1989-1999
A DECADE OF PROGRESS AND CHANGE IN THE DELIVERY OF COMPREHENSIVE GUIDANCE PROGRAMS GRADES 7-12

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

Steven O. Laing, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Gary L. Carlston
Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction

Applied Technology Education Division
Robert O. Brems, Associate Superintendent
Lynn Jensen, Coordinator of Student Services & School-to-Work

Salt Lake City, Utah
2000

UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
UTAH STATE BOARD FOR APPLIED TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

250 East 500 South
Salt Lake City, UT 84111

District 1
Bette O. Arial
590 North 260 West
St. George, UT 84770
Phone: (435) 673-5474

District 2
Lynn Haslem
H.C. 65, Box 74A
Altonah, UT 84002
Phone: (435) 454-3005

District 3
Marilyn Shields
458 Country Club
Stansbury Park, UT 84074
Phone: (435) 882-7137

District 4
Cheryl Ferrin
3361 North River Drive
Eden, UT 84310
Phone: (801) 745-0442

District 5
Vacant

District 6
Joyce W. Richards
5273 South Winchester Lane
Ogden, UT 84403
Phone: (801) 479-5370

District 7
Kim R. Burningham
932 Canyon Crest Drive
Bountiful, UT 84010
Phone: (801) 292-9261

District 8
Jill Kennedy
1385 Yale Avenue
Salt Lake City, UT 84105
Phone: (801) 583-2425

District 9
Judy Larson
5058 West Corilyn Circle
West Valley City, UT 84120
Phone: (801) 969-2382

District 10
Denis R. Morrill
6024 South 2200 West
Salt Lake City, UT 84118
Phone: (801) 969-2334

District 11
C. Grant Hurst
1893 Terrace Drive
Sandy, UT 84093
Phone: (801) 942-4832

District 12
Boyd F. Jensen
5380 Hillside Drive
Murray, UT 84107
Phone: (801) 262-0270

District 13
Janet A. Cannon
5256 Holladay Blvd.
Salt Lake City, UT 84117
Phone: (801) 272-3516

District 14
Susan C. Henshaw
44 West 1640 North
Orem, UT 84057
Phone: (801) 224-4311

District 15
Linnea S. Barney
1965 South Main Street
Orem, UT 84058
Phone: (801) 225-4149

Steven O. Laing
Executive Officer

Twila B. Affleck
Secretary

1/14/2000

Table of Contents

Page

UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION iii

LIST OF GRAPHS, TABLES, AND CHARTS v

FORWARD vi

PREFACE viii

I. A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE STATUS OF SCHOOL COUNSELING IN UTAH'S MIDDLE/JUNIOR HIGH AND HIGH SCHOOLS FROM 1990-1999 1
- A. Counselor-Pupil Ratios 1
- B. Status of Counselor Training 3
- C. Demographics of the Current Counselor Cohort 6

II. AN ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF COMPREHENSIVE GUIDANCE PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION 8
- A. Impacts on Program Characteristics 8
  - 1. Student perception of services provided 8
  - 2. Teacher perception of services provided 9
  - 3. Counselor perception of the program 10
  - 4. Student/parent participation in SEOP activities 11
  - 5. Impact of counselor-pupil ratios on program delivery 11
- B. Program Impacts on Students 13
  - 1. Student knowledge of options and participation in opportunities 14
    - a. ATC/ATCSR enrollment for the period 1991-1999 14
    - b. Concurrent enrollment 16
    - c. Centennial scholarships 16
    - d. Electronic high school 17
    - f. Advanced placement 18
    - g. Work-based learning experiences 18
  - 2. Impacts on student course-taking patterns and achievement in high implementation schools 18

III. AN ANALYSIS OF COMPREHENSIVE GUIDANCE FUNDING 20
- A. How Funds Are Used by School Districts 20
- B. Personnel Costs Associated with Comprehensive Guidance Funding 21

IV. AN ANALYSIS OF THE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE GUIDANCE PROGRAM 24
- A. The Statute and Program Standards 24
- B. Schools Meeting Program Standards 26
- C. State Administration of the Program 27

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION 31

VI. BIBLIOGRAPHY 34

List of Graphs, Tables, and Charts

Graphs

		Page
Graph I	Counselor-Pupil Ratio, Selected Years 1990-1999	2
Graph II	Student Perception of Services	9
Graph III	Teacher Perception of Services	10
Graph IV	Percentage of Schools Responding That the Statement Is Extremely Accurate in Describing Their Programs	13
Graph V	Comparison of Student Enrollment Growth and ATC Membership Hours Growth for the Period of 1991-1998	15
Graph VI	ATC/ATCSR Membership Hours	15
Graph VII	Concurrent Enrollment Credit Hours Granted to High School Students	16
Graph VIII	Funds Awarded to Students Through Participation in Centennial Scholarships	17
Graph IX	Credit Earned Through Electronic High School	17
Graph X	Schools Meeting Comprehensive Guidance Program Standards	27

Tables

Table 1	Counselor-Pupil Ratios by Number of Districts	3
Table 2	University Program Status and Number of Students Certified	6
Table 3	Counselor Ethnicity	7
Table 4	Counselor Age	7

Charts

Chart 1	Comprehensive Guidance Use of Funds -- Statewide	22
Chart 2	Comprehensive Guidance Use of Funds -- Rural	23
Chart 3	Comprehensive Guidance Use of Funds -- Wasatch Front	23
Chart 4	Utah State Office of Education Organizational Chart	29

FOREWORD

The Utah Comprehensive Guidance Program initiative stands as one of the major school restructuring efforts in the state during the past decade. As early as 1988, the State Office of Education and local district leadership began planning and piloting a new guidance program model and program implementation strategies. Eleven junior high and high schools participated in the pilot. Over the next eleven years, an estimated two thousand counselors, administrators, and teachers received inservice training in the Utah Comprehensive Guidance model. At the close of the decade, every middle school, junior high school, and high school had participated in this program initiative, and all but five schools (mostly those in very remote rural areas of the state) had successfully implemented the program as defined by program standards established by the State Board of Education.

In 1993, the Governor and the Utah State Legislature became partners in this reform effort. Both recommended a funding allocation in their budget priorities that year. Much of the motivation for improvement in the delivery of a school guidance program was stimulated by a strong commitment of the State Board of Education, the Legislature, and the Utah Parent-Teacher Organization to individual student planning and parental participation in each student's education. The Student Education Occupation Plan (SEOP) came to embody this commitment, and school counselors were viewed as a key to an effective SEOP process.

The data in this report confirm that program goals have been met and establish a clear relationship between the counselor-pupil ratio and higher levels of Comprehensive Guidance Program implementation. A study conducted in 1998 and reported in this document further

suggests a significant and positive relationship between a high level of implementation and a variety of desirable student outcomes.

While substantial progress has been made in implementing a Comprehensive Guidance Program in Utah schools, much remains to be done. All schools need to strive to become high implementation schools with strong SEOP processes. More effective career orientation and exploration activities are needed to better acquaint all students with career and education options and opportunities. Finally, the training of school counselors needs to be continually improved so they can deal with the increasingly complex problems encountered by students.

I commend all who have contributed to the successes of the Utah Comprehensive Guidance Program and look forward to a continuation of the support of school counselors, administrators, teachers, and legislators to achieve an increasingly higher level of program implementation.

Steven O. Laing, Ed.D.
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

PREFACE

During the 1980s, there was a growing sense of concern with the counseling and guidance program in Utah's public secondary schools. Counselor numbers were not keeping pace with a burgeoning student population. During this time, counselor-pupil ratios rose from 1:430 to 1:550. The counselor's role was frequently debated, widely varied, and dominated by a myriad of nonguidance activities. The counselor's job was not viewed as very attractive, counselor training institutions were producing very few counselors, and the shortage of trained counselors was so severe that certification requirements were substantially reduced for entry-level counselors.

Counselors in the state were frequently criticized for providing one-dimensional, university-bound guidance to students; vocational educators had become particularly dissatisfied with the lack of guidance for students seeking to pursue vocational and technical training, work-based learning options, and direct entry into the work force. Program administrators in the State Office of Education believed dramatic measures were needed to restructure guidance in the state. With the enthusiastic support of local district administrators, a long-term goal was established to restructure guidance in the junior high and high schools of the state as an education program rather than a set of unstructured activities and ancillary services offered by school counselors.

The Utah Comprehensive Guidance Program model was patterned after a model developed by Dr. Norm Gysbers at the University of Missouri. The Utah model contains four program delivery components: (1) a guidance curriculum, (2) individual planning, (3) responsive services, and (4) system support.

The following basic assumptions served to guide the development and implementation of the new model:

- The guidance program must be delivered to all students in the school. Guidance programs and instructional programs are equal partners in the educational process.

- Eighty percent of a counselor's time will be spent on delivering the direct services of the program to students. Not more than 20 percent of a counselor's time will be allocated to managing the program.

- No counselor time should be spent on nonguidance activities.

- The program should be developmental and comprehensive. Program priorities should be based on needs assessment and a community advisory council.

- The guidance program must be flexible and responsive to changing needs. The program will be evaluated at least annually to determine areas of success and program deficiencies.

The Comprehensive Guidance model was piloted during the 1989-90 school year in 11 schools following the inservice training of counselors, administrators, and selected teachers from the pilot schools. Over the course of the next ten years, every school in the state with any students in Grades 7-12 moved to adopt and implement the Comprehensive Guidance Program model. In 1993, the Legislature began a process of allocating funds for the program by appropriating $1.5 million. For FY2000, $7.03 million has been allocated statewide for the program. As of December 1999, 235 of the 240 target schools in the state now qualify through on-site evaluation to receive the program funds appropriated by the Legislature.

During the past six years, the Utah State Office of Education has contracted with an independent agency for several statewide evaluations of the Comprehensive Guidance Program.

A highly significant study was conducted in 1998 and was augmented in 1999 with a careful analysis of the impacts of counselor-pupil ratios on counselors' ability to develop more fully implemented programs.

During the 1999 legislative session, a comprehensive evaluation of the program was requested. This document fulfills that request. This report is comprehensive in that it reports on the current status of counselors and the counselor education programs, reports on the manner in which districts are expending the appropriated funds, summarizes the program impacts on students including comparisons of course-taking and test performance between high implementation and low implementation schools, provides longitudinal data related to changes in student participation in education options, and finally, examines the impacts of counselor-pupil ratios on program implementation.

The report was prepared by Student Services staff of the Utah State Office of Education and is respectfully submitted to the Office of the Governor and the Legislature in compliance with legislative requirements.

1989-1999
A DECADE OF PROGRESS AND CHANGE IN THE DELIVERY OF COMPREHENSIVE GUIDANCE PROGRAMS GRADES 7-12

SECTION I: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE STATUS OF SCHOOL COUNSELING IN UTAH'S MIDDLE/JUNIOR HIGH AND HIGH SCHOOLS FROM 1990-1999

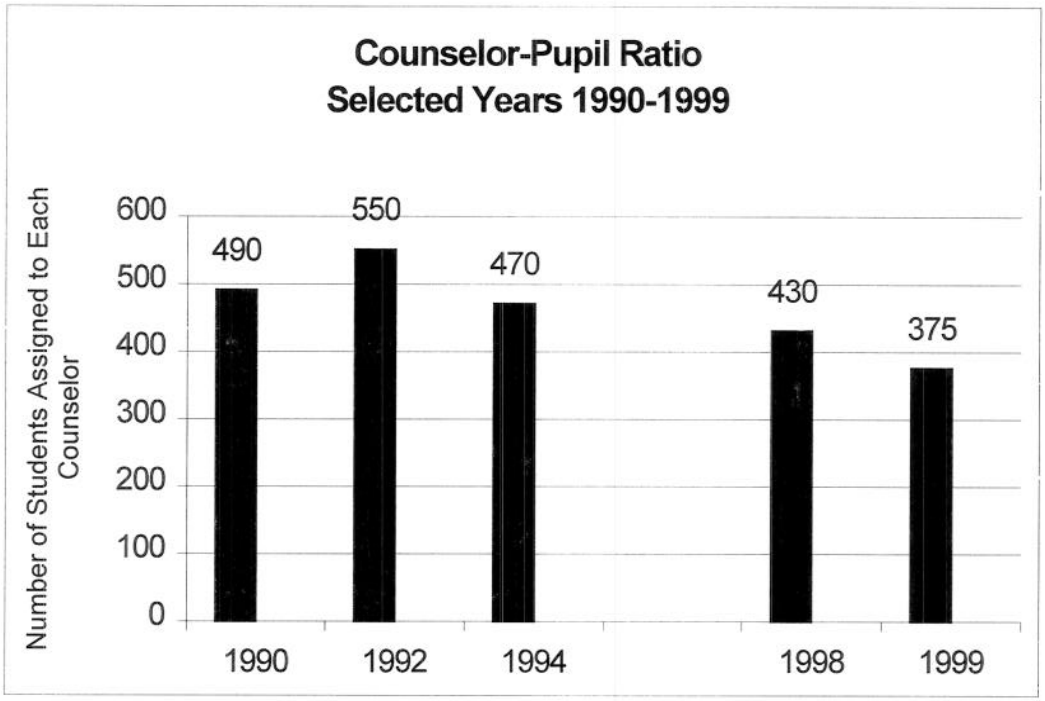
This section of the report reviews data related to changes in counselor-pupil ratios over the past decade. Current ratios in the 40 Utah districts are also presented by grouping districts in 50-pupil increments. The current status of counselor training in the state is depicted both in terms of the training requirements and in the numbers of individuals being certified or licensed as school counselors. Finally, some of the demographics of the current cohort of school counselors are presented. The age, sex, and ethnicity of this cohort has implications for anticipating replacement and recruitment needs.

Counselor-Pupil Ratios

At the beginning of the decade the counselor-pupil ratio was nearly 1:500, and by 1992 it had risen to 1:550. Following funding of the Comprehensive Guidance Program in 1993, the counselor-pupil ratios have declined steadily. As of October 1999, the ratio of school counselors

to pupils for Grades 7-12 in Utah public schools on a statewide average is 1:375. The progress to pupils that has been made in reducing counselor-pupil ratios during the past decade is displayed in Graph I.

Graph I: Counselor-Pupil Ratio, Selected Years 1990-1999



In a 1994 Education Interim Committee meeting, a goal was set to reduce counselor-pupil ratios in Grades 7-12 to not more than 1:400 by the year 2000. While the present ratio of 1:375 achieves that goal, a statewide average only reflects part of the total picture. Table 1 represents groupings of the 40 districts within the state in 50-pupil increments and indicates that there are 13 districts with ratios greater than 1:400.

Table1: Counselor-Pupil Ratios by Number of Districts

Number of Students	Number of Districts
1-350	16
351-400	11
401-450	9
451-500	1
501+	3

Status of Counselor Training

Another goal set by the 1994 Education Interim Committee was to work toward increasing the capability of counselor education programs. Attainment of this goal is indicated in two areas: revised standards for counselor education programs and increases in the numbers of individuals meeting Utah's counselor certification requirements. Current requirements for school counselor preparation and data related to the number of counselors prepared by in-state and out-of-state institutions are included in this section.

The Utah State Office of Education certification for school counseling requires completion of a master's degree in a state-approved counselor education program. In November 1995, the standards for counselor education programs were revised to support the Comprehensive Guidance Program and now require courses in three general areas: foundational skills, program management skills, and community and professional relations skills. The current accreditation status of recommending universities in Utah is included in Table 2 (page 6).

The eight standards under foundational skills require demonstrated competence in traditional school counseling skills which include:

- Knowledge of history, philosophy, theories, and trends in school counseling.
- Understanding of the requirements for administering and interpreting assessments.
- Knowledge of social and cultural issues that may affect the functioning of children and adolescents.
- Ability to manage and resolve legal and ethical issues related to school counseling.
- Understanding special needs and developmental issues of students with disabilities.
- Knowledge and skill in preventative, developmental, and responsive counseling strategies.
- Knowledge and skill in using computer assisted information and guidance programs.
- Knowledge and skill in career guidance and decision making.

The standards under program management skills require demonstrated competence in areas directly related to the Comprehensive Guidance Program, including the following skills:

- Knowledge of design, implementation, and evaluation of a comprehensive, developmental school guidance program.
- Designing and implementing preventative and developmental strategies as well as responsive services.
- Planning and presenting guidance curricula that involve students, school personnel, and parents.
- Knowledge of collaborative and system support activities of comprehensive guidance such as program management, placement and follow-up, public relations, and community outreach.

The two standards under community and professional relations require demonstrated competence in areas that strengthen the impact and effectiveness of a Comprehensive Guidance Program and include the following:

- Collaboration, consultation, and coordination of efforts with counseling staff, resource persons, specialists, businesses, and community agencies to promote program objectives.
- Knowledge of community, public, private, medical, and educational referral agencies and other services as well as demonstrated competence in making appropriate referrals.

School counselor staffing patterns indicated a serious shortage of trained school counselors in the early part of the decade (1990-1994). In order to fill these positions, entry-level requirements were reduced. Following the funding of the Comprehensive Guidance Program and the subsequent school counseling and guidance reforms, the numbers of individuals interested in professional school counseling increased. Standards for counselor preparation were raised and aligned with the Comprehensive Guidance Program. Presently, there are adequate numbers of trained counselors to staff the secondary Comprehensive Guidance Program. Since 1994, 552 individuals have been licensed (certified) to work in schools as counselors. Table 2 displays the numbers of individuals recommended for licensing from university graduate programs.

Table 2: University Program Status and Number of Students Certified

INSTITUTION	NUMBER CERTIFIED	PROGRAM STATUS
Brigham Young University	37	Full Approval
University of Phoenix	186	Provisional Approval
University of Utah	36	Full Approval
Utah State University	117	Full Approval
Out-of-State or Other	176	

Demographics of the Current Counselor Cohort

An analysis of the current cohort of school counselors indicates that there are 658 certified counselors working in Utah's schools. Four hundred and one are female and 256 are male indicating an 8 to 5 ratio of females to males. The growing number of female to male counselors suggests a need to encourage more males to consider school counseling as a profession. Tables 3 and 4 present data on minority status and age range. Minority groups represent 3.8 percent of the current cohort, and 275 individuals are 50 years or older and are likely to retire in the next 12 years.

Table 3: Counselor Ethnicity

TOTALS BY ETHNICITY	
African American	2
American Indian	5
Asian	1
Caucasian	632
Hispanic	15
Pacific Islander	2

Table 4: Counselor Age

TOTALS BY AGE BRACKET	
20 - 29	43
30 - 39	110
40 - 49	230
50 – 54	164
55 - 59	79
60 +	32

The data in tables 2, 3, and 4 suggest three important considerations for counselor preparation in the next ten years. First, all education programs need to maintain full program accreditation in order to provide training that will best serve Utah's students. Second, training institutions and the Utah State Office of Education need to focus on recruiting and training qualified minority counselors to reflect the changing diversity in Utah's student population. Third, in light of the fact that over 40 percent of the current work force will be retiring within the next 12 years, and a growing demand exists for counselors at the elementary level, a closer look is needed at the availability of individuals prepared to assume these positions. The number of students completing counselor education programs includes many classroom educators who seek advanced degrees for additional salary benefits but do not assume school counseling positions.

SECTION II: AN ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF COMPREHENSIVE GUIDANCE PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

This section of the report examines the impact of the Comprehensive Guidance Program. The first part of this section reviews data that have been collected on the impact of the program on counselor services provided and on SEOP participation, and the impact of counselor-pupil ratios on program delivery. The second part of this section reviews data focused on program implementation and student outcomes.

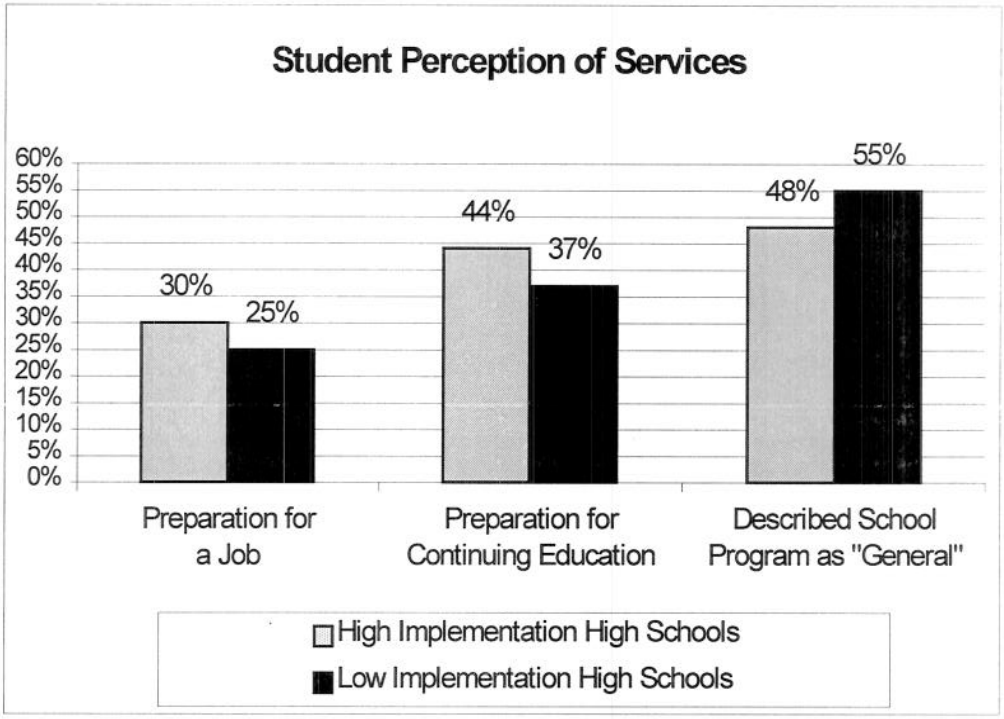
Impacts on Program Characteristics

This section reviews student, teacher, and counselor perceptions of the services provided by the Comprehensive Guidance Program. Student and parent participation in SEOP activities as reported by teachers, principals, and counselors is summarized. Data on the impact of counselor-pupil ratios on program delivery, collected fall of 1999, is reported.

Student perception of services provided. The 1998 study *An Evaluation of the Comprehensive Guidance Program in Utah Public Schools* by the Institute for Behavioral Research in Creativity (IBRIC) compared student data from Utah's 1997 survey, *Intentions and Accomplishments of High School Seniors*, relative to high implementation and low implementation schools. Graph II indicates that students in high implementation schools are more positive than their peers in the low implementation sample in evaluating how well their school prepared them for a job and for continuing their education. A major problem in the state of Utah over a very long period of time has been the percentage of high school students who

characterize their high school program as "general." This study revealed that substantially fewer students in the high implementation sample described their high school program as "general."

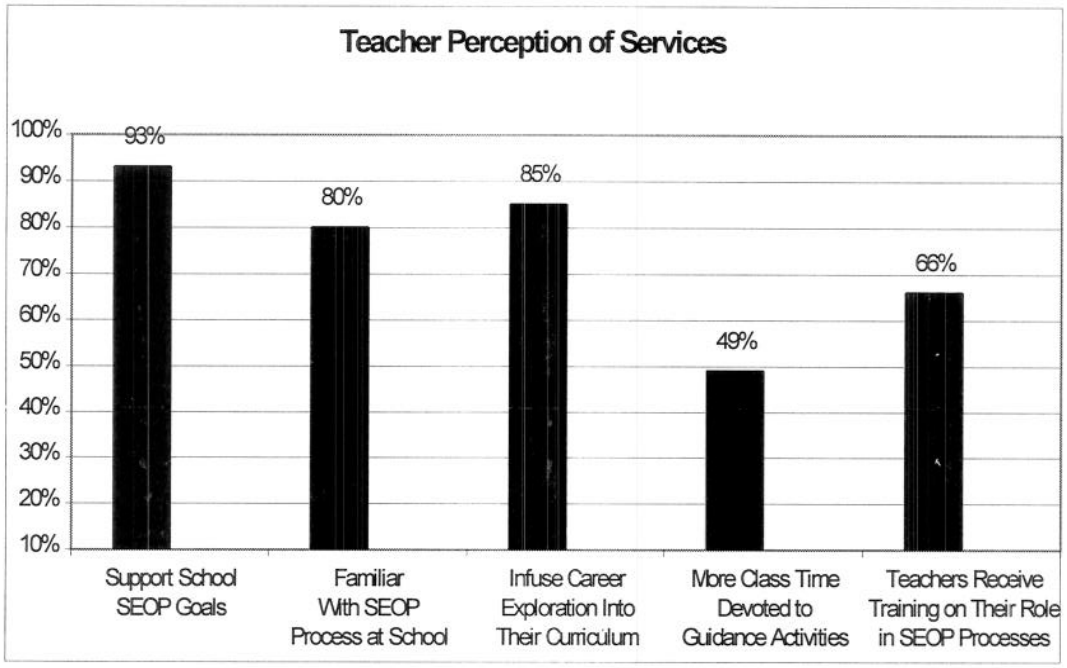
Graph II: Student Perception of Services



Teacher perception of services provided. Teacher responses to the 1997 Comprehensive Guidance Program study are shown in Graph III. The majority of teachers reported receiving an orientation to and participating in Comprehensive Guidance and SEOP activities. Ninety-three percent of teachers reported that they supported their school's SEOP goals and 80 percent were familiar with their school's SEOP process. Eighty-five percent of teachers infuse career exploration content into their regular curriculum and 49 percent devoted more class time to guidance activities as a result of the Comprehensive Guidance Program. Teacher preparation to participate in the Comprehensive Guidance Program was an

area of concern. Only 66 percent of the teachers indicated they had received training in their role in SEOP processes.

Graph III: Teacher Perception of Services



Counselor perception of the program. Counselor response to the 1997 program evaluation survey indicated that counselors believe that their school has implemented a Student Education Occupation Planning (SEOP) process consistent with district policy and state law, that parent involvement in the SEOP process has increased student attendance at SEOP conferences, and that students have become more interested in planning their education and career development. Virtually 100 percent of the counselors indicated that they have received training that has enabled them to perform more effectively in their schools, that they have been trained to conduct SEOP conferences, and that they view improved student planning as one of the most significant successes of their Comprehensive Guidance Programs. Counselors also reported an

increase in the amount of time available to work directly with students. Career exploration resources, especially career centers, have become more available and more accessible. Improved program coordination with feeder schools and increased district support of guidance activities were reported by counselors as positive improvements resulting from the Comprehensive Guidance Program.

Student/parent participation in SEOP activities. Comprehensive Guidance has had a dramatic impact on student planning. Teachers, principals, and counselors consistently named student planning as one of most significant successes of their Comprehensive Guidance Program. Survey data also indicates that the component of individual planning is among the most widely implemented aspect of guidance and counseling in the state. Counselors were asked to identify the percentage of students in Grades 7-11 that attended an individual SEOP conference in 1995-96 and 1996-97. The percentage of schools reporting high levels of SEOP attendance (over 90 percent of all students) rose from 5 to 11 percent for all grade levels. Survey data indicated that seniors already had high levels of attendance at SEOPs because of the nature of the senior exit process.

Impact of counselor-pupil ratios on program delivery. The IBRIC 1999 study included research on the "level of program implementation and pupil-counselor ratios within the Comprehensive Guidance Program in Utah public schools." The purpose of the study was to assess how counselor-pupil ratios effect the level of Comprehensive Guidance Program implementation. Schools with a counselor-pupil ratio of 1:400 or lower were classified as *low ratio;* those schools having a ratio of 1:500 or higher were classified as *high ratio*. Of the 193 schools in the study, 92 (48%) were identified as *low ratio* and 50 (26%) as *high ratio*. Fifty-one

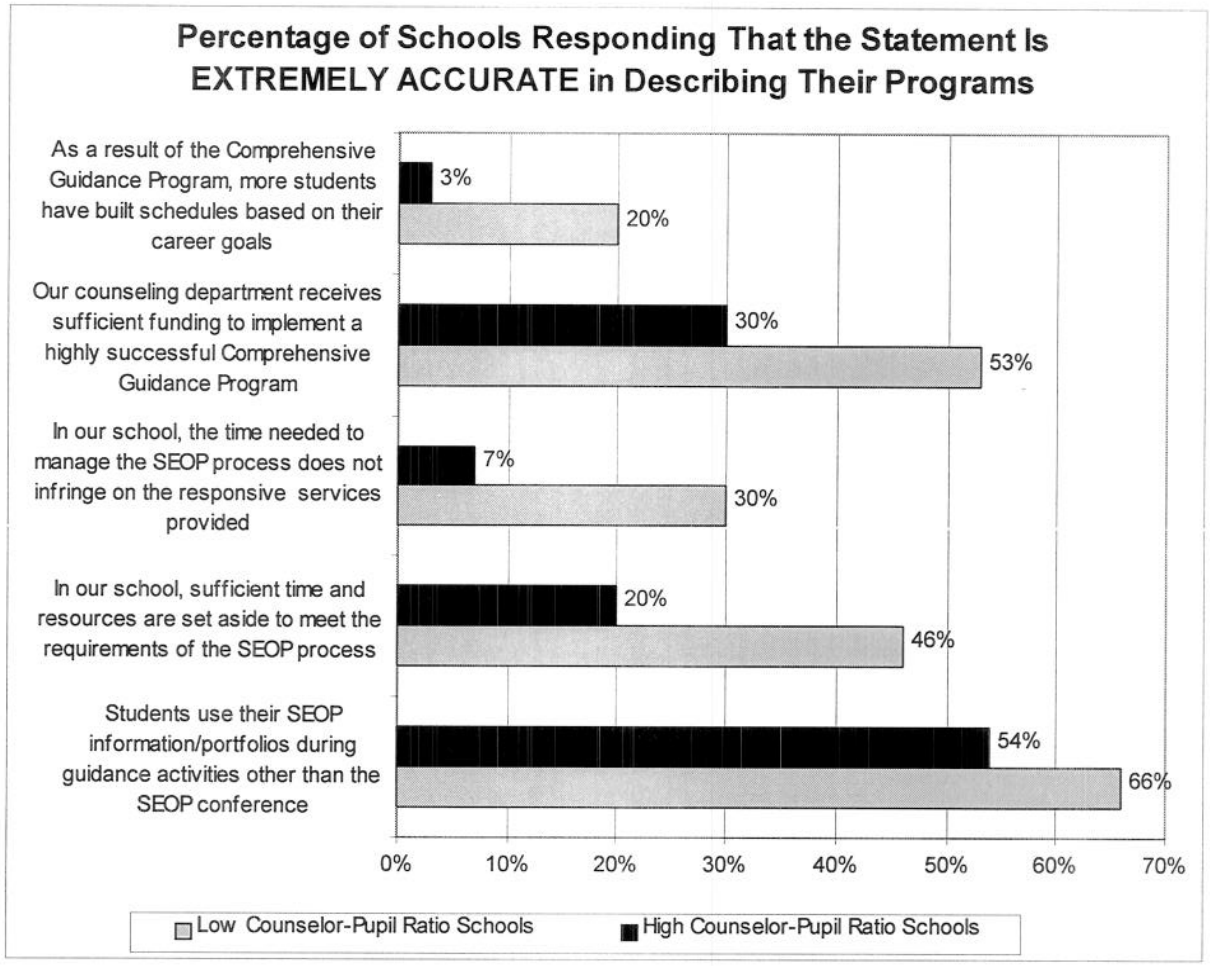
schools (26%) were classified as *middle-range* and not considered in the comparison. The results from this study indicate strongly that counselor-pupil ratios influence counselors' ability to implement Comprehensive Guidance at high levels and, thus, to improve student performance. The most important specific conclusions from the study are as follows:

- There is a statistically significant relationship between the counselor-pupil ratio and the level of Comprehensive Guidance implementation in Utah secondary schools.
- Secondary schools that were the ***highest*** implementers of Comprehensive Guidance had counselor-pupil ratios ***below 1:400***.
- Secondary schools that were the ***lowest*** implementers of Comprehensive Guidance had counselor-pupil ratios ***over 1:500***.
- Secondary schools with lower counselor-pupil ratios report that they can do a much more effective job of making Student Education Occupation Plans (SEOPs) a meaningful experience for students.
- Secondary schools with lower counselor-pupil ratios report that they can do a better job of providing individual assistance (responsive services) to students.

Graph IV illustrates the differences between low ratio and high ratio schools in response to questions about Comprehensive Guidance Programs and the SEOP process.

When counselors were asked to identify statements that were "extremely accurate" in describing the Comprehensive Guidance Program at their school, a significantly higher percentage of counselors in low ratio schools indicated the statements were descriptive of the program in their school. The descriptive statements in Graph IV reflect on the adequacy of program funding, time and resources available to meet the requirements of the SEOP process, and student use of the SEOP process and products for career and education planning.

Graph IV: Percentage of Schools Responding That the Statement Is EXTREMELY ACCURATE in Describing Their Programs



Program Impacts on Students

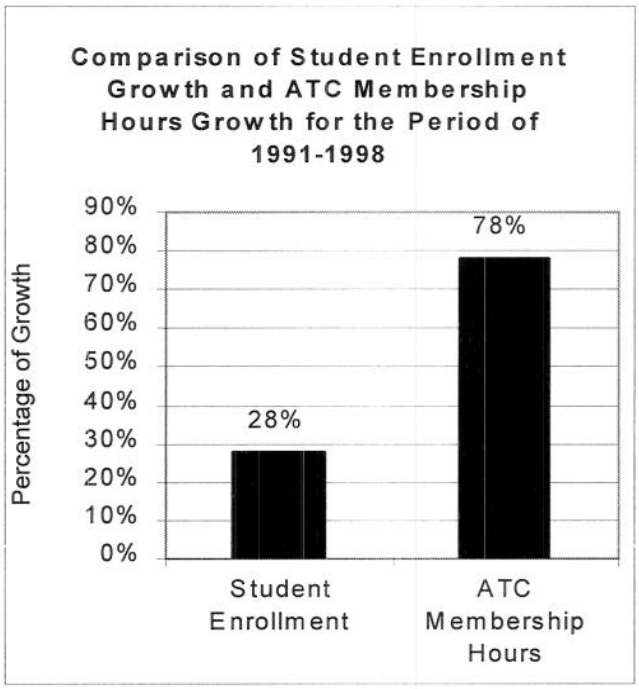
Two types of data on impacts of the Comprehensive Guidance Program on students are reported in this section. In the first part of this section, longitudinal data covering different time periods within the past decade (as was available) are reported. Data are also reported on student participation in concurrent enrollment, Centennial Scholarships, Electronic High School, ATC/ATCSR enrollment, Advanced Placement (AP) course enrollment and examinations, and work-based learning experiences.

A second type of data is reported from the 1998 IBRIC study *Contrasts Between Students in High Implementation and Low Implementation High Schools in the Utah Comprehensive Guidance Program.* Independent data from the annual survey *Intentions and Accomplishments of Utah High School Seniors* and the statewide ACT database were used to examine the impact of levels of implementation of the Utah Comprehensive Guidance Program on student outcomes.

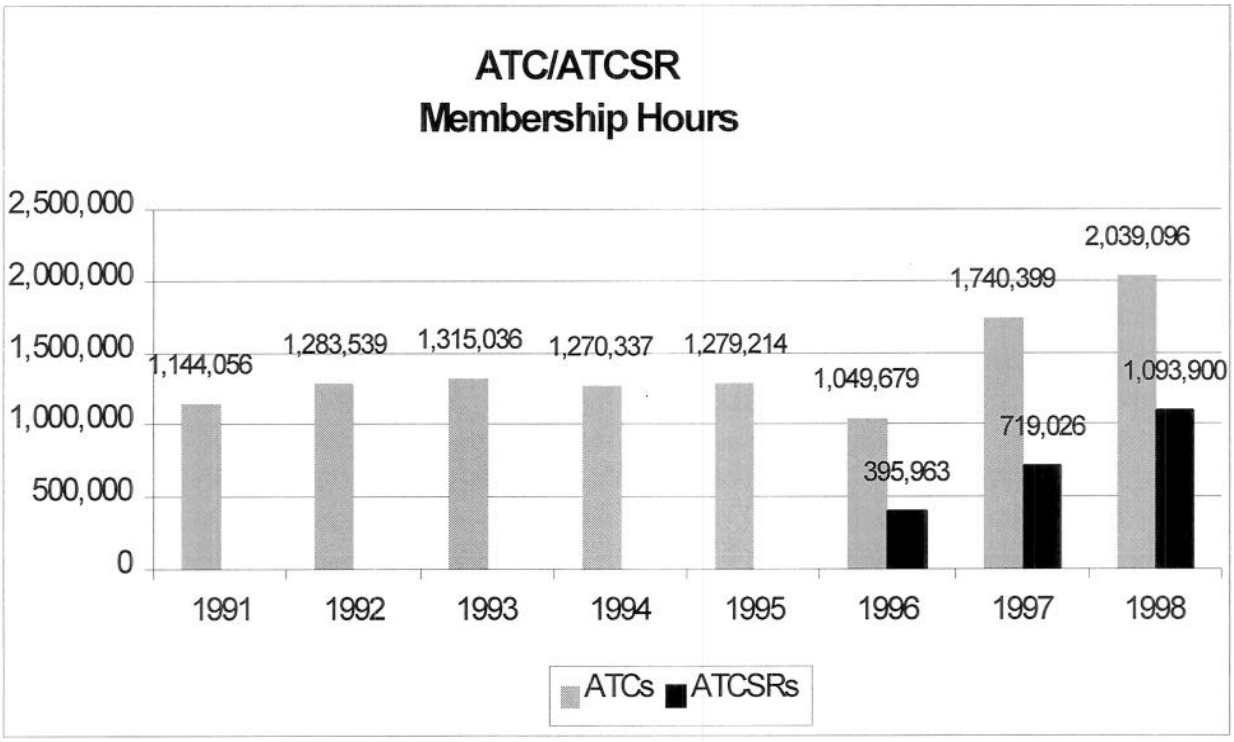
Student knowledge of options and participation in opportunities. It is difficult to establish a direct cause and effect relationship between secondary students' SEOPs and the growth of student participation in a variety of education opportunities. However, the following data related to greater student awareness of options and participation in a number of programs over the past decade suggest a strong link between the individual planning process and trends of high involvement in supplementary educational programs.

ATC/ATCSR enrollment for the period 1991-1999. In 1991, high school membership hours in the five ATCs in Utah were 1,144,056. By the end of the 1998-99 school year, high school membership hours had increased to 2,039,096, or an increase of 78 percent. In that same period of time, the enrollment in Grades 11 and 12 increased by 16,072 students or almost 28 percent. In 1996 the scope of the ATCs expanded, and service regions were developed. There are currently four service regions in Utah. High school membership hours in these service regions have grown from 395,963 in 1996 to 1,093,900 in the 1998-99 school year.

Graph V: Comparison of Student Enrollment Growth and ATC Membership Hours Growth for the Period of 1991-1998

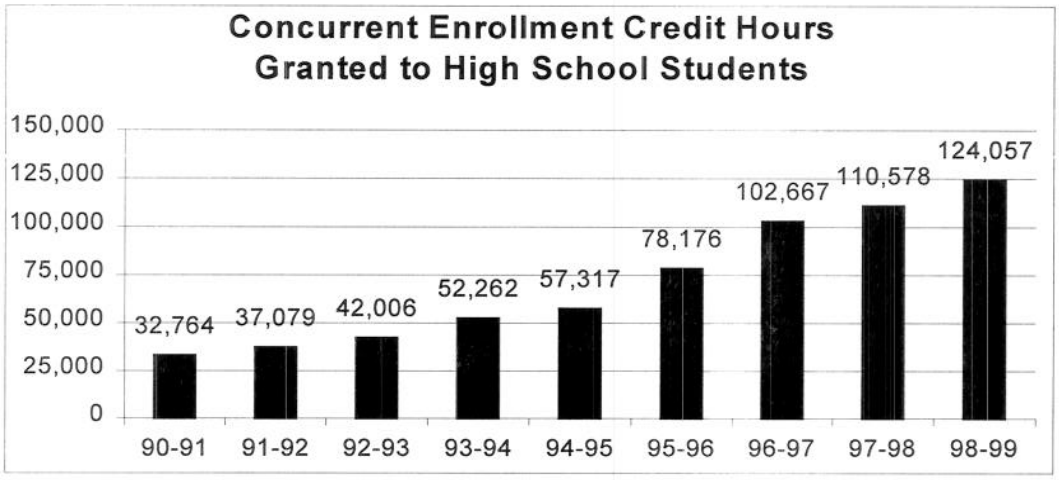


Graph VI: ATC/ATCSR Membership Hours



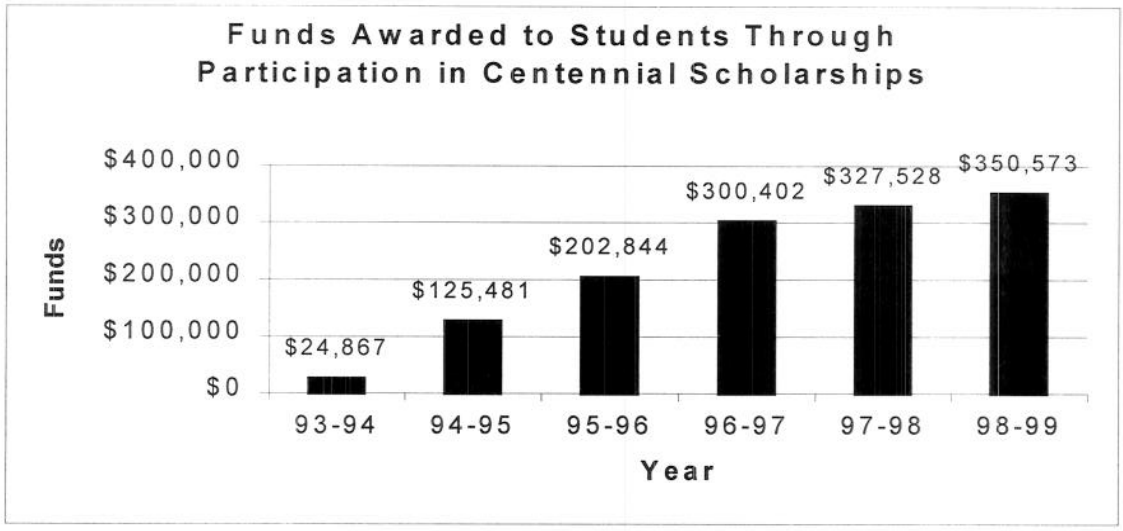
Concurrent enrollment. From 1990-91 to 1998-99, student participation in concurrent enrollment courses increased from 4,582 students who earned 32,764 semester hours of credit to 19,744 students who earned 124,057 semester hours of credit. Graph VII illustrates the yearly increase in college credit granted to high school students from 1990-1999.

Graph VII: Concurrent Enrollment Credit Hours Granted to High School Students



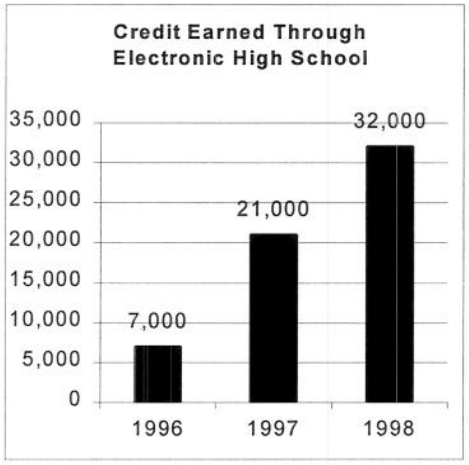
Centennial scholarships. From 1993-94 to 1998-99, student participation in the Centennial Scholarships for Early Graduation increased from 133 recipients who received $24,867 in scholarship funds to 598 recipients who received $350,573 in scholarship funds. Graph VIII illustrates the growth in student participation as indicated by funds allotted to the program.

Graph VIII: Funds Awarded to Students Through Participation in Centennial Scholarships



Electronic high school. The Electronic High School began offering courses for high school credit in the 1995-96 school year. That year, 7,000 credits were earned by Utah high school students. The number of credits earned has since increased to over 32,000. The number of students utilizing this method of earning high school credit has increased by 357 percent. Graph IX depicts the increases in credit earned from 1996 to 1998.

Graph IX: Credit Earned Through Electronic High School



Advanced placement. Since 1991 the number of students enrolled in Advanced Placement (AP) courses has increased by 54 percent (7,596 to 11,670 students). The number of students taking AP examinations has risen by almost 60 percent (11,586 to 18,449 students). It is interesting to note that during this same time period, student enrollment in the state grew by 28 percent.

Work-based learning experiences. Utah's School-to-Careers initiative has placed considerable emphasis on work-based learning experiences for students at all levels. In 1998-99, ten schools and the feeder junior high and elementary schools participated in a pilot program using a work-based learning coordinator to match business/industry resources and student interests and needs for work-based learning experiences. In 1999-2000, legislative funding provided for an expansion of coordinators to an additional 39 schools. While longitudinal data on work-based learning are not available, work-based learning represents another important learning option for students, particularly at the high school level. In order to establish a baseline, first quarter data for 1999-2000 are included in this report. For the first half of the school year, coordinators reported 5,529 senior high students involved in Service-Learning experiences, 1,534 in internships, 882 involved in a co-op experience, and 22 student apprenticeships.

Impacts on student course-taking patterns and achievement in high implementation schools. In the previous section, the increase in participation in supplementary educational activities and its relationship to the SEOP was discussed. The results of the 1998 IBRIC study, Part II, indicate that the level of implementation of a school's Comprehensive Guidance Program directly relates to the types and patterns of student course work and scores on standardized

achievement tests. These are important factors in understanding the role that effective guidance programs can play in linking current educational planning to the relevance of future goals.

Generally speaking, strong guidance programs are effective in helping students target areas of educational/career emphasis. Survey results indicate that a significantly greater number of students in schools with highly implemented programs move away from describing their course work in high school as "general." Students demonstrate an awareness of the relationship between the courses they take and their identified goals for the future by describing a specific course of study. In schools with highly implemented programs there are also documented increases in enrollment for courses that are related to specific educational goals or careers, e.g., advanced math and science courses and vocational/technical courses.

Increased student performance on the American College Test (ACT), a standardized achievement test, is related to enrollment in schools with highly implemented guidance programs. Scores were significantly higher on all four skill areas of the ACT (mathematics, English, reading, and science) than student scores from low implementing schools and the scores for the total state of Utah. These results suggest student learning increases when courses are organized around a relevant area of interest.

SECTION III: AN ANALYSIS OF COMPREHENSIVE GUIDANCE FUNDING

Over seven million dollars are currently allocated for the Comprehensive Guidance Program by the legislature and are distributed to school districts based on State Board of Education standards and school qualification for the funds. Program standards must be achieved in order to qualify for the Comprehensive Guidance funding; each school's program is reevaluated every three years. The combination of incentive and accountability in the funding approach is somewhat unique in an education program in Utah. Since a viable education program requires both personnel and resources (curriculum materials, information sources, and equipment), it is important to examine how the Comprehensive Guidance Program funds are being used, as well as the need to adjust the funding relative to growth and inflation factors.

How Funds Are Used by School Districts

As of December 20, 1999, all 40 Utah School Districts have schools that meet the Comprehensive Guidance Standards for program approval and therefore qualify to receive Comprehensive Guidance funding. During December 1999, the Utah State Office of Education asked the 40 school districts statewide to provide information regarding the use of Comprehensive Guidance funds during the 1998-99 school year. Thirty-seven of the 40 school districts provided information for this report. Self-reported information indicates that 73.70 percent of funds statewide are used for personnel costs which include hiring certified school counselors, para-professionals, and district student services personnel as well as paying for extended days or hours for school counselors to implement the Comprehensive Guidance

Program. In the rural districts, 84.82 percent of Comprehensive Guidance funds are used for personnel costs as compared to 69.53 percent of funds used for personnel costs in the Wasatch Front districts. For the rural districts, Comprehensive Guidance funds have been particularly crucial in their ability to provide guidance services to all students.

Categories for use of funds as outlined by *R277-462-4 USE OF FUNDS* include: hiring personnel; purchasing equipment and materials to support career centers and the Comprehensive Guidance Program; and providing inservice training for counselors and other members of the school guidance team. An effective Comprehensive Guidance Program requires the support of equipment and materials for delivering guidance curricula in the classroom and supporting student exploration in the career center. The three days of annual inservice training provided by the Utah State Office of Education for counselors, administrators, and other members of a school guidance team have been a key factor in the continuing improvement in the Comprehensive Guidance Program across the state. Funds used under the category of "other" include counselor travel, printing, and contract services. Charts 1, 2, and 3 show the division of all funds used for the Comprehensive Guidance Program statewide, in rural districts, and in Wasatch Front districts.

Personnel Costs Associated With Comprehensive Guidance Funding

The Utah Comprehensive Guidance Program is a personnel-intensive initiative. During the 1998-99 school year, the Utah State Legislature provided $6,900,784 as incentive funding for schools meeting the rigorous standards for Comprehensive Guidance Program approval. As indicated by the *USE OF FUNDS* report, 73.70 percent of funds are used statewide for personnel costs. The funds provided for the Comprehensive Guidance Program do not nearly cover the

personnel costs associated with an effective Comprehensive Guidance Program. For instance, the October 1998 counselor to student ratio in grades 7-12 was 1:429 as a statewide average. Local districts were reminded of the legislative goal of counselor to student ratios lower than 1:400 by the year 2000. For the 1999-2000 school year, local districts hired enough additional counselors without receiving additional funding to make the statewide ratio 1:375 in Grades 7-12 as of October 1999. Local districts have committed their resources to fully implement an effective Comprehensive Guidance Program. Because of the personnel-intensive nature of the program, indexing Comprehensive Guidance funds to the WPU will help ensure the low counselor to student ratios required for all schools to meet the indicators for high levels of implementation of the Comprehensive Guidance Program.

Chart 1: Comprehensive Guidance Use of Funds – Statewide

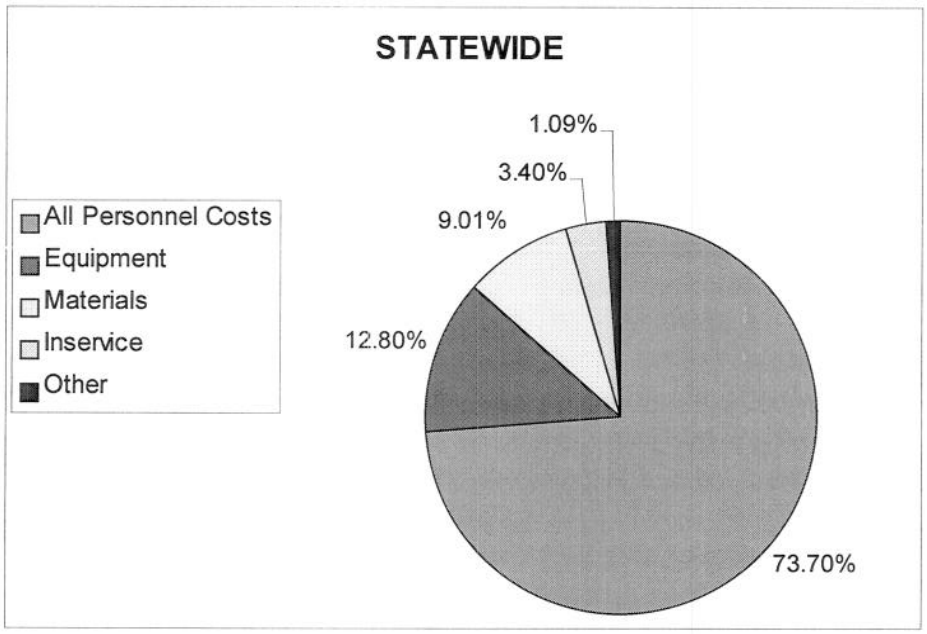


Chart 2: Comprehensive Guidance Use of Funds – Rural

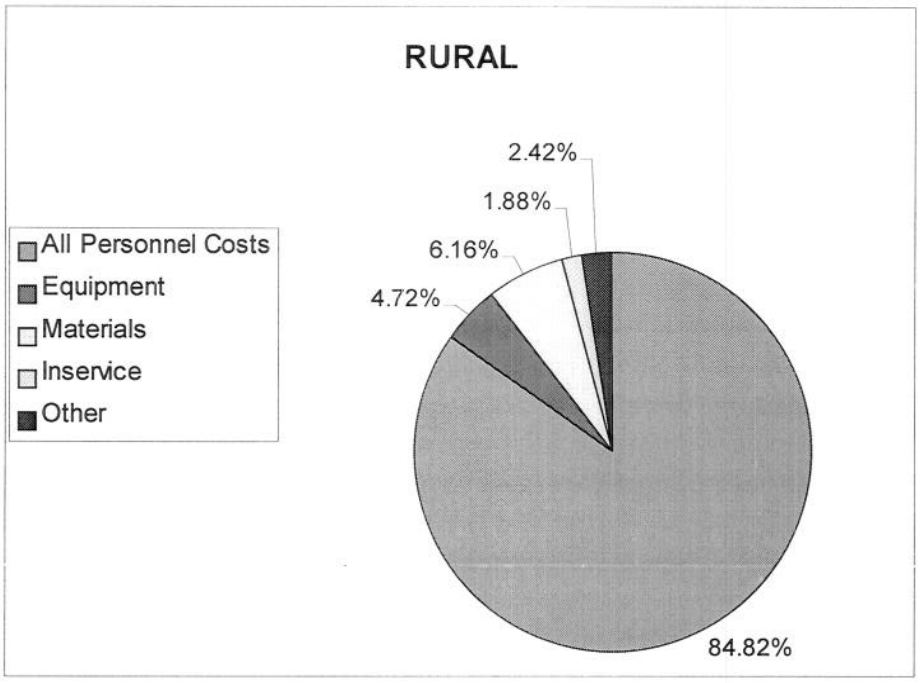
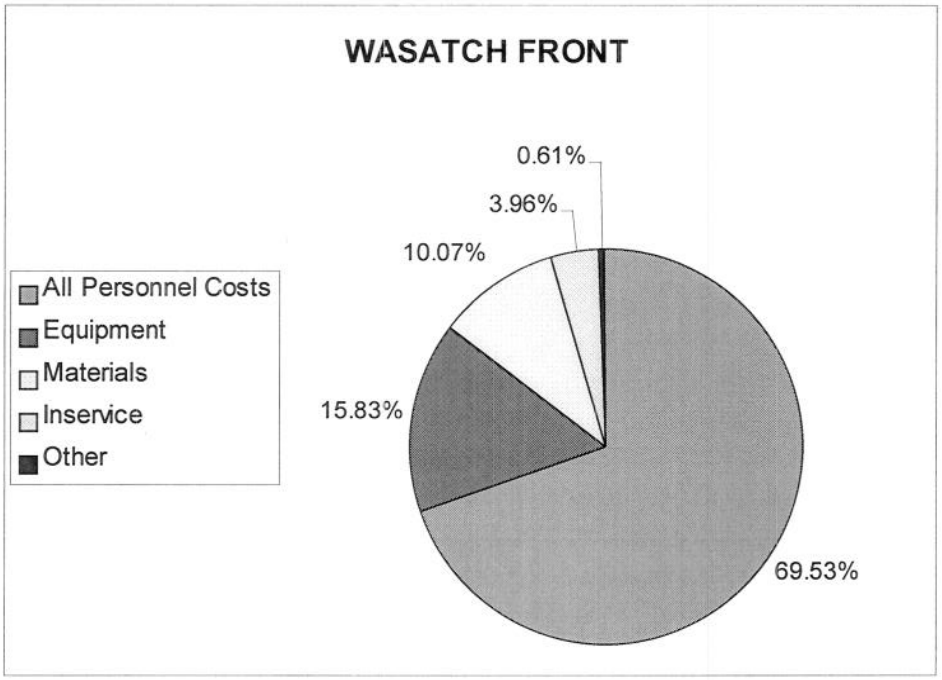


Chart 3: Comprehensive Guidance Use of Funds – Wasatch Front



SECTION IV: AN ANALYSIS OF THE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE GUIDANCE PROGRAM

This section serves to remind readers of the enabling legislation for the Comprehensive Guidance Program and the subsequent program standards established by the Utah State Board of Education. The history and status of schools meeting the program standards are presented. Finally, the procedures and structure for administering the program are outlined.

The Statute and Program Standards

The Comprehensive Guidance Program and the SEP/SEOP process are supported by Section 53A of the Utah Code. Section 53A-1a-106, attached, annotated (2)(b)(i)(ii)(iii), delineates the SEOP (Student Education Occupation Plan) process and goals. The student, parent or guardian, and counselor SEOP conferences are the driving force of the Comprehensive Guidance Program.

Section 53A-17a-131.8 defines the state contribution to the Comprehensive Guidance Program. Funding for the Comprehensive Guidance Program began with an appropriation of $1.5 million by the Utah State Legislature in 1993. In 1995, funding was increased to $3.0 million; in 1996, $4.3 million; in 1997, $4.9 million; and in 1998, $6.9 million. Funding for the 1999-2000 school year was increased to $7,033,759 to adjust for inflation and growth.

Comprehensive Guidance funds are distributed to districts based on the number of schools that meet legislative qualifications and have met the following "Standards for

Comprehensive Guidance Program Approval" as outlined in Utah Administrative Code R277-462-3 annotated (4)(a - j):

> (4) Comprehensive Guidance Program funds shall be distributed to districts for each school within the district that meets all of the following criteria:
>
> a) A school-wide student/parent/teacher needs assessment completed within the last three years prior to the application deadline for funding;
>
> (b) Documentation that a school advisory and a school steering committee have been organized and are functioning effectively;
>
> (c) Evidence that eighty percent of aggregate counselors' time is devoted to DIRECT services to students;
>
> (d) A program that reflects a commitment that all students in the school shall benefit from the Comprehensive Guidance Program;
>
> (e) Approval of the Program by the local board of education;
>
> (f) The establishment of the SEOP requirements for all students both as process and product consistent with R277-911, Secondary Applied Technology Education and R277-700, The Elementary and Secondary School Core Curriculum and High School Graduation Requirements;
>
> (g) Assistance for students in developing job seeking and finding skills and in post-high school placement;
>
> (h) Inclusion in the guidance curriculum of activities for each of the twelve National Occupational Information Coordination Committee (NOICC) competencies (available from the USOE guidance specialist);
>
> (i) Distribution to and discussion with feeder schools of the Comprehensive Guidance Program; and
>
> (j) Sufficient district budget to adequately provide for guidance facilities, material, equipment, and clerical support.

Schools Meeting Programs Standards

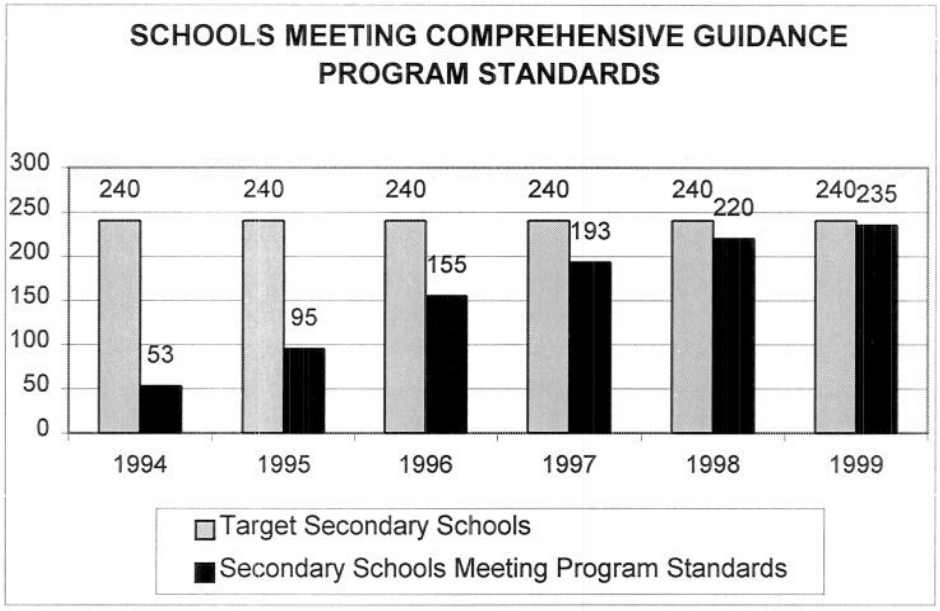
As of December 20, 1999, 235 of the target 240 secondary schools have qualified to receive Comprehensive Guidance funds. Of the five schools that have not yet qualified for program approval, all but one have guidance teams that have participated in Comprehensive Guidance Program training. It is anticipated that most of these schools will qualify for program approval during the 1999-2000 school year. During the 1998-99 school year, through a rigorous on-site review process, ten additional schools met the Standards for Comprehensive Guidance Program approval as outlined in Utah Administrative Code R277-462-3. Schools that have previously qualified for program approval and funding are also subject to the same rigorous on-site review process every three years. A total of 87 on-site reviews were conducted at secondary schools across the state during the 1998-99 school year. The regularity of the review process helps ensure that quality programs are being delivered to all Utah students.

In Utah, the history of Comprehensive Guidance Program implementation and schools meeting standards for program approval reflects steady success. In 1989, 11 schools piloted the Comprehensive Guidance Program model. In 1990, an additional 12 schools committed to implementing the Comprehensive Guidance Program. Twenty-three more schools joined in 1991, and another 50 schools began program implementation during each of the next three years.

Graph X indicates that by the end of the 1993-94 school year, 53 secondary schools had progressed sufficiently in the program implementation process to meet the Utah State Board of Education approved program standards and to qualify to receive their share of the $1.5 million appropriated by the Legislature. During 1995-96, the number of secondary schools meeting

program standards increased to 95, and total funds appropriated by the Legislature increased to $3.0 million. By 1995-96, 155 secondary schools met program standards, and total funds appropriated increased to $4.3 million. In 1996-97, 193 schools had met program standards with total funds available at $4.9 million. By May of 1998, 220 schools had met the Comprehensive Guidance Standards for Program Approval and qualified to receive their share of $6.9 million. Through December 20, 1999, 235 schools qualify to share 7.933 million dollars.

Graph X: Schools Meeting Comprehensive Guidance Program Standards



State Administration of the Program

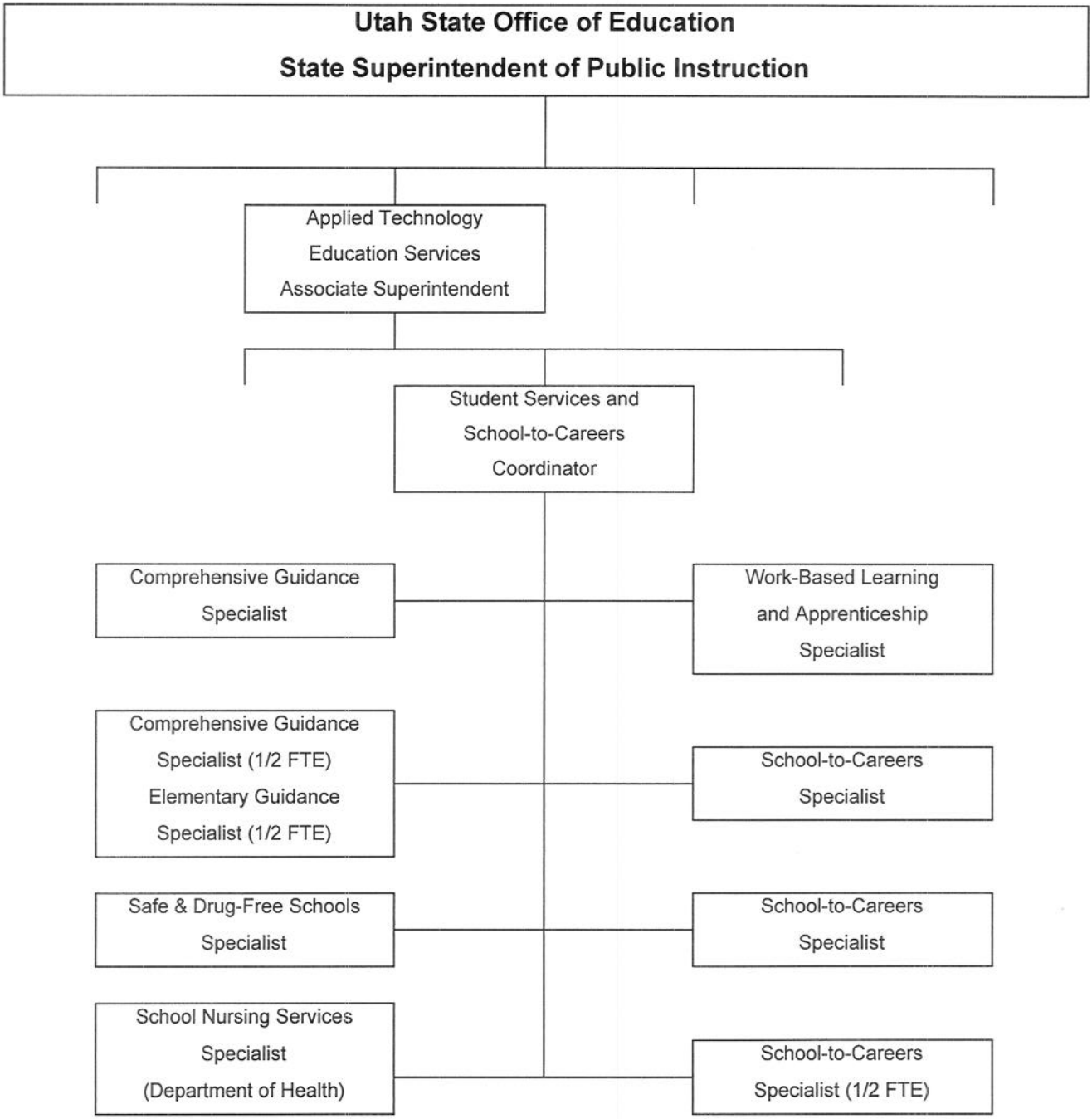
The Utah State Office of Education has assumed substantial responsibility for the implementation of the Comprehensive Guidance Program. Guidance specialists in the State Office have sponsored and managed the inservice training of counselors, administrators, and

teachers every year for the past ten years. It is estimated that over this time period 1,200 counselors received on average 50 hours each of Comprehensive Guidance training, and an additional 800 administrators and teachers averaged 20 hours of training. This equates to 76,000 total estimated hours of training.

In addition, the State Office has provided technical assistance to schools and districts and has given leadership and assistance to the self-study and peer review process utilized in the verification of schools meeting program standards. Finally, the state guidance specialists manage all of the program accountability processes and records associated with the program.

The Comprehensive Guidance Program is managed within the Student Services and School-to-Careers unit of the Applied Technology Education Services Section. This organizational structure places virtually all career development, student planning, and student career exploration programs in a single unit. Chart 4 represents the organizational structure for managing the Comprehensive Guidance Program in the Utah State Office of Education.

Chart 4: Utah State Office of Education Organizational Chart



While the administration for the Comprehensive Guidance Program is well positioned for coordination with ATE and School-to-Careers within the Utah State Office of Education, this is not always the case in the districts and regions of the state. As the federal funding for School-to-Careers winds down over the next one to two years, efforts need to be made to bring these programs together in the School-to-Work sustainability planning and actions within school districts and regions of the state.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This report documents the progress and effects of one of Utah's major school restructuring efforts during the past decade. Designed to replace a pattern of school counselors caught up in a myriad of non-guidance activities, an ancillary services approach, and a service pattern that reached only a portion of students, the Comprehensive Guidance Program is a structured program delivered to all students.

The Comprehensive Guidance Program is now operational in virtually all middle/junior high and high schools in the state. This was accomplished over a ten-year period of systematic program and staff development efforts. Counselor shortages in the early part of the decade have been replaced by an adequate supply of counselors fully qualified to implement and operate a Comprehensive Guidance Program.

Survey data from two studies conducted by an independent evaluation group reflect positive student, teacher, and counselor perceptions of improvements to counselor services resulting from the program. Student and parent participation in the SEOP have increased. Student participation in concurrent enrollment courses, the electronic high school, ATCs and ATCSRs, Advanced Placement (AP) courses and AP tests, early graduation, and Centennial Scholarships has dramatically increased during the past decade.

Data also substantiated significantly higher levels of student participation in additional CORE courses and Applied Technology Education courses in schools with a high implementation program when compared to like schools with a low implementation program.

Data also reflected a strong relationship between a low counselor-pupil ratio and a high implementation program. Perhaps the most significant finding of a 1998 study was student ACT scores which were significantly higher for every area of the ACT test in high implementation schools compared with students in similar low implementation schools.

It is gratifying to note the impact the Comprehensive Guidance Program has had on the lives of Utah students. The introduction of the SEOP into schools has had a dramatic effect on the role of education and guidance throughout the state. The increased involvement of parents, students, and counselors in the planning process of students has elevated the value of the secondary school experience. Students are taking advantage of the numerous options available to them to prepare and train for the skills and education needed as they embark upon their journey into life after high school.

Often programs in education are introduced and implemented only to fade away after a few years. The Comprehensive Guidance Program has endured for an entire decade and the commitment of counselors, teachers, and administrators to the program has only grown stronger. Many counselors struggle with ratios that exceed the desired 1:400 but are allocating the time and effort necessary to provide ALL students with a meaningful individual SEOP. Great strides have been made, but there is still much to be done. It is important that counselors work with a low enough student ratio that they can devote the time necessary to touch each student's life. Lowering the counselor-pupil ratio in all secondary schools below 1:400 remains an important goal for the program to continue to impact the lives of our students. The Comprehensive Guidance Program that has been developed and implemented in the state of Utah has become one

of the most highly respected guidance programs in the United States. Various school and district programs have received national recognition, and representatives from these programs have made presentations in professional conferences throughout the country. The information that was presented in this document substantiates the reasons for the success of the Comprehensive Guidance Program, and sustained focus and support for this program by the State Board of Education, the Governor's Office, and the Legislature are indeed critical components.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Nelson, David E., and John L. Gardner (1998). An Evaluation of the Comprehensive Guidance Program in Utah Schools. Salt Lake City, Utah: Institute for Behavioral Research in Creativity.

Gardner, John L., David E. Nelson, and David G. Fox (1999). Level of Program Implementation and Pupil-Counselor Ratios within the Comprehensive Guidance Program in Utah Public Schools. Salt Lake City, Utah: Institute for Behavioral Research in Creativity.

Jensen, Lynn, and Judy Peterson (1998). The Comprehensive Guidance Program in Utah. Salt Lake City: Utah State Office of Education, Applied Technology Education Services.