the symptomology of the student and prevention of a formal referral for special education services (Kratochwill, McDonald, Levin, Scalia, & Coover, 2009). These services may address the academics and may address certain behaviors. Prevention of behavioral problems in school settings is essential. Addressing students on an individual basis helps with this. Therefore, it is important for teachers to have varied strategies available for use in support of such learners; the importance of meeting individual learner needs as the basis for comprehensive behavior change (Murray, Baker, Murry-Slutsky, & Paris, 2009). The goal is to work with the individual student. By doing so, a process is put in place to deter inappropriate behavior from occurring and from escalating.

Factors such as the appropriate number of staff; staff who are knowledgeable in their particular area of expertise; time for collaboration in order to systematically provide the best guidance possible; and finally, time to actually see students and meet with them individually, are critical within this model. Academic/career/post-secondary counseling strives to address all areas associated with the individual for preparing students for life after high school.

To ensure that students feel connected, steps should be put in place to make sure appropriate guidance is in place. Appropriate guidance includes individualizing the approach. Students should be known individually and guided in the same manner. Guidance should be comprehensive in nature and should include academic, career, post-secondary, and social aspects.

5.3 Career and Post-Secondary Counseling

Personalization and appropriate guidance programs facilitate a process where time is provided for each student to build a class schedule. But this class schedule should not just be for the current school year, it should be a schedule that would include a plan that would cover the entire high school career to best prepare each student for life after high school. As students engage in career development activities, strategies should be aimed at identifying their interests, skills, and aspirations. It is crucial that time be allotted to spend with these students to discuss these attributes such as developing decision-making skills, understanding the consequences of their decisions, and identifying and beginning to implement goals. It is critical that the counseling office stay true to the focus on the responsibility throughout this process. It is critical that the school must realize and take it upon themselves, that many students do not have anybody else in their life advocating for their future and playing such a crucial role in developing students. And again, it is the personalization that defines the success of our students.

One way to personalize the learning environment is for the counseling office to work with each student to develop a four-year plan outlining the courses that the individual student should take throughout their high school career. The four-year schedule that students are involved in creating, is based on their interests, skills, and aspirations that will best put them in a position for life after high school. This also demonstrates the importance that the counseling department plays in a large school setting and communicates the initiative they must show when working with the individual student and providing complete, comprehensive, and appropriate guidance.

Summary

It is important to differentiate between appropriate guidance and appropriate support. In a broad sense, they have the same meaning. But in a large high school setting, these terms can, and most likely will, be an entirely different set of people. Appropriate support can sometimes entail a group of people, or a team, focusing on one individual. However, the bottom line is that each individual student is receiving personalized attention.

It is also important to stress that appropriate support consists of faculty and staff demonstrating building relationships with students and fostering a caring environment. Faculty and staff consist of both faculty (certified employees) and staff (non-certified employees). For students, knowing and feeling that adults are concerned, provides support. Faculty and staff members can also serve as advocates for each individual student as well. After all, smaller learning communities were intended to help teachers know and work with each other, students, and families on a more personal scale; intentionally aimed at promoting trust, individualization, and a renewed focus on good teaching and learning (Levine, 2010).

The need for personalization also relates to students feeling safe. In a large high school setting, it is easy for students to fall through the cracks. Many students are not known. Students are insecure. Students may be scared and they may have fear. They may view the school, and its inhabitants, as unfriendly. Therefore, they may not feel safe. Not feeling safe does not necessarily mean the students feel they will be harmed. It simply means that students may not feel comfortable. And when they are not known and not supported, that may translate into not feeling safe.

Chapter 6: Advisory Programs as a Solution

6.1 Introduction

Advisory programs are a strategy that can be used to personalize education. Other strategies may include *Smaller Learning Communities* (David, 2008), *Professional Learning Communities* (Eaker, Dufour, & Dufour, 2002), and *the AVID Program* (Swanson, Marcus, & Elliott, 2000). All of these programs and initiatives exist to encourage personalization to some extent and to serve a population of students that may be under-served but they are not adequate to meet the needs by themselves. Personalization starts with advisory programs. Students learn best when they are engaged in meaningful, relevant, and authentic learning tasks (Murphy, 2009). Advisory programs provide opportunities for faculty/staff to gain skills in personalizing the education through various professional development opportunities.

6.2 Advisory Program Defined

The term advisory program is used to describe a program within the school that assists in the personalization of the educational process. By creating personal connections students can begin to feel safe and supported (Makkonen, 2004). Advisory programs are aimed at working with the individual student and personalizing his or her education. It is a model that facilitates the overall participation of the staff and provides strategies aimed at prompting a focus on learning. Advisory programs have the power of raising student achievement by embracing all students. Advisory programs raise student achievement when they build connections among people and between students and their courses of study. In other words, an advisory program is one of the best investments a school can make to increase learning for all students, especially the most marginal (Champeau, 2011).

6.3 Advisory Programs and Personalization

Personalization starts with advisory programs because there are several key areas that need to be present for personalization to occur. Advisory programs are unique to each individual school because the focus at one school may not be the focus of the other school. The programs assist in encouraging and outlining ways to personalize the process of education on a continuous basis while seeking to create connections between the school, staff, and students. Advisory programs address concerns associated with lack of personalization, a condition that exists in many large high schools. Advisory programs are a time built into the school day in which the known curriculum instruction is set aside, and the hidden curriculum is focused on. The hidden curriculum is considered the experiences associated with day-to-day life in high school. And at times, those hidden items can be more important in molding the identity of each individual student. Advisory programs consist of a multitude of opportunities associated with the operation of a school. There are opportunities such as professional development, school improvement initiatives, student achievement strategies, and critical time for collaboration for faculty and staff. All of these components relate to the need for personalization.

Advisory programs and personalization begin with leadership. The leader's role is to provide direction through modeling and vision, to motivate through love and inspiration, to build a complimentary team based on mutual respect, to be effectiveness-minded and focused on results rather than on methods, systems, and procedures (Covey, 1991). Although instruction, curriculum, teaching strategies, and rigor are vital to the success of any school, it is the personalization that makes all of these areas even more effective and successful. This can be a hard concept for many people to comprehend. What does a strong advisory program look like?

6.4 Advisory Program Beginnings

First, it is important to establish advisory programs as a priority and communicate this initiative to the faculty and staff to begin implementation. This is not to diminish the importance of curriculum and instruction, but rather to enhance curriculum and instruction and make it even more relevant and meaningful to the individual student. The first goal of advisory programs may be as simple as ensuring that teachers know the names of all of their students. This does not have to just pertain to the class roster, but rather the school population. And although this may sound impossible or extremely hard to do, it is the attempt at doing so and the effort involved that can make difference. Think about the impact that it makes when someone remembers your name. Something as simple as this can have a profound impact on the rest of the day. Initiating conversation, asking a simple question, remembering the answer, and being able to recall the answer later are all components of teaching and learning; curriculum and instruction. Isn't this what we ask of our students? Yes, it requires effort and discipline. It requires initiative and dedication. But the students will respond positively.

Second, personalization is not something that is achieved overnight. It is a marathon and a journey. It is a process where a leader is constantly seeking ways to improve the school and the school environment for all learners as individuals. Establishing a climate and culture within the school community that communicates a desire to acknowledge, respect, and validate each student as an individual are central themes woven throughout the school.

Advisory programs are not intended to create additional work for faculty and staff. Nor are they intended to add stress and anxiety. Advisory programs are meant to provide a time to communicate relevant and important information to all students. Advisory programs are meant to create a means to engage students in meaningful dialogue that can equip students with not just

important information, but also all of the resources that are available that can assist them throughout the high school experience. The impact on the faculty and staff as advisory programs are discussed and implemented can be resounding. Regardless the size of the school, obtaining support of 100% of the faculty in implementing any type of change, is nearly impossible. Therefore, realistic expectations should be established as to what level of support is expected. Once faculty and staff have reached consensus and a comfort level has been reached, logistics should be discussed. Again, it should be stressed, that all personnel may not be comfortable. However, an overwhelming majority should have a certain level of comfort.

High schools having some sort of activity period embedded in the bell schedule is common. An activity period can be a time frame that is created for clubs and organizations to meet during the school day. Activity periods periodically meet throughout the school year. Advisory programs can be in place when activity periods are not in use. This can be called an advisory period. Advisory programs and advisory periods differ. Advisory programs are the substance, the content, the focus, and the entire initiative that is being implemented. Advisory period is the time frame used to implement the advisory program contents.

The length of the advisory period is typically 25-30 minutes depending on the time necessary to accomplish the objectives, and depending on the time that is already a part of the bell schedule associated with each respective school. This time frame allows for the delivery of the topic of the day, and for small discussion, dialogue, and questions with each period. The advisory period can be an extension of a particular class period. In other words, on days when the advisory period is scheduled, a few minutes are shaved off each class period. Those minutes combined, are added as an extension to the 3rd hour class. In this situation, class will go on as

scheduled, and then when the advisory period is activated, students remain in the 3rd hour for the 25-30 minutes.

The “objective of the day” is introduced and communicated to the students. This allows for guided discussion, with the teacher serving as the facilitator, and the students actively engaged in the discussion. Through this dialogue, students are gathering important information and facts. Students will gain information that will not only pertain to them as an individual student, but they will gain information that will assist them throughout their high school career and prepare them for life after high school. As the school continues to utilize all resources available, and communicate all resources available, students gain information and important communication that will be of great benefit to them on an individual basis.

6.5 Advisory Programs Areas of Focus

Academic support is one area that is addressed in advisory programs. Academic support consists of grade checks, progress reports, additional instruction time, tutorial time, and even communicating other opportunities with the school system that may be of benefit to the student. Academic support is an area, that when discussed with the student individually, makes the student feel as though they are known and that people care about their academic standing and their academic performance. In turn, students gain ownership of their education, and as they mature throughout high school, actually learn how to advocate on their behalf. This fosters accountability and responsibility and encourages the student in achieving academically, and possible other areas of life.

Time management is another area of support that is discussed with advisory programs. Time management, to a student in high school, may mean nothing if it is not explained in depth

and thoroughly. But again, when students start to understand what time management is and how it affects each and every day, they start to understand and comprehend the significance of it.

Developing skills in the area of time management can benefit the busy schedules of all students.

Students want to be treated with respect and dignity. The more the process of education is personalized, the more students will feel validated and known as an individual. There are times when a student just wants to be listened to and heard. Being able to have adult advocates in the building is advantageous. It allows the student to talk to someone that hopefully will not judge or condemn – but rather listen, guide, counsel, and help the student navigate life. Advisory programs are designed to facilitate communication; disseminate information; expose all aspects and services that the school provides; and to ensure the opportunity to build relationships of trust, respect, communication, and advocacy.

Advisory programs benefit the students academically. Students who may be identified as needing additional support may view the teacher as someone who can serve as an advocate. Students that still need additional support may be referred for more detailed and even more intensive support. One area involved within support and intervention is academic grade checks. Students need to be involved with grade checks, because it treats the students as young adults and it helps them to become responsible and accountable. Not only do students have the ability to discuss their grades, they may be able to go visit with a teacher, get additional help, or just use this time to get organized. It also helps students because they feel as though the school is working as one big team to help them be successful, and also to keep some students from failing. As a result, students feel as though they are known at an individual level.

Below is an example of a calendar that outlines and lists possible topics covered throughout various advisory period sessions. This particular calendar has an emphasis on academic performance/achievement, bully prevention/safe schools, and career awareness. Emphasis is placed on these areas throughout the year. The goal is to personalize the process by working with students individually in each specific area. The process is continuous and ongoing. Prior to each individual session, professional development is provided for the faculty and staff involved in the facilitation of the advisory period session. Faculty and staff will be provided key vocabulary associated with the areas of focus. In addition, faculty and staff will be provided with essential personnel who can be of additional support and guidance in each individual student achieving his/her goal.

6.5.1 Advisory Period Calendar Sample

“Advisory Period Time”

Advisory Period Time is a tool used to personalize the learning environment and focus on the individual. Advisory Period Time will be used to communicate and expose numerous components associated with the dissemination of information and provide appropriate support and guidance for all students. By creating personal connections, students can begin to feel safe and supported.

Advisory Period Time Goals

Academic Progress – Students will view their current grades regularly and will track their progress throughout the school year. They will also know of academic support systems within the school that offer students additional academic assistance outside of the regular classroom. Academic interventions may be recommended or required during this time by teachers and administration.

Time for students to work on study skills, test preparation, scholarships, and other activities related to post-secondary education may also be included.

Career Awareness – Students will begin/continue making connections between their education and future career options. They will utilize the Kansas Career Pipeline in order to create/update an individualized plan of study, bank information to enable them to create an electronic portfolio, search for scholarships, and find resources to enhance career-related skills.

Safe & Supportive Schools – Students will improve peer relations.

1st Semester

- 9/26 Academic Awareness Grade Check/Study Skills/Test Prep/Scholarship Work*
- 10/3 Career Awareness Connecting Education & Employment
- 10/10 Safe & Supportive Schools Teambuilding – Leadership/Communication
- 10/24 Career Awareness Habitudes Lesson (teacher select based on given resources)
- 10/31 Academic Awareness Grade Check/Study Skills/Test Prep/Scholarship Work*
- 11/7 Safe & Supportive Schools Bullying/School Violence Prevention**
- 11/28 Career Awareness Career Clusters/Pathways
- 12/5 Academic Awareness Grade Check/Study Skills/Test Prep/Scholarship Work*
- 12/19 Safe & Supportive Schools Community Service Project – class competition

2nd Semester

- 1/7 Advisory Period Time Prep Day
- 1/9 Academic/Career Awareness Kansas Career Pipeline – Plan of Study/Career Search/Etc.*

- 1/16 Academic/Career Awareness Kansas Career Pipeline – Plan of Study/Career Search/Etc.*
- 1/30 Academic/Career Awareness Pre-enrollment Preparation*
- 2/6 Academic Awareness, Grade Check/Study Skills/Test Prep/Scholarship Work*
- 2/20 Safe & Supportive Schools Teambuilding – Good Character/Positive Relationships
- 2/27 Safe & Supportive Schools Bullying/School Violence Prevention**
- 3/6 Academic Awareness, Grade Check/Study Skills/Test Prep/Scholarship Work*
- 3/27 Awareness Habitudes Lesson (teacher select based on give resources)
- 4/3 Academic Awareness, Grade Check/Study Skills/Test Prep/Scholarship Work*
- 4/10 Safe & Supportive, Schools Drug/Alcohol Awareness & Education*
- 4/24 Career Awareness, Career Guest Speaker Session (in person or virtual)
- 5/1 Academic Awareness Grade Check/Study Skills/Test Prep/Scholarship Work*
- 5/8 Safe & Supportive Schools, Community Service Project – class competition
- 5/15 Career Awareness, Activities That Teach Lesson

KEY

*= an activity that involved previously pulling students out of class, taking up class time in order to complete based upon school district and/or KSDE requirements and recommendations.

**= an activity integrated to be in compliance with Kansas law

Additional Notes:

During some of the Advisory Period Time sessions, selected upperclassman will be going

to the freshman class as mentors, leading some of the discussions and activities. These are the same students who have already established relationships with each other during the Freshman Orientation in August.

6.5.2 Pre-/Post Awareness Survey Sample

The purpose of this survey is to provide accountability for personnel and students. Please circle the YES or NO and return to your Advisory Period Instructor.

Academic Progress

YES NO I know how to access my grades and check my academic progress.

YES NO I know about academic support systems, such as ELT (Extended Learning Time), our school employs and the availability to use them.

YES NO When time allowed during academic grade check days, I could work on study skills, prepare for future assessments, and/or search for and fill out scholarship paperwork.

Career Awareness

YES NO I know a wide variety of career fields and the education and training levels connected to future careers.

YES NO I have a personalized college and career plan of study on the Kansas Career Pipeline.

YES NO I have utilized the Kansas Career Pipeline in the following ways (circle any that apply) – to bank assignments/projects for my electronic portfolio, search for scholarships, watch videos related to getting/keeping a job, or other (please list) _____.

In order to make this initiative more effective and more efficient, planning and professional development are constant and ongoing. There is also an accountability component that assists in guiding the effectiveness and efficiency of the advisory programs. The following chart (6.5.3) outlines various activities, goals, and accountability measures, will assist in this process, more specifically, when implementing personalization strategies utilizing advisory programs. Again, faculty and staff will be provided professional development as it relates to effectively administering advisory programs and providing a personalized approach to the learning community. And also, as is shown below, the Advisory Period Accountability Chart will assist faculty and staff in gaining a more comprehensive understanding of the advisory program.

6.5.3 Advisory Period Accountability Chart Sample

Activity	Advisory Period Goal – personalize learning	District Goal	Potential Accountability Measures
Grade Check/Study Skills/Test Prep/Scholarship Work	Academic Awareness	1 - high academic standards, 6 - accommodate needs... expectations, 12 - involve families in education, 13 - increase communication	Infinite Campus portal hits, student grades, academic engagement (anecdotal), AYP/state assessment scores, attendance rate, MTSS interventions, KS Career Pipeline, scholarships, graduation rate,

			ACT results, ELT participation
Sexual Harassment Training	Safe & Supportive Schools	7 - learning experiences regardless of age, gender..., 11 - safe & orderly environment	Activity engagement percentage, attendance rate, MTSS interventions, behavioral incidents (bullying, ISS, OSS), Communities the Care survey results, Olweus bullying questionnaire (if given regularly at this level)

<p>Connecting Education & Employment</p>	<p>Career Awareness</p>	<p>3 - ... foundation of an integrated curriculum, 5 - support programs... resources, 6 - accommodate needs... high expectations, 14 - partnerships with broader community</p>	<p>Academic engagement (anecdotal), KS Career Pipeline, ACT data, scholarships, business & industry certifications, enrollment trends</p>
<p>Grade Check/Study Skills/Test Prep/Scholarship Work</p>	<p>Academic Awareness</p>	<p>1 - high academic standards, 6 - accommodate needs... high expectations, 12 - involve families in</p>	<p>Infinite Campus portal hits, student grades, academic engagement (anecdotal), AYP/state assessment</p>

		education, 13 - increase communication	scores, attendance rate, MTSS interventions, KS Career Pipeline, scholarships, graduation rate, ACT results, ELT participation
Teambuilding - Leadership/Communication	Safe & Supportive Schools	3 - ... foundation of an integrated curriculum, 13 - increase communication	Activity engagement percentage, attendance rate, MTSS interventions, behavioral incidents (bullying, ISS, OSS), Communities the Care survey

			results, Olweus bullying questionnaire (if given regularly at this level)
Habitudes Lesson (teacher select based on resources given)	Career Awareness, Safe & Supportive Schools	3 - ... foundation of an integrated curriculum +	Academic engagement (anecdotal), KS Career Pipeline, ACT data, scholarships, business & industry certifications, enrollment trends, activity engagement percentage, attendance rate, MTSS interventions, behavioral

			<p>incidents</p> <p>(bullying, ISS, OSS),</p> <p>Communities</p> <p>the Care survey results, Olweus bullying questionnaire (if given regularly at this level)</p>
<p>Grade Check/Study Skills/Test</p> <p>Prep/Scholarship Work</p>	<p>Academic Awareness</p>	<p>1 - high academic standards, 6 - accommodate needs... high expectations, 12 - involve families in education, 13 - increase communication</p>	<p>Infinite Campus portal hits, student grades, academic engagement (anecdotal), AYP/state assessment scores, attendance rate, MTSS interventions,</p>

			KS Career Pipeline, scholarships, graduation rate, ACT results, ELT participation
Bullying/School Violence Prevention	Safe & Supportive Schools	3 - ... foundation of an integrated curriculum, 5 - support programs... resources, 11 - safe & orderly environment	Activity engagement percentage, attendance rate, MTSS interventions, behavioral incidents (bullying, ISS, OSS), Communities the Care survey results, Olweus bullying questionnaire (if

			given regularly at this level)
Career Clusters/Pathways	Career Awareness	3 - ... foundation of an integrated curriculum, 5 - support programs... resources, 6 - accommodate needs... high expectations, 14 - partnerships with broader community	Academic engagement (anecdotal), KS Career Pipeline, ACT data, scholarships, business & industry certifications, enrollment trends
Grade Check/Study Skills/Test Prep/Scholarship Work	Academic Awareness	1 - high academic standards, 6 - accommodate	Infinite Campus portal hits, student grades, academic

		needs... high expectations, 12 - involve families in education, 13 - increase communication	engagement (anecdotal), AYP/state assessment scores, attendance rate, MTSS interventions, KS Career Pipeline, scholarships, graduation rate, ACT results, ELT participation
Community Service Project - class competition	Safe & Supportive Schools	3 - ... foundation of an integrated curriculum, 14 - partnerships with broader community +	Activity engagement percentage, attendance rate, MTSS interventions, behavioral incidents

			(bullying, ISS, OSS), Communities the Care survey results, Olweus bullying questionnaire (if given regularly at this level)
Kansas Career Pipeline - Plan of Study/Career Search/Etc.	Academic Awareness, Career Awareness	5 - support programs... resources, 10 - use of technology	Infinite Campus portal hits, student grades, academic engagement (anecdotal), AYP/state assessment scores, attendance rate, MTSS interventions, KS Career

			Pipeline, scholarships, graduation rate, ACT results, ELT participation, business & industry certifications, enrollment trends
Kansas Career Pipeline - Plan of Study/Career Search/Etc.	Academic Awareness, Career Awareness	5 - support programs... resources, 10 - use of technology	Infinite Campus portal hits, student grades, academic engagement (anecdotal), AYP/state assessment scores, attendance rate, MTSS interventions,

			KS Career Pipeline, scholarships, graduation rate, ACT results, ELT participation, business & industry certifications, enrollment trends
Pre-enrollment Preparation	Academic Awareness, Career Awareness	1 - high academic standards, 3 - ... foundation of an integrated curriculum, 6 - accommodate needs... high expectations, 12 - involve families in	Infinite Campus portal hits, student grades, academic engagement (anecdotal), AYP/state assessment scores, attendance rate, MTSS

		education, 13 - increase communication	interventions, KS Career Pipeline, scholarships, graduation rate, ACT results, ELT participation, business & industry certifications, enrollment trends
Grade Check/Study Skills/Test Prep/Scholarship Work	Academic Awareness	1 - high academic standards, 6 - accommodate needs... high expectations, 12 - involve families in education, 13 -	Infinite Campus portal hits, student grades, academic engagement (anecdotal), AYP/state assessment scores, attendance rate,

		increase communication	MTSS interventions, KS Career Pipeline, scholarships, graduation rate, ACT results, ELT participation
Teambuilding - Good Character/Positive Relationships	Safe & Supportive Schools	3 - ... foundation of an integrated curriculum +	Activity engagement percentage, attendance rate, MTSS interventions, behavioral incidents (bullying, ISS, OSS), Communities the Care survey results, Olweus bullying

			questionnaire (if given regularly at this level)
Bullying/School Violence Prevention	Safe & Supportive Schools	3 - ... foundation of an integrated curriculum, 5 - support programs... resources, 11 - safe & orderly environment	Activity engagement percentage, attendance rate, MTSS interventions, behavioral incidents (bullying, ISS, OSS), Communities the Care survey results, Olweus bullying questionnaire (if given regularly at this level)

<p>Grade Check/Study Skills/Test</p> <p>Prep/Scholarship Work</p>	<p>Academic</p> <p>Awareness</p>	<p>1 - high</p> <p>academic</p> <p>standards, 6 -</p> <p>accommodate</p> <p>needs... high</p> <p>expectations,</p> <p>12 - involve</p> <p>families in</p> <p>education, 13 -</p> <p>increase</p> <p>communication</p>	<p>Infinite Campus</p> <p>portal hits,</p> <p>student grades,</p> <p>academic</p> <p>engagement</p> <p>(anecdotal),</p> <p>AYP/state</p> <p>assessment</p> <p>scores,</p> <p>attendance rate,</p> <p>MTSS</p> <p>interventions,</p> <p>KS Career</p> <p>Pipeline,</p> <p>scholarships,</p> <p>graduation rate,</p> <p>ACT results, ELT</p> <p>participation</p>
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<p>Habitudes Lesson (teacher select based on resources given)</p>	<p>Career Awareness, Safe & Supportive Schools</p>	<p>3 - ... foundation of an integrated curriculum +</p>	<p>Academic engagement (anecdotal), KS Career Pipeline, ACT data, scholarships, business & industry certifications, enrollment trends, activity engagement percentage, attendance rate, MTSS interventions, behavioral incidents (bullying, ISS, OSS), Communities the Care survey</p>
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			results, Olweus bullying questionnaire (if given regularly at this level)
Grade Check/Study Skills/Test Prep/Scholarship Work	Academic Awareness	1 - high academic standards, 6 - accommodate needs... high expectations, 12 - involve families in education, 13 - increase communication	Infinite Campus portal hits, student grades, academic engagement (anecdotal), AYP/state assessment scores, attendance rate, MTSS interventions, KS Career Pipeline, scholarships, graduation rate,

			ACT results, ELT participation
Drug/Alcohol Awareness & Prevention	Safe & Supportive Schools	3 - ... foundation of an integrated curriculum, 5 - support programs... resources	Activity engagement percentage, attendance rate, MTSS interventions, behavioral incidents (bullying, ISS, OSS), Communities the Care survey results, Olweus bullying questionnaire (if given regularly at this level)

<p>Career Guest Speaker Session (in person or virtual)</p>	<p>Career Awareness</p>	<p>3 - ... foundation of an integrated curriculum, 5 - support programs... resources, 6 - accommodate needs... high expectations, 10 - use of technology, 14 - partnerships with broader community</p>	<p>Academic engagement (anecdotal), KS Career Pipeline, ACT data, scholarships, business & industry certifications, enrollment trends</p>
<p>Grade Check/Study Skills/Test Prep/Scholarship Work</p>	<p>Academic Awareness</p>	<p>1 - high academic standards, 6 - accommodate needs... high expectations, 12 - involve</p>	<p>Infinite Campus portal hits, student grades, academic engagement (anecdotal), AYP/state</p>

		families in education, 13 - increase communication	assessment scores, attendance rate, MTSS interventions, KS Career Pipeline, scholarships, graduation rate, ACT results, ELT participation
Community Service Project - class competition	Safe & Supportive Schools	3 - ... foundation of an integrated curriculum, 14 - partnerships with broader community +	Activity engagement percentage, attendance rate, MTSS interventions, behavioral incidents (bullying, ISS, OSS), Communities

			the Care survey results, Olweus bullying questionnaire (if given regularly at this level)
Activities That Teach Lesson (teacher select based on resources given)	Career Awareness, Safe & Supportive Schools	3 - ... foundation of an integrated curriculum +	Academic engagement (anecdotal), KS Career Pipeline, ACT data, scholarships, business & industry certifications, enrollment trends, activity engagement percentage, attendance rate, MTSS interventions,

			behavioral incidents (bullying, ISS, OSS), Communities the Care survey results, Olweus bullying questionnaire (if given regularly at this level)
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6.6 Advisory Program Anticipated Outcomes

Any and all areas of support may be needed as students mature and become more cognizant of their needs. And as students feel the support and realize the attention they are receiving on an individual basis, they begin to grasp the fact that their future is truly in their own hands. Opportunities are made available. Resources are discussed and viable options are afforded to students with appropriate support. This support consists of school personnel, family, and the student and allows for strategic decisions to be made. It is through situations such as this, situations in which the student is made to feel respected as a young adult and are involved in decisions that are going to impact their life after high school that all students are able to grow into responsible students and advocate for their own lives.

Advisory programs provide such an array of opportunities to provide personalization that it has become a terrific tool to broaden the scope and the delivery of the educational process. The personalization component allows for the student to experience individualized attention and also assists in fostering and creating circumstances in which the student assumes responsibility, but only after being placed in a situation to do so. From an educational perspective, the goal should be to prepare students for life after high school and this is not just academically related. Advisory programs are a small investment that may yield big returns.

Advisory programs have the power of raising student achievement by embracing all students. Advisory programs raise student achievement when they build connections among people and between students and their course of study. In other words, Advisory programs are one of the best investments a school can make to increase learning for all students, especially the most marginal (Champeau, 2011). There are many instances when the most marginal students are the ones that have the potential to fall through the cracks. They are coasting by and can go unnoticed by the school community. It is the advisory program that serves as an advocate for this particular student. The advisory program brings the information to the student and it is done in a manner in which the marginal student only needs to participate by listening. And because students such as this seemed to have gone through many years of education without receiving much support and attention, providing necessary information that will only equip these students to advocate for themselves at a much higher level is to their advantage. This is another example of the benefits of advisory programs. Advisory programs are the conduit for reaching students and guiding them individually. Advisory programs ignite the fire within the student on how to pursue, and meet, goals and dreams that they may have as an individual. Advisory programs do

not have to be something that requires a great deal of effort of the student, only their attention. In turn, this enables the student to act according to their will in regards to their education.

6.7 Advisory Program Teacher Role

The role of the teacher is vital to the success of the advisory program. The teacher is viewed as the advocate in most situations. However, much responsibility falls onto the teachers because they assume the role as serving in this capacity. The teacher's role in personalized, student-centered instruction is to know the students' learning styles and to adjust instruction accordingly (George, 2000). By doing so, the teacher has gained the respect of the students. They view the teacher as someone who cares about them as a person, and as an individual. This type of healthy relationship only enhances the purpose of the advisory programs because it creates an environment in which respect is mutual and a climate exists that communicates genuine care and concern.

It is imperative that teachers that are serving in an advisory program role be committed to truly buying into the initiative. This will come across loud and clear to the students and will confirm not only the importance of the program, but also the care and concern by the faculty and staff. Teachers who are serving in this capacity who are not committed to advisory programs should not serve in an advocate role. This can be a pitfall. However, those staff members that may not "buy in" to advisory programs may be assigned to other duties within the school building, such as hall monitoring.

Shared leadership at the school is promoted through teams of teachers that are responsible for specific groups of students (Rourke & Boone, 2009). An example of such an advisory program is found at Huntington Beach High School in Huntington Beach, California.

Huntington Beach established an adopt-a-kid program, which matched adult volunteers on campus with one or two students of their choosing from the list. The adults were to listen, provide information when needed, and to provide support or advice when asked (Shore, 1996). The advisory program was implemented to help students feel less anonymous.

Arkansas City High School, Arkansas City, Kansas, also began an informal mentoring program in 2007 that matched juniors and seniors with freshman who were struggling. Every student was also involved in a three-tiered system of support that was monitored by staff members. The formal response to intervention program detailed assessment data, academic progress, and effective strategies and interventions to aid the student (Rourke & Hartzman, 2009). The ultimate goal was for every student to have someone he/she could trust and talk to, someone who knew them and cared about them (George, 2000). Trust, respect, mutual obligation, and concern for others welfare can have powerful effects on educators and learners interpersonal relationships, as well as learning academic achievement (Osofsky, Sinner, Wolk, & Miles, 2003). Another example is at Wuthrow University High School in Cincinnati, Ohio. Individual attention continues as the intervention teams monitored at-risk students during the second semester of their freshman year and continued to follow them through graduation (Rourke & Boone, 2009).

These are three examples of schools that have successfully implemented advisory programs to assist in the personalization of education. In the age of performance and accountability, the pressure is intense not to let one student fall through the cracks. In addition to the several resources listed below is a Table 6.8.1 displaying multiple schools implementing advisory programs.

6.8 Review of Existing Resources

Resources already exist for school leaders. Several have been provided.

The Advisory Guide: Designing and Implementing Effective Advisory Programs in Secondary Schools (Poliner & Lieber, 2004). This book helps secondary educators design and implement an advisory program. It is a resource for anyone involved in advisory for study groups and committees. The Advisory Book (Crawford, 2008). This book provides step-by-step instructions for implementing the meeting components including modeling and practicing. It also contains frequently asked questions and answers. Professional Development Kit: Launching a Successful Advisory Program (Niska & Thompson, 2007). This book is not a program or curriculum but rather a well-organized and thoughtful framework for engaging activities and organizes to develop and/or identify the advisory program. This book contains all the materials and activities needed to carry out a faculty study.

These resources discuss the desired benefits of advisory programs, but they do not discuss how to implement such programs. Other resources exist that discuss goal setting, life skills, career explorations and other tools for school learning, but not how to attain the results. In addition to the many sources that are provided, websites such as www.essentialschools.org, www.advisoryprograms.wikispaces.com, and www.betterhighschools.org are available. These sources mention advisory programs, but only on the surface. This handbook provides implementation guides with the necessary components to achieve the benefits associated with the personalization of education through advisory programs.

The proposed handbook differs from existing publications, because in addition to discussing the benefits, it discusses actual components necessary in personalizing the learning environment. This includes the advisory programs, the need for personalization, the need for leadership, the need for transition assistance, the need for support and intervention, and the need for academic counseling. (See Table 6.8.1 Review of Advisory Program Resources Table)

6.8.1 Review of Advisory Program Resources Table

This is a visual representing components in several sample schools reviewed throughout the literature review. The components of these programs were broad concepts and did not discuss in detail what this handbook provides. Each school mentioned stated what components are included at each respective school.

	Personalization	Transition Assistance	Support and Intervention	Academic Counseling
Seaford High School, Seaford Delaware	X			X
Dominion High School, Loudon, Virginia	X		X	X
Brunswick High School, Maryland	X			X
Huntington Beach High School, California			X	X
Arkansas City High School, Kansas	X		X	X
Wuthrow University High School, Ohio		X		X
The Advisory Guide	X		X	X
The Advisory Book	X		X	X
Profession Development Kit	X		X	X
www.essentialschools.org	X		X	X
www.advisoryprograms.wikispaces.com	X		X	X
www.betterhighschools.org	X		X	X
Dissertation Proposal	X	X	X	X

6.9 Evaluation of Advisory Programs

Evaluating the effectiveness of advisory programs should be done on an annual basis. It could be done even more often due to the fact that education is constantly changing. Therefore, something that may be emphasized one year may not be emphasized the next year. To address this, surveys may be conducted to obtain data from students and faculty. Below is a short survey that could be given to students and/or faculty. This form of data can be used to assist in planning for the following year.

Factors related to program implementation and outcomes can be assessed using simple evaluation instruments. Evaluating the program through simple strategies can assist in providing useful data. According to Boulametis and Dutwin (as cited in Goff, 2011) the program model most often used is the goal-based model, also called the objective attainment model and objectives-oriented approach. This model or approach requires the evaluator to first identify the purpose or goal of some activity or program then focus on the evaluation upon the extent to which those purposes or goals are achieved. (p. 2). The handbook contains several examples that could be used to evaluate programs such as those. The Advisory Period Calendar Sample, the Pre-Post Awareness Survey Sample, and the Advisory Period Accountability Chart Sample all demonstrate varying degrees of evaluation and accountability. Table 2:1 lists multiple factors that could be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the program among personnel.

6.9.1 Possible program implementation variables to consider.

Program factors	Environmental factors	Mediating variables
Teacher Training	Teacher buy-in	Time allotted
Supplemental handouts	School culture	Teacher-student rapport
Student materials	Other school-wide initiatives	Professional development

6.9.2 Student Survey Sample Questions

1. What do you like most about advisory programs?
2. What do you like least about advisory programs?
3. How can advisory programs better assist you?

Other forms of data also exist to evaluate the effectiveness of advisory programs. This can include data gained from various reports containing information associated with attendance, discipline referrals, and grade performance. Information from the counseling office also provides additional data related to college and career readiness, grade cards, testing information, and the amount of referrals related to all aspects of support. All of this data are essential in evaluating the advisory programs as they provide information that assists in addressing a moving target.

Summary

Advisory programs can have a positive impact on faculty, staff, and students. The focus of the advisory programs should always be on personalization and student learning. There are many details embedded within the advisory program. Effective leadership and staff investment prepare the course. Although the program may seem overwhelming on the surface, it is not

intended to create additional work or stress on personnel. The focus of advisory programs will vary based on the needs and objectives of each respective school seeking to implement advisory programs. Advisory programs should be evaluated on an annual basis. Evaluating the programs should solicit input from students and personnel. This can be accomplished through any avenue that can measure student achievement and student needs.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Personalizing the learning environment in a large high school is a must. Based on my experience, utilizing advisory programs is one of the best ways to accomplish personalization. The content and discussion in this handbook will assist any administrator in a large high school in creating a climate and culture in which students are acknowledged and respected as individuals. This handbook is designed for large high schools, but could apply to any and all levels/sizes of schools.

It all begins with leadership. It begins with the leader having the strength and courage needed to launch such an initiative. The leadership must garner support. The leadership also must strive to alleviate the concerns of the faculty/staff. On the surface, advisory programs can appear to be something in addition to the responsibilities of faculty/staff. However, advisory programs are not an addition. Instead these programs serve as a time frame and an effort, aimed at meeting the needs of individual students and personalizing the education process. Leadership must listen to the concerns of the staff, but must also believe strongly in this initiative.

Professional development that includes collaborative time is essential throughout this entire process. Professional development is not only applicable to the beginning stages, but should be continuous and ongoing, and it should include the entire staff. Professional development familiarizes the faculty/staff with the goals and objectives of what the expectations are for advisory programs. The collaborative time allows for questions to be asked and answered. It also allows faculty/staff the necessary time needed to discuss the various objectives and gain the confidence needed to move forward to personalize the learning environment.

Planning and outlining the process establishes the structure needed to define and communicate the desired goals and objectives sought through the implementation of advisory

programs. This can reduce the stress among the faculty/staff when they realize that this will not require any additional planning on their part. This further demonstrates the time, effort, and commitment needed from the committee that is involved. Planning and outlining seeks ways to mainstream the goals and objectives of advisory programs that allow the “objective of the day” to be discussed.

The components that assist in the personalization of education consist of 1) transition, 2) support and intervention, and 3) academic/career/post-secondary guidance. These areas encompass the needed areas of focus in the daily life of a high school student. And all of these areas place the focus on the individual student and on providing the most complete, comprehensive, personalized education possible. These components are essential in defining the task at hand and enhance learning. They assist in equipping students to assume responsibility for their own education while providing support mechanisms to assist students. These components are also essential in placing faculty and staff in a position in which they help facilitate, promote, and demonstrate the personalization. It also helps educators to grow and develop professionally, which will only strengthen their capacity to provide quality education for the students.

Advisory programs are a solution to achieving personalization in a large school. They provide a time and a venue to communicate the key components needed to personalize the learning environment. Advisory programs, when planned and organized, are an effective way to have an impact on the individual student. Not only is important information communicated, but it is also discussed. It is discussed in a non-threatening manner. Students must feel comfortable participating. In this instance, participating does not mean talking. It may mean actively listening. However, this encourages the student to investigate further avenues that may be of assistance to them as an individual. In turn, this equips students to learn to advocate for

themselves. It also helps them learn key people within the school building that can be of support and guidance. And finally, students feel known as individuals. They feel as though they are cared about and that they are a part of the school community. They gain responsibility and mature. And they gain confidence, which has a positive impact academically, athletically, socially, and educationally.

Advisory programs also assist faculty and staff. Faculty and staff develop professionally and personally by being involved in this process. They also become more aware of the need to make sure every student has an advocate in the school building. Students that are in need of additional support or guidance are identified throughout this process. Thus, it keeps students from falling through the cracks and ensures that students are known. Advisory programs benefit every student and can benefit faculty/staff the same. Advisory programs are a solution to personalize the learning environment of a large high school.

Definitions of Terms

Academic counseling –

The American School Counseling Association (ASCA) standards consist of:

- 1) The foundation is the basis of the model, and it addresses the philosophical underpinnings of the counseling program.
- 2) The delivery system includes guidance curricula, individual student planning, Responsive services, and systems support.
- 3) The management systems are the systemic monitoring process that ensure the implementation of the program.
- 4) The accountability system includes reports, performance evaluations, and program audits that measure and communicate with stake holders about program results and related data (Dimmett & Cary, 2007).

Academic counseling generally refers to trained professionals counseling students on their academic plans and course selection for secondary schools as well as for post secondary education. (Hughes & Karp, 2004).

Advisory Programs -

Advisory Programs are one of the strategies used to "personalize" education. By creating personal connections students can begin to feel safe and supported. (Makkonen, 2004).

At-Risk -

At-Risk students are: students who would potentially drop out of school or engage in self-destructive behaviors that interfere with academic success. Behaviors include absenteeism, performing below academic potential or participating in activities that may

be harmful to self and/or others such as substance abuse, threats and intimidation, and physical violence are some behaviors that place students at risk (Johnson & Perkins, 2009).

AVID – Advancement Via Individual Determination

A California program that empowers students to take responsibility for their own learning and develop the academic and interpersonal skills allowing them to take rigorous college-prep courses (Swanson, Marcus, & Elliott, 2000).

AYP – Adequate Yearly Progress -

Target scores high enough to classify a sufficient number of students in a school (or district) as proficient or above on state assessments in response to NCLB (Popham, (2005).

Climate -

School climate is the social atmosphere of a setting or "learning environment" in which students have different experiences, depending upon the protocols set up by the teachers and administrators (Moos, 1979).

Culture -

Beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that characterize a school (Phillips & Wagner, 2003).

IPS – Individual Plans of Study –

Individual plans of study are consider a “best practice” for districts, can help all Kansas students obtain a suitable vision of their path toward college and career readiness. (Tobias, 2014).

Kuder Career Search (KCS) –

An instrument that may be thought of as three distinct assessments: a) the preference record, b) Kuder career clusters, and c) person-match with job seekers (Zytowski, 2001).

MTSS - Multi-Tiered Systems of Support -

A system designed to support and serve everyone involved in continuous school improvement through ongoing collaboration. The MTSS framework outlines supports to improve learning for all students based on their specific needs (Dulaney, Hallam, & Wall, 2013).

Personalization -

A learning process in which schools help students assess their own talents and aspirations, plan a pathway toward their own purposes, work cooperatively with others on challenging tasks, maintain a record of their explorations, and demonstrate their learning against clear standards in a wide variety of media, all with the close support of adult mentors and guides (Clark, 2004). Personalization is achieved through a structured, caring environment in which students receive personal attention and instruction (Rourke & Boone, 2009).

PLC - Professional Learning Community –

Professional Learning Communities are characterized, in part, by collaborative teams whose members work interdependently to achieve common goals (Eaker, Dufour, & Dufour, 2002). The term professional learning community describes a collegial group of administrators and school staff who are united in their commitment to student learning (Hord, 1997).

Self Directed Search -

The Self-Directed Search (SDS) assessment provides information not only about a person's interests, but also about other aspects of vocational personalities, including self beliefs and aspirations (Gottfredson, 2002).

Strong Interest Inventory -

An instrument or tool that can help you make a satisfying decision about your career and education (Donnay, 1997).

SIT - Student Improvement Team –

A team approach for developing a support system to assist students within the general education classroom (Burns, 1999).

SLC - Smaller Learning Community -

The notion of breaking large high schools into smaller units as a way to increase personalization, relevance and rigor of coursework, and teacher collaboration (David, 2008).

Transition –

Transition programs address the needs of students and their parents and facilitate communication between middle school and high school educators (Mizelle, 2000).

504 Plan –

A disability, which is identical to that in the ADA, is broader because eligibility extends beyond learning to other major life activities, such as walking, eating, and breathing. A mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more of major life activities. (Zirkel, 2009).

Advisory Period Appendices

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Chapter 5 - Conclusion

Chapter 5 summarizes the research and development activities used to create *Personalizing Education through Advisory Programs: A Handbook for School Leaders of Large High Schools in Kansas*. This chapter also presents the summary of activities, research questions and results, reflection, conclusions, recommendations for future studies, dissemination, and summary.

Summary of Activities

The purpose of this study was to create *Personalizing Education through Advisory Programs: A Handbook for School Leaders of Large High Schools in Kansas*. The research and development (R & D) methodology recommended by Gall and Borg (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 2007) was used to complete this study through a seven-step cycle, which consisted of these steps:

1. Review and analysis of related literature
2. Needs assessment and proof of concept
3. Development of prototype
4. Preliminary field test
5. Initial handbook revision
6. Main field test
7. Final handbook revision

The research process was extensive in nature due to the topic that was covered and spanned from January, 2011 through December, 2012. The needs assessment and proof of concept were conducted in April of 2013. From April of 2013 through January of 2014, the first prototype was developed. The preliminary test began in January, 2014 with the first prototype of the handbook. The prototype was sent to 45 high school building principals in the state of

Kansas. All of these principals served in high schools with student populations of 1000 or more students. These building level practitioners/preliminary field test experts possess insight and understanding regarding the challenges associated with large high school. The preliminary field test experts not only provided feedback, they were also asked to provide additional names of experts in the field of education that would have an even deeper comprehension about personalization and advisory programs. The preliminary field experts provided four names.

After reviewing the comments and suggestions gained from the preliminary field test experts, revisions were made to the prototype in February of 2014. Once these revisions were complete, the main field test began.

The main field test was then conducted from late February, 2014 through mid-March, 2014 and was sent to the four individuals that were recommended by the preliminary field test experts. Three responses were returned. The main field test experts represented diverse areas within education and provided affirmation and feedback.

Based on the comments and suggestions from the main field test experts, additional revisions were made to the handbook prototype. This final version of *Personalizing Education through Advisory Programs: A Handbook for School Leaders of Large High Schools in Kansas* was completed in late March of 2014 and included as Chapter 4 of this dissertation.

Limitations

The preliminary field test provided limited feedback. Twenty percent of the 45 building principals responded to the short survey, eighty percent did not respond. There are several factors to consider that may have had an impact regarding the low response rate. These factors could include:

- A resistance to change
- Reluctance to give negative feedback
- Perception that advisory programs already exist in school they lead
- Timing of when handbook and supporting documents were sent to principals
- Short response time
- Perceived budget pressure related advisory programs might be to the school
- Accountability measures related to the evaluation process of the program; this could include student data such as attendance, discipline, graduation, grades, clubs/organization participation, etc.

These factors should be considered throughout the field test process to assist in gathering the most accurate data possible and secure more responses from expert panelists.

Research Questions and Results

The research for this R & D dissertation was focused on the key question: What are key components that will allow school leaders to personalize education for each student through advisory programs?

Two sub-questions were also explored. The sub-questions focused on the strategies and components identified to aid in personalization utilizing advisory programs. The framework for identifying successful advisory programs has been defined by Ziegler (1993) as those with efforts focused on higher school retention rates, a better school climate, increased staff-student contact, better student behavior, better resources for subject teachers in the person of the advisor-coordinator who knows the student well, more and better parent-teacher contact, and a better use of guidance counselors as consultants to advisors.

The following sub-questions were addressed:

1. In what ways can school leaders effectively create, implement, and evaluate effective advisory programs to personalize education for each individual student?
2. What are the critical components in successfully personalizing the education of a large high school?

1st Sub-Question Answer: Personalizing education for each student utilizing advisory programs.

Creating, implementing, and evaluating effective advisory programs was addressed in the handbook. The literature review provided multiple examples of schools that have implemented advisory programs in order to personalize education. The goal of personalizing education was in response to wide-spread criticism of the large comprehensive high school as an alienating and bureaucratic structure that hindered the development of learning or trust among all stakeholders Levine (2011). The lack of personalization in America's large high schools is problematic and Duke and De Roberto (2009) have characterized high schools as places in which:

- Students are not feeling connected.
- Students are not receiving appropriate guidance geared to the individual.
- Students are not receiving appropriate support on an individual basis.
- Students are not feeling safe.
- Students are not being known by faculty and staff. (p. 4-5)

These are common areas large high schools need to address. Therefore, the purpose of this handbook was to create a comprehensive step-by-step guide for administrators in large schools by researching effective ways to create, implement, and evaluate advisory programs in large high schools to personalize education. The extensive literature review provided numerous examples of what schools were doing to address this issue, but no literature addressed how to

create, implement, and evaluate advisory programs. Administrators and teachers should use this handbook to effectively personalize education

2nd Sub-Question Answer: Critical components in successfully personalizing the education of a large high school.

The second purpose of the study dealt with providing critical components to successfully personalize education in a large high school. The components that were selected were encompassing of critical elements researched throughout the literature review. The components covered strategic areas to guide school administrators to expand when implementing the advisory programs.

- Transition assistance--When supports for time management, social skills, and maintaining an academic focus were provided, students experienced an easier transition and were more likely to have success in ninth grade and beyond (Oakes & Waite, 2009)
- Support and intervention strategies--It is important for teachers to have varied strategies available for use in support of such learners; the importance of meeting individual learner needs as the basis for comprehensive behavior change (Murray, Baker, Murry-Slutsky, & Paris, 2009).
- Academic counseling--Student services personnel must be relentless in their efforts to assess the needs of each student; to identify the barriers and obstacles that interfere with student success; and to work with students, parents, the student support team, and faculty to develop strategies for overcoming those barriers (Dufour, Guidice, Magee, Martin, & Zivkovic, 2002).

The goal of this second sub-question dealt with the components to guide administrators in effectively creating, implementing, and evaluating advisory programs to personalize education. These components allow administrators to individualize their respective advisory program based on the needs of the school they serve in administratively.

Reflections

Throughout the dissertation process, the researcher wanted to create a handbook that was relevant, practical, and applicable for school administrators to use. These ideas were encouraged by having experienced the overwhelming feeling of being in a large high school as an individual, and my experiences serving as a building administrator at both a small high school and a large high school. Throughout the literature review, affirmation was gained, that other administrators had similar experiences and knowledge as my own. In an era when more and more is required of educators, advisory programs offer a solution. Advisory programs create a time frame in which numerous important components embedded within education are addressed. Advisory programs required minimal time from faculty and are focused on the student. Creating the process of implementing advisory programs, identifying critical components, garnering faculty support, and evaluating the effectiveness, and providing this handbook for administrators and educators, proved to be a true resource for administrators and educators. The researcher maintains the handbook is relevant based on the literature review and the comments provided by the field test participants. Many suggestions were received for revisions. Some were not followed at this time but will be considered when publishers consider the work as well. The researcher acted on some suggestions to enhance formatting. The researcher will consider other suggestions to assist in the publishing process.

Conclusions

The purpose of the study was to create, develop, and evaluate advisory programs to help personalize the educational process in large high schools. From following the R & D process prescribed by Gall et al. (2007), the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Expert panelists in multiple phases of the process indicated a strong need for administrators and educators to personalize the learning environment through advisory programs. The panelists were excited about the practicality of the handbook and voiced positive support.
2. Expert panelists in multiple phases of the process indicated large high schools were in need of a resource that was relevant in their respective schools. The panelists expressed support for the components researched and contained in the handbook.
3. Expert panelists in multiple phases of the process communicated the need for a handbook such as this to address key components such as transition, support interventions, and academic counseling.
4. Expert panelists in multiple phases of the process indicated that a comprehensive handbook that included a step-by-step process, discussing critical components for administrators on how to personalize education utilizing advisory programs could prove to address numerous concerns in large high schools.

Implications

The implications that are attached to a product such as this are relevant and hold promise to make an immediate impact on personalizing the education in large high school utilizing advisory programs. No handbook such as this exists and large high schools are scrambling to find ways to personalize the learning environment.

The literature review for the dissertation provided numerous examples of large high schools searching for ways to address concerns and issues previously discussed, that large high schools face. This demonstrated the need for a handbook such as this.

The implications as it relates to the steps large high schools take to merge the many issues being faced while focused on the individual student can be daunting. Not only is there more accountability than ever before, but the expectation of educating each child from an individual standpoint is growing. The components and strategies that are shared in the handbook are helpful to each and every school.

Another implication includes that of change. Change, in this context, consists of adding non-traditional instruction such as advisory program implementation focused on personalization that may have nothing to do with the core curriculum or assessments. This concept may be hard to grasp by faculty and staff initially, however, this strategy impacts all aspects of the school.

Recommendations for Future Studies

The research methodology used for the study was that of research and development (R & D) as described by Gall et al. (2007). The research consisted of a seven-step process that merged the needs assessment with the proof of concept. Further research could be conducted regarding dissemination of the final product, and the possible long range effects an initiative such as advisory programs, focusing on personalization, can have on the school. Not only will this have

an impact on the climate and culture of the school, but it will have an impact on numerous other areas that were addressed within this handbook.

Other research could be conducted on the process and components. As mentioned previously, the landscape of education changes constantly. Therefore, this process and the components may need to be evaluated annually for their effectiveness and relevance. Areas to consider include 1) a survey of non-respondents to gain insight as to why they did not respond, 2) add more “how to” examples to strengthen the visual aspect of implementation, 3) conduct a more traditional quantitative research survey, 4) conduct study of potential outcomes in relation to the effectiveness of use of the handbook. Further research could be conducted by soliciting data from graduates on the 1) effectiveness of advisory programs and 2) whether each student was known as an individual. These are a few areas that could be investigated.

Dissemination

An important part of the research and development methodology is the dissemination of the product after field-testing has been completed. The information developed for the handbook can be disseminated in several ways:

1. Numerous building principals, administrators, and directors expressed strong interest in utilizing the research, components, and strategies that were shared in the handbook. The handbook could be an instrument used to guide each individual administrator to personalize the environment they serve in.
2. Building principals, administrators, and directors can disseminate the handbook within the administrative team within the school, and with colleagues.
3. Building principals, administrators, and directors can disseminate the handbook while conducting professional development opportunities.

4. Building principals, administrators, and directors can classify the handbook as an active document that be manipulated to meet the needs associated with each respective school.

Initial steps will be to seek publication followed by communication with colleagues. The communication will establish the dialogue necessary to begin dissemination. Other options entail electronic communication, phone calls, and possibly creating a website to discuss, describe, and market the handbook.

Summary

Throughout the chapters of this dissertation and subsequent handbook, concerns and issues associated with large high schools were discussed. This culminated in the created handbook to assist administrators in providing an advisory program. Advisory programs seek to personalize the education in a planned, structured way that has effects on all areas within large high schools.

Based on the R & D process used for this research, building principals, administrators, and directors enthusiastically endorsed and validated a need for a comprehensive guide to personalize the learning environment utilizing advisory programs. Implementing the strategies, and focusing on the components from this handbook could guide building principals, administrators, and directors in large high schools. Personalization can occur using advisory programs.

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Appendix A - Needs Assessment Survey

This Needs Assessment Survey is being completed as the second stage in the Research and Design process for the development of a comprehensive handbook for school leaders, called, *Planning and developing advisory programs for the personalization of education: A handbook to guide school leaders of large high schools in Kansas*. You are asked to respond as indicated to these statements related to the need for such a handbook.

1. There is a need for personalized instruction in a large high school.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

2. Students need more guidance related to class schedule, course relevancy, and career information.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

3. Transitioning into a large high school is a critical component to the success of each individual student.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

4. Personalized instruction increases student achievement.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

5. Implementing personalization strategies requires professional development for faculty and staff.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

6. Advisory Programs are a strategy that will benefit students and personalize the learning environment.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Appendix B - Proposed Outline for Expert Panel

Proposed Outline for Expert Panel for *Planning and developing advisory programs for the personalization of education: A handbook to guide school leaders of large high schools in Kansas*.

A. Need for Personalization

1. Students do not feel connected.
2. Students not receiving appropriate guidance geared to the individual.
3. Students not receiving appropriate support on an individual basis.
4. Students not feeling safe.
5. Students not being known by faculty and staff (Duke & DeRoberto, 2009).

B. Leadership and Personalization

1. The leader's role is to provide direction through modeling and vision, to motivate through love and inspiration, to build a complimentary team based on mutual respect, to be effectiveness-minded and focused on results rather than on methods, systems, and procedures (Covey, 1991).
2. Leaders create the conditions and culture for the target changes to take place that lead to improvement in student achievement (Taylor, 2010).

C. Need for Transition Assistance

1. Transition is a process of moving from the known to the unknown. The first year of high school is pivotal in terms of adjustment and achievement (Donegan, 2008).

2. When supports for time management, social skills, and maintaining an academic focus were provided, students experienced an easier transition and were more likely to have success in ninth grade and beyond (Oakes & Waite, 2009).

D. Need for Support and Intervention

1. Tiers progress from providing school wide interventions for all students, additional support for students with additional concerns, and then more intensive support for individual students for whom previous interventions have not proved effective (Karge & Lasky, 2009).
2. With reduced family stress and enhanced social support, there may also be a reduction in the symptomology of the student and prevention of a formal referral for special education services (Kratochwill, McDonald, Levin, Scalia, & Coover, 2009).

E. Need for Academic Counseling

1. Academic counseling, as quoted in the Perkins legislation, (2004), is also referred to as academic advisement. Academic counseling refers to trained professionals who are counseling students on their academic plans, for course-taking while in secondary schools as well as for post-secondary education (Hughes & Karp, 2004).
2. Human behavior is the product of countless numbers of learning experiences made available by both planned and unplanned situations

in which individuals find themselves. The learning outcomes include skills, interests, knowledge, beliefs, preferences, sensitivities, emotions, and future actions (Krumboltz, 2009).

F. Advisory Programs as a Solution

1. Advisory Programs have the power of raising student achievement by embracing all students. Advisory Programs raise student achievement when they build connections among people and between students and their course of study. In other words, advisory programs are one of the best investments a school can make to increase learning for all students, especially the most marginal (Champeau, 2011).
2. The teacher's role in personalized, student-centered instruction was to know the students' learning styles and to adjust instruction accordingly (George, 2000).
3. Numerous high schools that have implemented advisory programs aimed at raising student achievement.
4. Putbrese (1998), surveyed 3400 middle level students to assess the effects of advisory programs and reported a reduction in student smoking and alcohol use. This was due to the interventions associated with personalization. When schools took the initiative and personalize the process, students responded because of the various interventions.
5. Some schools have taken steps to establish a guidance advisory system that involved parents in helping students plan and complete goal-focused

programs of study that began in middle grades and continued through high school graduation. These systems gave students a greater sense of belonging to something that had meaning in their lives now and in the future (High Schools That Work, 2009).

Appendix C - Informed Consent Approval

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

INFORMED CONSENT TEMPLATE

PROJECT TITLE: Planning and developing Advisory Programs for the personalization of education: A handbook to guide school leaders of large high schools in Kansas

APPROVAL DATE OF PROJECT: Sp13

EXPIRATION DATE OF PROJECT: Sp14

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: CO-INVESTIGATOR(S): Dr. Teresa Northern Miller
Terry McCarty

CONTACT AND PHONE FOR ANY PROBLEMS/QUESTIONS: (785) 532-5609

IRB CHAIR CONTACT/PHONE INFORMATION: Rick Scheidt/ 785 532 3224

SPONSOR OF PROJECT: N/A

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH: This research project is intended to plan, develop, and evaluate Advisory Programs for the personalization of education by creating a handbook to guide school leaders of large high schools in Kansas which will help them develop such program in their schools. This research project is part of a doctoral degree program and is the final dissertation.

PROCEDURES OR METHODS TO BE USED: This research will follow the Research and Design method as described by Gall, Gall & Borg (2007). The research stages will follow the processes of literature review, needs assessment, proof of concept, development of prototype, preliminary field test, main field test, and handbook completion.

ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES OR TREATMENTS, IF ANY, THAT MIGHT BE ADVANTAGEOUS TO SUBJECT:

N/A

LENGTH OF STUDY: Spring 2013-Spring 2014

RISKS ANTICIPATED: No known risks

BENEFITS ANTICIPATED: The benefits will be to assist school leaders in personalizing the learning environment utilizing advisory programs to do so.

EXTENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY: Names will not be used. Coding will be used to identify the respondents. Research data will be kept by the researcher in a secure location, with responses kept

confidential through the coding process (actual names will not be used). IRB policies will be followed throughout the R&D stages.

IS COMPENSATION OR MEDICAL TREATMENT AVAILABLE IF INJURY OCCURS:

No known risks

PARENTAL APPROVAL FOR MINORS: No parental approval required.

TERMS OF PARTICIPATION: I understand this project is research, and that my participation is completely voluntary. I also understand that if I decide to participate in this study, I may withdraw my consent at any time, and stop participating at any time without explanation, penalty, or loss of benefits, or academic standing to which I may otherwise be entitled.

I verify that my signature below indicates that I have read and understand this consent form, and willingly agree to participate in this study under the terms described, and that my signature acknowledges that I have received a signed and dated copy of this consent form.

(Remember that it is a requirement for the P.I. to maintain a signed and dated copy of the same consent form signed and kept by the participant

Participant Name: _____

Participant Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witness to Signature: (project staff) _____

Date: _____

Appendix D - Preliminary Field Test Juror Letter and Instructions

Preliminary Field Test Juror Letter and Instructions for *Planning and developing advisory programs for the personalization of education: A handbook to guide school leaders of large high schools in Kansas*.

Dear _____

Thank you for agreeing to participate as a reviewer of the Preliminary Field Test of *Planning and developing advisory programs for the personalization of education: A handbook to guide school leaders of large high schools in Kansas*. You were selected because of your credentials as a leader in the field of advisory programs in the state of Kansas. Your participation will likely involve a commitment of 2 to 3 hours of your time. This process is part of the work I am doing to complete a Doctor of Education degree at Kansas State University to create and validate a comprehensive handbook to guide school leaders in the implementation of Advisory Programs. This review process is an essential part of the research and development methodology, and I appreciate your constructive criticism of the *Planning and developing advisory programs for the personalization of education: A handbook to guide school leaders of large high schools in Kansas*. Should you have any questions or concerns with any part of the process please contact me or my major professor, Dr. Teresa Northern Miller. Our contact information is listed below. As you begin the review process, I would suggest you follow these steps:

1. Read the enclosed questionnaire to become familiar with the general areas for which you will be providing feedback.
2. Read the Advisory Program Handbook General Information document.
3. Use your own understanding, experience, and knowledge concerning advisory programs to assess my work.
4. Complete the survey.
5. Return the survey.

In order to complete this project on time, I must receive your feedback by _____. I truly appreciate your help with this project.

Respectfully,

Terry McCarty
Doctoral Student
tmccarty@stillwaterschools.com

Dr. Teresa Northern Miller
Associate Professor
tmiller@k-state.edu

Enclosures

Appendix E - Preliminary Field Test Survey

Preliminary Field Test Survey for *Planning and developing advisory programs for the personalization of education: A handbook to guide school leaders of large high schools in Kansas*.

The preliminary field test survey is designed to collect feedback from recognized experts in the area of the personalization of education. This feedback will be used to evaluate and make revisions to the handbook for school leaders *Planning and developing advisory programs for the personalization of education: A handbook to guide school leaders of large high schools in Kansas*. If you need additional space for comments, please attach additional sheets. The responses to this questionnaire will be confidential (they will not be identified by individual reviewer).

Name _____

Please rate each statement and include comments and/or suggestions for each section.

1. The content of the Advisory Program Handbook is based upon correct interpretation of relevant research and literature.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments & Suggestions

2. The format of the Advisory Program Handbook facilitates reader use.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments & Suggestions

3. The Advisory Program Handbook is comprehensive and an effective tool to help schools and school leaders understand the personalization process.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments & Suggestions

4. The Advisory Program Handbook can help school leaders integrate the personalization of schools concept into the existing local school program.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments & Suggestions

5. The Advisory Program Handbook provides accurate information that is helpful for school leaders seeking to personalize the educational process.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments & Suggestions

6. The background and frameworks identified and defined in Advisory Program Handbook will be helpful to school leaders.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments & Suggestions

7. The Advisory Program Handbook will assist school leaders in identifying specific components to implement a product such as this.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments & Suggestions

8. The glossary of the Advisory Program Handbook relevant terms and accurate definitions.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments & Suggestions

9. The resources section is logically organized and contains useful information.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments & Suggestions

10. The content in *Planning and developing advisory programs for the personalization of education: A handbook to guide school leaders of large high schools in Kansas* is of interest to both novices (to the personalization process) and experienced practitioners.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments & Suggestions

What is the greatest strength of *Planning and developing advisory programs for the personalization of education: A handbook to guide school leaders of large high schools in Kansas*?

What is the greatest weakness of *Planning and developing advisory programs for the personalization of education: A handbook to guide school leaders of large high schools in Kansas*?

What information should be added to *Planning and developing advisory programs for the personalization of education: A handbook to guide school leaders of large high schools in Kansas*?

Other comments or suggestions?

Nomination of Additional Reviewers

After this Preliminary Field Test, the next step in the process for preparing *Planning and developing advisory programs for the personalization of education: A handbook to guide school leaders of large high schools in Kansas* will be to conduct another field test with principals and/or superintendents who are planning for or are incorporating advisory programs into their schools. Please recommend three principals or superintendents that meet at least three of the four of the following criteria.

Criteria:

1. Practicing high school principal of school with 1000 students or more.
2. Certification as a school administrator by qualifying state certification authority.
3. Current involvement in a leadership role in implementing and modeling the personalization of education, administration/director of advisory programs, or supervision of students enrolled in respective advisory programs.
4. Nomination by a member of the Main Field Test panel based on successful involvement as a supervisor of students in the process of personalizing education.

Potential Reviewers:

Name _____

Title _____

Institution _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Name _____

Title _____

Institution _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Name _____

Title _____

Institution _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Recognition & Credit

To recognize your participation on the development of this product, your name will be listed on the credits page of *Planning and developing advisory programs for the personalization of education: A handbook to guide school leaders of large high schools in Kansas*. Please provide the information for the listing:

_____ I do not wish to have my name or information published in the handbook.

_____ I wish to have the following information included in the credit section (please list only the information you wish to have included):

Name _____

Title _____

Institution _____

E-mail _____

Please return this form and any additional pages to tmccarty@stillwaterschools.com

Appendix F - Debriefing Statement

Planning and developing advisory programs for the personalization of education: A handbook to guide school leaders of large high schools in Kansas

The purpose of this study was to to plan and develop advisory programs for the personalization of education by creating a handbook to guide school leaders of large high schools in Kansas which will help them develop such programs in their schools. This research project is part of a doctoral program and is the final dissertation.

This study's focus on will be to assist school leaders in personalizing the learning environment utilizing advisory programs to do so.

As stated earlier, your responses to all of the questionnaires will be absolutely confidential and actual names will not be used. You may withdraw from this study at any time in the process.

Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated. If you'd be interested in obtaining a copy of the results once the study is complete, you may contact

If you have any complaints, concerns, or questions about this research, please feel free to contact Dr. Teresa Miller, Kansas State University, 1100 Mid-Campus Drive, Manhattan, KS 66506, 785-532-5609, tmiller@ksu.edu, or Rick Scheidt, Chair, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, (785) 532-3224..

Thank you very much for your participation!!

Appendix G - Letter of Instruction for Main Field Test

Letter of Instruction for Main Field Test for *Planning and developing advisory programs for the personalization of education: A handbook to guide school leaders of large high schools in Kansas*.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the main field test of the *Personalizing Education Through Advisory Programs: A Handbook for School Leaders of Large High Schools in Kansas*, a guide being developed as part of a dissertation for a doctorate degree in educational leadership at Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas.

As previously explained, the purpose of this dissertation project is to research, design, and create a handbook to support administrators and educational practitioners interested in implementing a process to assist in personalizing the learning environment. The research methodology used in this dissertation is Research and Development (R & D), a process in which a product is developed, field tested, and revised on the basis of information received from the field test. Your evaluation will provide me with information for revising and improving the handbook.

Enclosed are a draft of the handbook and the Main Field Test Evaluation form. Please return the Main Field Test Evaluation form via e-mail no later than Friday, February 28, 2014. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the process, or need further information, please contact my major professor Dr. Teresa Northern Miller or me. Our contact information is enclosed for your convenience. I truly appreciate your willingness to assist me.

Terry McCarty
Doctoral Student
tmccarty@stillwaterschools.com

Dr. Teresa Northern Miller
Associate Professor
tmiller@k-state.edu

Appendix H - Main Field Test Survey

Main Field Test Survey for *Planning and developing advisory programs for the personalization of education: A handbook to guide school leaders of large high schools in Kansas*

Please rate the following statements and include comments and/or suggestions for each question.

Name: _____

1. The handbook is organized in a logical sequence.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments & Suggestions

2. The writing is clear, descriptive, and easy to read.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments & Suggestions

3. The handbook is presented in an attractive format.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments & Suggestions

4. Overall, the handbook provides useful information.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments & Suggestions

5. The content of the handbook is relevant and practical.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Agree

Strongly Disagree

Comments & Suggestions

6. The content of the handbook establishes the need to personalize the educational process.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments & Suggestions

7. The content of the handbook provides essential components necessary to assist in personalizing the educational process.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments & Suggestions

8. The content of the handbook blends theory, research, and practice into an applicable, practical guide for administrators and educational practitioners.

Strongly Agree

Agree

No Opinion

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments & Suggestions

9. What revisions should be made in the writing and format of the handbook?

10. What suggestions do you have for making the content more clear or understandable?

11. What areas need more clarification?

12. Additional Comments

Appendix I - IRB Approval Letter



TO: Teresa Miller
Educational Leadership
368 Bluemont Hall

Proposal Number: 6590

FROM: Rick Scheidt, Chair 
Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects

DATE: 03/05/2013

RE: "Planning, developing, and evaluating Advisory Programs for the personalization of education: a handbook to guide school leaders of large high schools in Kansas."

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Kansas State University has reviewed the proposal identified above and has determined that this is a **Non-Research Application**. The proposed activity as described does not meet the criteria in 45 CFR 46 for the definition of "research" involving human subjects, and therefore does not require review by the Committee for Research Involving Human Subjects (IRB).

This applies only to the proposal/document currently on file with the IRB. Any change affecting human subjects must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation.

Feel free to call our office if you have any questions.