

# School Counseling Advisory Council: How to Implement it Successfully and Gain Critical Support for Your School Counseling Program

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New York State School Counselor Association  
Annual Conference 2016  
Tarrytown, New York

# Purpose of workshop

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- Share recent history of departments
- Focus on the actual details of formulating and running a fully functioning ADVISORY COUNCIL
- Talk about the ADVISORY COUNCIL as a critical component of the Management System of the ASCA National Model
- Provide an opportunity to discuss our experience and answer questions
- Give participants access to practical samples of what you need to form and run your own advisory council!
- Designed for easy implementation

# BRIEF HISTORY

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Lindenhurst Public Schools in 2001

Poor public perception

Inadequate staffing

No coordinator

Low morale

Confrontational relationship with teachers

No supporters on Board of Education

Lack of understanding of WHAT COUNSELORS DO!

# Terminology

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ASCA NATIONAL MODEL: “Advisory Council”

NYSSCA COMPREHENSIVE MODEL: “School Counseling Advisory Committee”

LINDENHURST PUBLIC SCHOOLS: “Guidance Advisory Board”

SOUTHAMPTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS: “School Counseling Advisory Council”

Your group name will reflect your unique school identity

# EARLY PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIONS

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New Coordinator in 2001

- (NO COORDINATOR FOR 4 MONTHS!)

Board Presentation in October 2002 to educate about

## WHAT COUNSELORS DO

Ongoing dialogue with community...administration...teachers

Board Presentation in March 2004 with data, needs analysis and future plans, including the GUIDANCE ADVISORY BOARD

Three year ACTION PLAN presented in February 2005 to Superintendent, including the GUIDANCE ADVISORY BOARD

# More public relations efforts

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Regular Advisory Council meetings

Additional parent night meetings

Attendance at Board of Education meetings

Use of district website to create eBoard

Publication of middle and high school newsletter

High School Twitter Account

High School Facebook Account

Remind App for counseling events and deadlines

Share results of counseling programs in annual reports

Advocacy for department at administrative meetings at all levels

# ASCA National Model (2012): Program Management – SCAC

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## Activities:

- Membership includes administrator and representatives of school and community stakeholders
- Meets at least twice a year and maintains agenda and minutes
- Advises on school counseling program goals, reviews program results and makes recommendations
- Advocates and engages in public relations for the school counseling program
- Advocates for school counseling program funding and resources

# ASCA NATIONAL MODEL (2012): Value of the advisory council

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**Review counseling program goals, competencies and results**

**Participate in making recommendations to counseling department, principal and superintendent**

**Provide a forum for open dialogue between schools and community**

**Provide information on community and parental expectations for the counseling program**

**Act as a resource and support for the program**



# NYSED PROPOSED AMENDMENTS UPDATE:

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School Counseling Advisory Council is required in the proposed regulation!

Earliest date of implementation September 2019, but you should start NOW!

Must meet **two times** per year

Must **report to the Board of Education** each year

# TIMELINE FOR NEW REGS:

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- Board of Regents Presentation in November 2016.
- Will go out for public comment in the Federal Register for 30 days.
- Earliest date for return to the Board of Regents for a vote is Feb. 2017
- Full implementation would take place in 2019-2020 school year.

# Benefits of an advisory council

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Role definition for school counselors

Opportunity to talk to stakeholders about what we are doing

It is a mechanism for stakeholder input about proposed changes

Chance to find out what method of communication works best

Gain insight about ways to increase parent participation in counseling programs

**PURPOSE IS HONEST COMMUNICATION AMONG ALL PARTIES ABOUT THE IMPORTANT WORK OF THE SCHOOL COUNSELORS AS IT RELATES TO THE SCHOOL AND DISTRICT MISSION AND GOALS!!!**

# Planning the first meeting

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**Who will be on your council and how will you invite them?**

**What kind of meeting will you have and what will be on the agenda?**

**Where will you hold your meeting?**

**What time of day and what day of the week is best for your meeting?**

**What materials will you provide for your members?**

**Will you serve refreshments?**

**How will you share what you have discussed?**

# Who will be on your council and how will you invite them?

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**Refer to the ASCA National Model for “Who”**

**Look to your personal contacts in the local and professional community**

**Remember to search for people who are interested in what school counselors do**

**Construct a letter of invitation**

**Ask students to invite other students**

**Recommend US Mail not email for invitation**

**Seek suggestions from people in your organization**

**Give the invitees information about your council**

# Advisory council membership can include:

Parent

Teacher

School Counselors

Administrator

Community Member

Business/Industry/Labor Representative

School Board Member

Student(s)

College Representative: Admissions, HS Liaison

Mental Health Professional

University-level Counselor Educator



# What kind of meeting will you have?

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Determine the setup of your meeting

Make sure people are able to see one another and that the meeting can be facilitated easily

Look for a notetaker such as a school counseling intern, someone without a stake in the discussions

Chairperson needs skills in planning and conducting meetings, developing an agenda and facilitating group discussion

# What will be on the agenda?

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Agenda items should include introductions, explanation of the purpose of the board, counselor programs and activities, suggestions for future programs

Data should be presented on student achievement

The agenda should be brief but relevant

Meetings should be kept on schedule and meeting times should be consistent and predictable

Consider a guest speaker if it meets your goals



# Where will you hold the meeting?

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Seek out a comfortable and easily accessible venue

Make sure it is a private meeting space not being used by others

Search out a neutral space where the various parties will feel safe to speak

Suggestions include the school library, large conference room, special classroom space or music room.

If you are serving refreshments, make sure this is allowed in your meeting space

# What is the best time and day for the meeting?

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Be sensitive to district and school building calendars

Steer clear of holidays and popular travel times, such as Friday afternoons

Consider the time of day most of your members could be available

Keep your meeting day and time consistent so members can plan to attend

Think about ways to be flexible

Don't make too many changes to the schedule

# What materials will you provide?

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- GIVE ALL MEMBERS A COPY OF THE “ADVISORY COUNCIL” SECTION IN CHAPTER 5 OF THE ASCA NATIONAL MODEL
- SEE PAGE 89 OF THE ASCA MODEL IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Agenda

List of members

Contact information for the chair

Artifacts of counselor programs

Reports on counseling interventions that include data

Relevant articles about school counselors

# Will you serve refreshments?

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Inviting your members to share in food and drink adds to the social interaction and comfort level of the event

Consider such factors as time of day and your budget for providing refreshments

See what other groups do who meet in your district or school building

If you do decide to offer refreshments tell the members so they can plan their day

Be sure to clean up after your group to maintain positive perceptions of the counseling department!

# How will you share what was discussed?

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Decide who will receive your meeting minutes or reports

Be aware of the need to be prudent about what goes into the minutes

Ask someone else to review your minutes or reports before distributing

Give the members an opportunity to review the minutes or reports and to make changes if needed

The usual channels of communication apply, such as US Mail and/or email distribution list

Offer to present on it at district level meetings

# Past experiences with advisory groups

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Adelphi University Admissions Advisory Board

Hofstra University Center for Secondary School Education Advisory Board

Long Island Works Advisory Board

Long Island University School Counseling Advisory Board, Chair

Business Advisory Board of Lindenhurst Public Schools

Site Based Team

NYIT Counseling Program Advisory Board

## How about you?

# Lindenhurst process 2005 to 2016

Mailed and emailed invitations and reminders

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Refreshments and gifts from our university colleagues

Name place cards

Minute taker and mailed distribution of minutes after each meeting

Two meetings per year since March 2005 = 20+ MEETINGS!!!

Three-year action plan played a key role

Results include great public perception, increased staff, permission to engage in new programs and professional development activities

Example of new programs as outgrowth of discussion:

- College Scholarship Workshop & Middle School College Awareness Night
- Naviance Classroom Presentations & College Application Workshop
- College Bus Tours

# Southampton process 2014 to present

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Sent email to all district employees about the development of a new Advisory Council

Created an EventBrite event through which interested people could register to participate

Mailed letters of invitation to targeted stakeholders

Presentation to all members about the newly implemented programs over the previous three years

Open dialogue with members and new ideas generated

Minutes taken and distributed to members, school counselors, Board members and Superintendent

Presentation to Board of Education



# Where are we going next?

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Enhance our meetings by including more “virtual members”

Expand participation to other stakeholders

Rotate counselor membership on the council regularly

Survey members regarding changes

Continue to report to the Advisory Board/Council on our programs and plans for the future

Increase use of technology for communication

Provide the information in this workshop around the state.

Think positively about  
your advisory council!

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**“Always bear in mind that your own  
resolution to succeed is more  
important than any other.”**

*Abraham Lincoln*

# Resources

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- **Colleagues**
- **American School Counselor Association**
- **State school counselor associations**
- **Local professional counseling associations**
- **University school counseling training programs**
- **Bibliography from this workshop**
- **Best practices from other schools**
- **SAMPLE DOCUMENTS FROM THIS WORKSHOP**
  - **See Google link on last slide**

# CONTACT INFORMATION

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*THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!*

*PLEASE CONTACT US WITH QUESTIONS, COMMENTS OR REQUESTS FOR HELP!*

*We welcome reports about how your ADVISORY COUNCIL takes shape...*

*Follow updates on the new regulations at [www.nyssca.org](http://www.nyssca.org) !*

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# RESOURCES

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The goggle drive can be accessed using the following:

Go to <https://www.google.com/drive/> and enter the following:

Email: [nyssca2016advisorycouncil@gmail.com](mailto:nyssca2016advisorycouncil@gmail.com)

Password: nyssca2016