Contents

Introduction

Budget cuts; grass-roots rebellion against high-stakes testing; corporate challenges to public education; calls for accountability and evaluation; increasing student-to-school counselor ratios; unemployment and underemployment; and achievement, opportunity, attainment, and funding gaps all illustrate inequity among learners and school resources creating and responding to challenging times in K–12 schools. Common Core Standards and Career-Technical Common Core Standards have been developed to create more students who are career- and college-ready for a global economy and challenge systemic inequities in education. However, effectiveness of these initiatives is unclear and some worry about a narrowing of the curriculum due to their presence. At the same time, K–12 educational leaders—including school counselors and school counselor candidates—navigate the waters of academic, career, and college readiness and personal/social competencies for every K–12 student, with many stakeholders unclear about school counselor roles and responsibilities, fewer financial and human resources, and increased international expectations for all students to succeed in postsecondary education and careers.

This book is for educational leaders including school counselors who desire equity for every student. It is for school counselors facing challenging odds, including the average school counselor to student ratio in the high 400s to 1 and increasing in many U.S. states. This book is designed to give everyone who leads in schools, including school counselors, multiple equity-focused solutions that work in elementary, middle, and high schools.

We cannot predict the future, but we can work to ensure that educators collaborate to eliminate inappropriate tasks for school counselors—for instance, discipline, bus and hall duty, testing, and other noncounseling activities—so that school counselors can deliver comprehensive school counseling programs that reach every student,

every marking period, every year. For students who need more than annual planning and school counseling core curriculum lessons, there must be adequate time and space for group counseling for some students and individual counseling for other students.

Not every student needs counseling. Every student, does, however, need an annually updated **ACCESS/Accomplishments Plan** (Chen-Hayes, 2013), developmental school counseling core curriculum lessons, and other data-driven activities (digital and traditional) that cultivate academic, career, college readiness, and personal/social competencies to help them live their dreams. Every school leader needs to evaluate their school counseling program interventions and outcomes on equitable resources and experiences for every student using the **ACCESS Questionnaire** (Chen-Hayes, 2007), revised for *101 Solutions* with the latest American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Model changes and National Office for School Counselor Advocacy (NOSCA) eight college and career readiness counseling components.

School counselors need to be evaluated effectively and building/district leaders need an appropriate evaluation tool to successfully ensure that school counselors are on target to meet the needs of all students. We created the **Change Agent for Equity (CAFÉ) Model** to focus school counselors and other leaders on key school counselor skills needed to implement a school counseling program—advocacy, collaboration, cultural competency, leadership, technology, and equity assessment using data (Mason, Ockerman, & Chen-Hayes, 2013; Ockerman, Mason, & Chen-Hayes, 2013). In *101 Solutions,* we present the **Change Agent for Equity (CAFÉ) School Counselor Evaluation** for building, district, state/province, and national educators to assess equity-focused school counselor outcomes in 16 key areas (see Chapter 1).

Questions and Challenges for School Counselors and Other Leaders

In this book, we challenge outdated notions and use of dated "guidance counselor" and "guidance program" terminology since the profession has been "school counselor" and "school counseling" for over 60 years. We ask why so many public elementary, middle, and high schools staff school counselors primarily for personal-social issues and crisis intervention with too little career/college and academic counseling and competency development.

We question why too many independent schools don't staff any school counselors until high school, and then their sole focus is college readiness without equal time for academic, career, and

personal/social competencies. We challenge why school counselors are being cut and ratios are climbing when research indicates exactly the opposite would better prepare more students for higher academic achievement in literacy and math (Wilkerson, Pérusse, & Hughes, 2013) and college and career readiness and success (Lapan, 2012).

Outdated K–12 school counseling practices and lack of an evidence-based school and college readiness counseling program are indefensible when the research clearly shows that students benefit from lower counselor-to-student ratios by having greater likelihood of college admissions and greater likelihood of academic success and future college graduation (Lapan, 2012). Every student in public, charter, and independent schools deserves annual academic, career, college readiness, and personal/social competencies delivered from a professional school counselor's evidence-based school counseling program.

Why Building and District Leaders Need to Hire, Evaluate, and Empower Equity-Focused School Counselors

School counselors who focus on equity are a key career- and college-readiness success strategy in schools and districts *when they are given the appropriate tools and time to bust barriers and close gaps!*

However, effective school counseling programs require effective school counselors who are equity-focused and identify themselves as change agents (Mason et al., 2013; Ockerman et al., 2013). Our earlier work on the CAFÉ model purposefully positions the identity of the school counselor as leader, advocate, collaborator, and change agent for equity as the linchpin of school counseling programs. Therefore, when hiring school counselors, administrators must screen for these identities (and their complementary attitudes, knowledge, and skills) during interviews. Rather than, or in addition to, traditional one-on-one interviews, administrators may wish to utilize group interview formats, data analysis activities, or school counseling classroom lesson instruction to assess candidates' application of knowledge and skill performance.

How Do School Counselor-to-Student Ratios at 250 to 1 or Lower Promote Equity?

Three decades of research shows that schools with fully implemented school counseling programs are more likely to have higher math and literacy skills at the elementary level (Wilkerson et al., 2013) and to

graduate students from high school and have them enter and graduate from college (Lapan, 2012). Recent research (Hurwitz & Howell, 2013) indicates that more school counselors at lower ratios leads to closing the opportunity and attainment gaps, with more students applying for and gaining admission to college because there is more time to spend with students to assist them with the process.

School counselors are often the only school professionals educated with career development, college readiness, multicultural, and ethics coursework prior to school service (CACREP, 2009).

The Goal of 101 Solutions: Dream Makers and Barrier Busters

We do not have all the answers, but in our combined 59 years of professional experience in school counseling, college counseling, and counselor education, we offer 101 evidence-based and practical solutions. We envision all educators as dream makers and barrier busters, advocating for equitable outcomes for all students, and we are honored and excited to help you as practitioners and future practitioners to achieve that goal.

Every school counselor needs awareness, knowledge, and skills in 16 core key areas, and leaders must evaluate school counselors on their effectiveness in equity-focused school counseling program areas:

1. Leadership as change agents for equity
2. Educator and school counselor collaboration
3. Program assessment and accountability
4. Achievement gap solutions
5. Opportunity and attainment gap solutions
6. College and career readiness
7. Annual college and career readiness planning
8. School-family-community partnerships
9. Ethics
10. Cultural identity and language solutions
11. Technology
12. School-wide and multi-systemic intervention
13. Administrative, operational, and supervision solutions
14. Advocacy and public relations
15. Anti-violence, bullying, and safety solutions
16. Ability, disability, gifted/talented solutions

Chapter Overview

We have a chapter in each of these areas and have included solution success stories that highlight how practicing school counselors and school counselor candidates have had equity-focused success in each of them at elementary, middle, and high school levels in urban, suburban, and rural areas. *101 Solutions* is structured with the following chapters for ease of use by leaders and future leaders in school counseling:

Chapter 1: Leadership Solutions: Change Agents for Equity: This chapter highlights equity-focused leadership for school counselors and other leaders as the linchpin for all 101 solutions presented by us. It includes a new assessment for K–12 school counselors and other leaders in buildings, districts, and at the state or province level to evaluate school counselor performance, the **CAFÉ School Counselor Evaluation**.

Chapter 2: Educator and School Counselor Collaboration Solutions: This chapter demonstrates the critical need for school counselor-leader-educator collaboration in elementary, middle, and high school settings and provides practical and creative ways to collaborate.

Chapter 3: Program Assessment and Accountability Solutions: This chapter helps school counselors and other leaders with collecting, analyzing, and sharing critical data regarding school counseling interventions to promote comprehensive school counseling programs, equitable outcomes for students, and increased school counseling positions. It includes a revised version of the **ACCESS Questionnaire** for school counseling program assessment in buildings, districts, and at the state/province level.

Chapter 4: Achievement Gap Solutions: This chapter assists school counselors as equity-focused leaders in helping close achievement gaps with implementing, assessing, and sharing the outcomes of school counseling program planning and curriculum interventions for every K–12 student and group and individual counseling for some students annually.

Chapter 5: Opportunity and Attainment Gap Solutions: This chapter helps school counselors and other leaders ensure every student graduates from high school with equitable opportunities leading to a postsecondary diploma, thereby closing opportunity and attainment gaps via implementing, assessing, and sharing outcomes of planning and curriculum interventions for every

K–12 student and group and individual counseling for some students annually.

Chapter 6: College and Career Readiness Solutions: This chapter gives school counselors specific tools and multiple resources specific to six of the eight NOSCA Career and College Readiness Counseling components to help develop student college and career readiness skills K–12.

Chapter 7: Annual College and Career Readiness Planning Solutions: This chapter discusses academic planning interventions that help students succeed post high school and become successful world citizens with **ACCESS and Accomplishments Plans** and resources specific to two of the eight NOSCA Career and College Readiness Counseling components to help develop student college and career readiness skills K–12.

Chapter 8: School-Family-Community Partnership Solutions: This chapter introduces the school-family-community partnerships model and illustrates innovative ways to create collaborative partnerships with parents/guardians/caregivers, community agencies, and local businesses to improve student outcomes. A list of resources to challenge familyism is included.

Chapter 9: Ethics Solutions: This chapter assists school counselors and other leaders to implement an ethical decision-making tool and review key ethical issues focused on equity. A series of ethical case scenarios in schools based on composites of actual incidents showcases the need for school counselors and other leaders to constantly review and refer to codes of ethics including the ASCA *Ethical Code for School Counselors,* the American Counseling Association *Code of Ethics,* and the National Association for College Admission Counseling *Statement of Principles of Good Practice.*

Chapter 10: Cultural Identity and Language Solutions: This chapter helps school counselors and other leaders take an equity-focused advocacy and leadership role to challenge multiple oppressions in schools and target interventions to support culturally and linguistically diverse students individually and systemically. Hundreds of specific tools and websites focused on assisting school counselors and other leaders challenge multiple oppressions such as ageism, beautyism, classism, genderism, heterosexism, immigrationism, linguicism, racism, religionism, and sexism are included.

Chapter 11: Technology Solutions: This chapter addresses current issues and concerns about the use of technology by school counselors and other leaders and provides a substantial set of tools and

resources for immediate use in building digital skills for optimal student success and strengthening school counseling programs.

Chapter 12: School-Wide and Multi-Systemic Intervention Solutions: This chapter discusses how school counselors and other leaders create and sustain systemic change and lead school-wide reform efforts such as Response to Intervention (RTI), maximize time, promote equity-focused school counseling interventions, and better serve all students.

Chapter 13: Administrative, Operational, and Supervision Solutions: This chapter helps school counselors and other leaders with specific administrative and operational challenges and options in schools and with how to maximize supervisory relationships in the building.

Chapter 14: Advocacy and Public Relations Solutions: This chapter identifies how school counselors and other leaders can best use advocacy and activism to promote their school counseling programs and ensure that internal and external publics are clear about the role of the school counselor and their results in promoting academic, career, college readiness, and personal/social competencies for every student. It addresses advocacy as central to daily practice for students and the school counseling profession.

Chapter 15: Anti-Violence, Bullying, and Safety Solutions: This chapter addresses bullying and cyberbullying and how school counselors and other building and district leaders proactively create and implement comprehensive anti-violence and anti-bullying programs for all students to feel safe and learn.

Chapter 16: Ability, Disability, and Gifted/Talented Solutions: This chapter helps school counselors and other leaders take an equity-focused leadership role in affirming students of diverse abilities, disabilities, and gifts/talents in K–12 schools. A list of resources to challenge ableism is included.

How to Make the Most of *101 Solutions*

This book is best read as a whole because themes, solutions, and resources overlap and connect between and across chapters. However, each chapter can be read on its own. Each of the 16 chapters provides the following elements:

- A brief overview of the topic
- Key words defined for each chapter and summarized in the glossary

- Key questions and answers (101)
- Solution Success Stories to highlight how those in the field have successfully addressed the topics (50)
- Digital and print resources to help the reader implement solutions (1,000-plus)

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