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AN EVALUATION OF A SERVICE-LEARNING APPROACH TO ASSIST IN  
ACHIEVING THE GOALS OF A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDANCE PROGRAM

by

Kathryn A. Stott

A dissertation submitted to the faculty of

Brigham Young University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Counseling Psychology and Special Education

Brigham Young University

August 2004

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## BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

## GRADUATE COMMITTEE APPROVAL

of a dissertation submitted by

Kathryn A. Stott

This dissertation has been read by each member of the following graduate committee and by a majority vote has been found to be satisfactory.

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As chair of the candidate's graduate committee, I have read the dissertation of Kathryn A. Stott in its final form and have found that (1) its format, citations, and bibliographical style are consistent and acceptable and fulfill university and department style requirements; (2) its illustrative materials including figures, tables, and charts are in place; and (3) the final manuscript is satisfactory to the graduate committee and is ready for submission to the university library.

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## ABSTRACT

AN EVALUATION OF A SERVICE-LEARNING APPROACH TO ASSIST IN  
ACHIEVING THE GOALS OF A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDANCE PROGRAM

Kathryn A. Stott

Department of Counseling Psychology and Special Education

Doctor of Philosophy

The purpose of this qualitative study was twofold: (a) to investigate how a service-learning class assisted in achieving the goals of a comprehensive guidance and development program in a junior high school, and (b) to examine the effects of a service-learning class on junior high school students.

Thirty students who had been in the service-learning class participated in semi-structured interviews. Parents and teachers were also interviewed to cross-validate student perceptions. Interviews were transcribed and analyzed to identify core meanings. Using phenomenological analysis, eight major themes were identified: personal awareness, social skills development, learning skills, career interests, character education, application of class, class satisfaction, and program administration. Each of the eight themes also had several sub-themes.

Currently, there is a paucity of research regarding counselors using service-learning as a method to assist in achieving comprehensive guidance program goals. This study found that service-learning is an effective method of comprehensive guidance program delivery and is beneficial to students. Limitations of the study are described and ideas for future research are presented.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As I think about my dissertation experience, I am reminded of a time when I called my then three-year-old niece. The conversation lives in my heart. “Allison, this is Aunt Kathy. I am calling to tell you how much I love you.” “Thanks, Kaffy. Bye.” And the line went dead. Later, my sister, who overheard only Allison’s side of the conversation, told me she had asked Allison what I had said. Allison replied, “She just called to leave a message on the machine.” My sister looked at her strangely and said, “But Allison, we don’t have a message machine.” Allison looked at her with the expression that only three-year-olds and eighth graders can give and said, “Mom, she left the message on the machine in my head.” There are many people who have blessed my life by “leaving messages in my head” and in my heart. To them I am grateful. Special thanks to

the ACCEPT students and parents. May the class live on in your experiences.

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my own family: my time is now yours. Let's go play.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

School counseling began as a profession in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Since that time, society has seen many changes in education, including changes in the school counseling profession. The movement from a service or position orientation to a program orientation (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000) currently dominates the literature as the profession attempts to integrate the role of the school counselor with the educational program and mission of schools (American School Counseling Association [ASCA], n.d.). A national comprehensive guidance and school counseling program model has been developed and implemented in several states using a proactive and preventative approach (Sink & MacDonald, 1998). The model, based on developmental psychology, educational philosophy and counseling methodology, describes methods for delivering school counseling services (ASCA, n.d.).

One pedagogical method school counselors use to reach students is service-learning. Service-learning is an opportunity for students to implement what they are learning in the classroom by performing acts of service that benefit the community and then reflecting on what they have learned in class. It is based on community needs which complement the curriculum, reinforcing what the students are learning using an experiential approach (Billig, 2002). Traditionally, service-learning was used in post-secondary education to encourage college students academic, civic, and social development. Recently, it has expanded to all grade levels (Pritchard & Whitehead, 2004). Generally, it is a method used by classroom teachers. However, it has been adopted by school counselors, in various forms, as comprehensive guidance programs allow more development of guidance curriculum. Aspects of service-learning are seen in

counseling efforts such as peer helper programs, peer tutoring programs, or community service. Whereas these programs are progressing towards service-learning, they fail to fully integrate service-learning standards and concepts.

This research studied the relationship of a comprehensive guidance program vis-à-vis service-learning standards and concepts. It evaluated one service-learning class that was designed to assist in achieving the goals of a comprehensive guidance program at the middle school level. In order to understand the connection between comprehensive guidance programs and service-learning programs, it is necessary to understand both concepts. The following will introduce each individual program and then discuss the value of service-learning in meeting comprehensive guidance goals. An introduction of the program studied in this research is then provided with an explanation of the study organization. Following the study organization there is a historic overview and literature review.

### *Comprehensive Guidance Programs*

The 2003 American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model provided an organizational framework for school counseling programs. The framework defined the role and work of school counselors on an unprecedented level. In the past, school counselors have developed individual programs in response to the needs of their school based on suggestions of the school administration (Gysbers, 2004). The National Model represents a continuing shift from administrative-based practice of school counseling to a program-oriented approach of school counseling. It provides a model for school counselors to follow. By standardizing the practices of school counseling programs, educators are able to see the counselors' roles, make valuable connections to

school mission statements and accreditation goals, and evaluate comprehensive guidance programs using a common language.

The ASCA National Model outlines a comprehensive national school guidance program with flexibility to accommodate local needs (Myrick, 2002). Using the model, counselors and other educators can integrate the counseling program into the overall school mission. The model outlines direct services for all students, not just the high-risk or high-performing students that counselors may have focused on in the past. The model assumes that all students need academic, career, personal and social competencies to succeed in school and develop skills for the transition after school (ASCA, 2003; Baker, 2000; Downs, et al, 2002; Herr, 2001; Johnson & Johnson, 2003; Paisley & McMahon, 2001; Sink, 2002b).

The National Model is developmental in nature and based on the ASCA National Standards (ASCA, 2003; Campbell & Dahir, 1997), which are divided into three main competency areas: academic, career, and personal/social. Academic development includes “skills, attitude, and knowledge contributing to effective learning in school and across the life span” (Campbell & Dahir, 1997, p. 18). Career development includes “skills, attitude, and knowledge that enables students to make a successful transition from school to the world of work” (Campbell & Dahir, 1997, p. 19). Personal/social development includes the “skills, attitude, and knowledge which help students understand and respect self and others, acquire effective interpersonal skills, understand and practice safety and survival skills and develop into contributing members of society” (Campbell & Dahir, 1997, p. 19).



Many states have adapted the national model to meet their specific state needs (Gysbers, 2004; Myrick, 1997). The Utah State Office of Education (USOE) added a fourth competency area of multicultural global/citizenship (USOE, 2004). This domain is designed to support students in developing “the ability to evaluate and to approach life as a contributing citizen in the global community” (USOE, 2004, p.1). The addition of this competency was intended to encourage students to “demonstrate a deep regard for self and others, personal commitment to basic democratic principles, and a civil and considerate spirit while participating in society” (USOE, 2004, p.1). It is based on students’ need to acquire skills, attitude, and knowledge to become “responsible, productive, and healthy citizen[s] contributing to society in a changing world” (Sink, 2002a, p. 131). This addition to the national standards and emphasis on citizenship is not entirely new; the 1992 Strategic Planning Act states that the mission of public education is to

Assure Utah the best educated citizenry in the world and each individual the training to succeed in a global society by providing students with skills for lifelong learning, occupational skills, character development, literacy, and basic knowledge through a responsive statewide educational system that guarantees local school communities autonomy, flexibility, and client choice, while holding them accountable for results. (USOE, 1998, p. 1)

To meet this challenge, the Utah Model of Comprehensive Guidance was designed to provide all districts and schools in Utah a comprehensive program designed to offer prevention, intervention, and crisis and referral services. Such services were designed to assist students in becoming respectful, responsible, and contributing citizens

(USOE, 1998). Making multicultural citizenship development a fourth domain area (along with academics, career, and personal/social development) displays an added emphasis on the need to assist students in citizenship development.

Utah has implemented a state-wide comprehensive guidance program in secondary education, establishing a structured programmatic approach with a developmental foundation for counseling that reaches all students, ensures accountability, defines the school counselor's role (eliminating non-guidance activities) and defines student competencies (USOE, 2004). The state also provides suggestions as to how individual schools can measure student outcomes. All secondary schools in Utah have participated in the program initiative, and all but five schools have implemented the Utah Model of Comprehensive Guidance model. All 40 school districts in Utah have schools that participate in the comprehensive guidance program (D. S. Kay, personal communication, June 17, 2004; USOE, n.d.).

In 1993, the Utah state legislature began allocating funds for the comprehensive guidance program. Utah is currently the only state with specific appropriations for comprehensive guidance (Gysbers, 2004; J. Petersen, personal communication, February 6, 2004). During 2003-2004 over six million dollars were allocated to comprehensive guidance (Kay, 2004). The State Board of Education established program standards that had to be met in order to receive funding.

Over 73 percent of the state comprehensive guidance funds were used for personnel costs to hire counselors that brought the student-to-counselor ratio in secondary schools statewide from 550:1 in 1988 to 380:1 today (USOE, n.d.). In 2002, the national average *high school* counselor-to-student ratio was 315:1 (U.S. Department of Education,

Institute of Education Science, 2003). The American School Counselor Association recommends that counselor-to-student ratios not exceed 250:1. Research shows a strong relationship between low counselor-to-student ratio and schools who have a high level of comprehensive guidance program implementation (Nelson et al., 1998).

The Utah State Office of Education, the Utah State Board of Education, and the Utah State Board for Applied Technology Education employed independent researchers from The Institute for Behavioral Research in Creativity (IBRIC) to investigate how the comprehensive guidance program has affected students in Utah. IBRIC developed a scale to rank order nearly 100 schools on key implementation items from the counselors, administrator, and teacher surveys. Matched samples of high and low implementing schools were evaluated. The report found that students in schools that had high comprehensive guidance program implementation rated their overall education and job preparation higher; took more advanced math, science and vocational/technical courses; scored higher on the ACT in all test areas; and rated their guidance and career planning experience better overall than in low implementing schools (Nelson & Gardner, 1998). IBRIC also found that between 1991 and 1999 the number of students participating in concurrent enrollment courses, electronic high school, applied technology center programs, Advanced Placement courses/tests, early graduation, and the Centennial Scholarships have increased dramatically in high implementing comprehensive guidance schools (Nelson & Gardner, 1998; USOE, 2000).

Accountability is a key element of the national comprehensive guidance model and expresses the need for program results and evaluations. The National Model encourages all counselors to be accountable by demonstrating how they help students

achieve (ASCA, 2003; Paisley & Hayes, 2003). Accountability establishes school counselors as critical players on the school team (Dahir & Stone, 2003). The national model urges counselors to ask, “How are students different *because* of what school counselors do?” (Wong, 2002). Data are essential to show the success or failure of programs. Unfortunately, such studies are sparse (ASCA 2003; Baker, 2000; Borders, 2002; Campbell & Dahir, 1997; Foster, Watson, Meeks, Young, 2002; Gysbers & Henderson, 2000; Sciarra, 2004; Whiston, 2002). However, there is some evidence that this is being addressed (Borders & Drury, 1992; Kuranz, 2002; Whitson & Sexton, 1998).

### *Service-learning Programs*

Similar to the National Model of comprehensive guidance, service-learning focuses on academic, career, and personal/social development. In addition, a primary goal of service-learning is civic development. Service-learning has been defined as a program, philosophy, and pedagogy with specific tasks that are combined with reflection and reciprocity (Jacoby 1996, 2003; Pickeral & Bray, 2000). It is more than community service alone (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1999).

Service-learning is based on the theories of Frank Parsons (1909) and John Dewey (1916). Although he did not use the term “service-learning,” Parsons, known as the “father” of the guidance movement, encouraged a balance of traditional education, vocational learning, and society (Cobia & Henderson, 2003; Herr, 2001). This is consistent with the American School Counselor Association and Utah State Office of Education desire to balance academics, career, personal/social, and civic development.

Similarly, Dewey encouraged traditional education with a balance of experiential education within the context of a democratic society (Dewey, 1916). He felt that the role of the community in a student's education was just as important as the role of the school and that learning should include hands-on experience in addition to traditional methods. This was often referred to as *progressive education*. It was based on the premise that children needed an educational model that was consistent with their developmental level (Sadovnik & Semel, 1999; U. S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1999). Recent legislative reforms that fund service-learning have encouraged the growth of service-learning programs nationwide (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1999).

Research shows that service-learning programs have a positive effect on students. Building on the work done by Conrad and Hedin (1991), Billig (2000) summarized current service-learning research. Throughout the research, students who participated in service-learning activities showed measurable increases in personal/social development, civic responsibility, academic learning, and career exploration. In addition, the community and school environments also received benefits.

Scales, Blyth, Berkas, and Kielsmeier (2000) studied 1,153 middle school students from racially and socioeconomically diverse backgrounds in three different states. They found that social responsibility—defined as students' concern for others welfare, felt responsibility to help others, and perceived ability to be effective helping others—increased among students who were enrolled in a service-learning program compared to control groups. Because learning has been found to be a social process as well as a cognitive process, increases in social responsibility create a social awareness

that is valuable for academic learning. The study also found greater parental involvement with students who participated in service-learning programs.

The call for additional research is strong in the service-learning field (Billig, 2000; U. S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1999). Many schools have service-learning programs, and multiple resources are available to find methods of evaluation for the programs (Bringle, Phillips & Hudson, 2004; National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, n.d.).

Most often, service-learning programs are associated with an academic class. For example, a middle school science class studying the environment may adopt a service-learning project to help preserve a local canyon. Throughout the class they would learn about the environment, including trees, animals, water, and soil. They would develop a service project such as cleaning the area, developing a hiking trail, or creating a water preservation system. Throughout the project, students would discuss and write about how their service is related to the science class and their community.

#### *Value of Service-learning in Meeting Comprehensive Guidance Goals*

In addition to classroom teachers, school counselors have adopted service-learning as a method to implement comprehensive guidance curriculum and goals. Both comprehensive guidance and service-learning programs strive to help students understand and develop needed skills to succeed in today's changing world. These skills include academic development, career development, personal/social development and multicultural citizenship development. However, there is a paucity of literature that discusses school counseling programs and school service-learning programs together, despite the similarity of goals. Many school counseling programs use aspects of service-

learning as a method to teach guidance curriculum, provide responsive services, and assist with individual planning. This study looked at one junior high school to determine if using a service-learning class assisted in achieving the goals of a comprehensive guidance program.

*ACCEPT: A Service-learning Program*

Junior high school is a time of transition and can be difficult for many students (Lapan et al., 2001). Through Student Educational Occupational Plan meetings, an aspect of individual planning in comprehensive guidance, counselors at the research school found students who struggled both socially and personally as they developed academic and vocational skills. The department set goals to assist these students. The counselors started the Alliance for Children: Collaborative Exceptional Peer Tutors (ACCEPT) program. The program was designed to meet the needs of students based on the school accreditation needs assessments, counseling department needs assessments, and district goals using the standards and concepts of service-learning programs.

The ACCEPT program began in Utah's Alpine School District, which has adopted a strong Deweyan philosophy of educating the whole child. Superintendent Vernon M. Henshaw stated that the district's success can be measured by the "happiness and well-being of every student" (Alpine School District [ASD], 2004, p. 3). In the annual district report, Henshaw reflected on the launch of Sputnik, the first Russian-made satellite that created national concern that the United States might lose the Cold War. This was also an important time in the history of school counseling. During this time, administrators and politicians were afraid schools had failed to prepare students for the future. School reform efforts brought about a greater emphasis in teaching students

(specifically math and science), preparing teachers, and providing guidance for students in school. “We had to catch up [to the other countries]; it was imperative” (ASD, 2004, p. 3).

Henshaw supported comprehensive guidance by emphasizing that students in Alpine School District not only need to develop academic skills and vocational skills but also personal, social and civic attributes (ASD, 2004). The district seeks to educate students to become better people, workers, family members, and citizens. The school board has approved six areas of focus for the district: student achievement, community relationships, K-12 literacy, professional development, school and district culture, and technology.

The ACCEPT class attempts to balance Parson’s vocational theories of education and Dewey’s ideas of educational reform using a service-learning approach to education. Students have traditional classroom instruction on academic, personal, social and career skills two days a week and an opportunity to develop career interests and employ experiential learning by teaching younger students the skills they have learned the other two days. (The research school provided a modified schedule where students attend class four days a week with one of the four days being an extended amount of class time.)

ACCEPT was designed to achieve district goals (student achievement, community relationships, K-12 literacy, and school and district culture) and to fulfill the individual students development needs of the junior high school. On the elementary level, kindergarteners were provided literacy education and third graders were provided character education regarding self acceptance, accepting others, and accepting responsibility, in addition to academic tutoring. On a junior high level, students were



provided personal and social skill development, career training, academic encouragement, and citizenship skill development.

During the seven years that the ACCEPT program has been in place no formal evaluation has been performed. Class-end evaluations have been given, but the data have not been evaluated. One purpose of this study was to evaluate the program based on the perceptions of students, parents, and teachers.

The school in this study has met state guidelines and approval for Utah comprehensive guidance program funds since the 1995-1996 school year. Data from needs assessments are available from 1994-2003. Based on the information gleaned from the counseling department and accreditation needs assessments and individual Student Education Occupation Plans (SEOP), in 1996 counselors developed the ACCEPT program to meet student needs.

Data showed that various stakeholders wanted the counseling department to assist with personal/social development and career development. Parents reported to counselors that their children did not feel accepted at school. Research shows that students who do not feel that they have a place in school disengage from school—emotionally or physically—and will not be as academically or personally successful (Nelson, Covin, & Smith, 1996). Students and teachers reported that students had difficulty relating what they learned in class to the outside world. In addition, students reported that the counselors needed to do a better job explaining vocational options to the students. Comprehensive guidance research has demonstrated that counselors can assist with both these elements of career development (Lapan et al., 2001; Lapan, Gysbers, & Sun, 1997; Nelson & Gardner, 1998; Sink & Stroh, 2003; Whiston, 2002).

While considering different ways to help students relate what they learn in class to situations outside of class and different ways to help students feel more comfortable at school, counselors determined that a service-learning class could be implemented to achieve the goals of both groups. The class was designed for students who had a career interest in teaching or another helping profession, as well as for at-risk students. A one-year pilot program was started, with the counselor teaching the class during a weekly “enrichment period.”

A grant received from the district using federal safe and drug-free school monies was used to support the program. During this enrichment class period junior high students who were at-risk or were interested in helping careers were able to help at the elementary school by teaching character education lessons and providing academic tutoring to the students. Students then reflected on what they learned in the class through discussion, class assignments, and journal writing. Each student left ACCEPT with a booklet of reflection activities.

After the first year, many students and parents were interested in the ACCEPT class. There were over 100 applications for 12 openings. The counseling department decided to move ACCEPT to a regular elective class period instead of the enrichment period. This enabled the students to have more experience tutoring and reflecting, as the program time increased from one day to four days a week.

ACCEPT has been an elective class since 1998. The author of this study taught the class for three years. When the administration saw that it was a long-term program, they chose to have a teacher, rather than a counselor, teach the class. The counselor

continued to oversee the program and write curriculum. Over 150 students have participated in the program.

### *Organization of the Current Study*

#### *Statement of the Problem*

Research on comprehensive guidance programs dealing with student outcomes in areas of academic, personal, social, civic, and career development has increased dramatically over the last ten years (ASCA, n.d.; Hatch, 2004; Sink & MacDonald, 1998; Trevisan & Hubert, 2001). In addition to national and state institution findings, individual counselors collect data and report on findings, with certain states mandating data collection from all counselors (Hatch, 2004; D. S. Kay, memorandum, July 14, 2003; Myrick, 2003).

At the same time, research on service-learning is extensive. Multiple studies have been done on student outcomes in the areas similar to those assessed by comprehensive guidance researchers (academic, personal, social, civic, and career development). Whereas the role of the school counselor has been briefly mentioned in service-learning literature (Allen, 2003), service-learning has not been significantly studied in the literature as a way to achieve comprehensive guidance goals. There is a need to investigate the potential of service-learning as a method of achieving comprehensive guidance goals. This study examined the outcomes of one service-learning class in relation to the goals of comprehensive guidance.

#### *Statement of the Purpose*

This study was designed to examine whether a service-learning class assisted in accomplishing comprehensive guidance program goals (academic/learning development,

life/career development, multicultural/global citizenship development, personal/social development) as reflected in student-, parent-, and teacher-perceived outcomes. It was also designed to identify additional student gains from a service-learning class.

### *Assumptions*

This study did not debate the value of service-learning nor comprehensive guidance. The value of these programs has been established in existing literature (Billig, 2000; Brown, 1996; Jacoby, 2003; Dahir & Stone, 2003; Lapan & Gysbers, 1997). Other investigators have found that both programs are effective enhancers of academic, career, and personal/social development. In addition, literature on service-learning has established that it leads to citizenship development. The question of interest in this study was the use of service-learning as a pedagogical method to achieve comprehensive guidance goals. The author is a proponent of both programs and one of two key developers of the ACCEPT service-learning program.

This study did not focus on the multicultural aspect of ACCEPT. The school has limited ethnic diversity, although it is average for the district. In conjunction with the counseling department and other faculty, the school developed small psychoeducational groups, after-school activities, field trips to outdoor educational facilities, and tutoring programs for multicultural students. Though ACCEPT involved multicultural students, the effects of multiculturalism was not an aspect of this study.

### *Definition of Terms*

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions were used:

*Comprehensive Guidance Program.* Comprehensive guidance is a school counseling framework that provides structure to guidance activities, individual planning, and responsive services for all students based on a developmental theory while encouraging accountability and system support for school counselors.

*Service-learning.* Service-learning is a researched practice, pedagogy and philosophy that combine meaningful work in the community and on-going participant reflection about the experience (Jacoby, 1996). The challenge for educators then is to teach experientially so that the learning will contribute to future educational experiences.

*ACCEPT. The Alliance of Children: Collaborative, Exceptional Peer Tutors* [ACCEPT] program is a service-learning program started in Alpine School District by the junior high counseling department at the research school in conjunction with a feeder elementary school based on the school accreditation needs assessment, the comprehensive guidance needs assessment and needs seen through parent/counselor meetings including the Student Education Occupation Plan (SEOP) meeting.

### *Research Questions*

This study sought to answer the following questions, with the understanding that in qualitative studies, the questions are under continuous revision (Kvale, 1996):

1. Did a service-learning class assist in accomplishing the goals of a comprehensive guidance program as reflected in student, parent, and teacher perceptions?
2. What did students glean from the ACCEPT service-learning class? Did students use experiences gained in the service-learning class after completing the class? Has

the ACCEPT program had long-term effects on students? Have students been able to use the material, information, and skills they gained in ACCEPT for other classes or outside experiences?

### *Historic Overview*

In order to understand the evolution of the ACCEPT program, it is necessary to review the model and research of school counseling, the history and research of service-learning, and the needs of the research school. This historical base review will provide the framework for understanding the current literature and research studies on the topic. With an understanding of current research, the need for the present qualitative study combining both comprehensive guidance and service-learning becomes clear.

### *Historic Models of School Counseling*

Gysbers and Henderson (2000) outlined three distinct models of school counseling during different time periods that show the evolution of the profession. The models were position (1910-1950), service (1960-1980), and comprehensive development (1970-present) (Sink, 2002b). These models defined the roles that the school counselor filled during a certain time period and help explain the future of school counseling. By learning this history of school counseling, we are better able to see how the current comprehensive developmental guidance came about as a program to meet the needs of students, parents, teachers, counselors and the community.

Different authors have contended that various factors gave rise to school counseling in the United States. Brewer (as cited in Herr, 1979) said that the four most important conditions were “division of labor, growth of technology, the extension of vocational education, and the spread of modern forms of democracy” (p. 22). In contrast,

Traxler and North (as cited in Herr, 1979) suggested five factors: “philanthropy or humanitarianism, religion, mental hygiene, social change, and the movement to know pupils as individuals” (p. 22). Clearly there were numerous causes in the late 1800s and early 1900s that led to the beginning of what we know today as school counseling.

The turn of the century brought many changes to America and to education. The Industrial Revolution changed public schools. Before that time, over sixty percent of Americans lived on farms or in small towns. There was little need for formal education and those who received education typically came from wealthy families (Cobia & Henderson, 2003). Teachers, not school counselors, provided the vocational training and any guidance that was needed (Baker, 2000). As industry began to change, the way that people worked changed. Goods were being made by machine, and workers did little more than tend to the machines. Labor was moving towards better working conditions and shorter working hours. Living standards of the workers were improving and more people were living in the cities and sending their children to school (Jacob, 2003). Because of the increase in students, teachers were unable to provide vocational information and guidance for each individual student (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000; Schmidt, 2003).

Gibson and Mitchell stated that “history is often made when a person with an idea coincides with a need and an opportunity” (1995, p. 6). Frank Parsons saw the need for vocational guidance at the turn of the century. In 1908, Parsons organized the Boston Vocational Bureau to provide help to students and other individuals struggling to know what career to pursue. In addition to helping students, the bureau also trained teachers to serve as vocational counselors (Gibson & Mitchell, 1995). In 1909, Parsons published

*Choosing a Vocation* where he outlined three needs in making a wise choice for a vocation:

(a) a clear understanding of yourself, your aptitudes, abilities, interests, ambitions, resources, limitations, and other causes; (b) a knowledge of the requirements and conditions of success, advantages and disadvantages, compensation, opportunities, and prospects in different lines of work; and (c) true reasoning on the relations of these two groups of facts. (p. 5)

Other individuals during the same time were also influencing the vocational guidance field. Jessie B. Davis was a Michigan school high school principal in 1914 who implemented a vocational and moral guidance curriculum into the English classes believing that students needed to have information about themselves and vocations in order to make responsible choices (Cobia & Henderson, 2003; Gibson & Mitchell, 1995; Wittmer, 2000; Yillik-Downer, 2000). Likewise, Eli Weaver established programs for New York City school teachers to assist students in learning about vocational opportunities and training (Gibson & Mitchell, 1995). Stratton Brooks was an educator impressed by Parson's work who trained elementary and secondary teacher as vocational counselors. By 1910, thirty-five other cities had followed Parson's example. Vocational guidance was being implemented across the country (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994).

In 1913, the National Vocational Guidance Association was founded and began to publish what would eventually be the *Journal of Counseling and Development*. The establishment of a professional association specifically for school counselors enhanced the credibility of the school counseling program. In 1917, U.S. legislature created the Smith-Hughes Act, which provided support for vocational education (Gibson & Mitchell,



1995). In 1918, the U.S. Bureau of Education (which later became the U.S. Office of Education) published the *Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education*, a document that emphasized topics such as the importance of vocation, citizenship, worthy use of leisure time, and ethical character. Many saw this as validating to the role of the school counselor (Herr, 1979).

It is interesting to note that this time in history is also the birth of progressive education (Yillik-Downer, 2000). This movement was concerned with creating a public school system that was molded to the needs of a democratic industrialized society. It encouraged “the uniqueness and dignity of the individual pupil, emphasized the importance of facilitating classroom environments, and suggested that learning occurred in many ways” (Gibson & Mitchell, 1995, p. 9). American philosopher John Dewey was associated with this movement. Dewey believed strongly that education and democracy should work together. He also believed that children learn best by actively doing (Dewey, 1916). Progressive education took Dewey’s form of pragmatism and experimentalism and developed a curriculum that was based on the needs of the child (Semel & Sadovnik, 1999). In 1964, Cremin (as cited in Herr, 1979) stated that the remaining ideas of the progressive movement are seen in the role of the school counselor. Many of these ideas can still be seen in school counseling today as counselors strive to improve students’ social and learning environments, facilitate teacher/pupil relationships, and assist with developmental needs (Gibson & Mitchell, 1995).

The 1920s brought a change to education. Gysbers and Henderson (1997) described a philosophical approach that added an aspect of vocational, personal/social, and mental health to the educational mission. Prior to the 1920s, guidance based its work

on a “position” model. Various services needed by students were identified and filled by school counselors, or at times, classroom teachers. This included assessment, information, counseling, placement, and follow-up services (Gysbers & Henderson, 1997). Many students needed assistance with these areas as mandatory attendance laws in the United States brought many students to school who had not been there in the past and were not sure of their goals. Curriculum models were being challenged and changed with the new students.

Because of the changes in society, many felt that guidance should be implemented in all grades. The mental health movement, pioneered by the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, encouraged the concept of educational guidance (Gibson & Mitchell, 1995). Guidance departments began to shift to a more clinical service model. State departments of education hired full-time guidance personnel (Herr, 1979).

The 1930s brought continued growth of the counseling movement. It became integrated into educational circles and was a subject of educational debate. Educational associations researched guidance activities and studied the movement of guidance. In a 1935 report, The New York State Teachers Association posited that guidance, helping students make life adjustments, is needed in the home, school, community, and other areas of the student’s life (Gibson & Mitchell, 1995). Gysbers points out that during this time education was developing a mission that included vocational and academic goals as well as personal/social and mental health goals (Gysbers & Henderson, 1997).

During the 1940s, Carl Rogers developed a humanistic theory of counseling that offered “non-directive” counseling as an alternative to the traditional methods (Cobia &

Henderson, 2003). In 1946, the George-Barden Act provided the financial support for guidance activities and leadership development (Dierlam, 2000; Yillik-Downer, 2000).

There was a significant movement in the 1950s for the school counseling profession. The American School Counselor Association organized in 1952. It joined the American Personnel and Guidance Association in 1953 and began publication of *The School Counselor*. This same year the Federal Department of Education shifted guidance to Pupil Personnel Services to include all aspects of students needs, not just vocational. In 1954, *The Journal of Counseling Psychology* was established with C. Gilbert Wrenn serving as its first editor. Most states had a state certification for school counselors (Dierlam, 2000; Herr, 2003; Yillik-Downer, 2000).

In 1957, the Russians launched Sputnik, the first satellite. This caused much debate in America not only about the state of education and whether or not public schools provided sufficient math and science training for their students but also about the guidance provided to their students. Education was seen as a national defense instrument (Herr, 1979). In 1958, the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) required that each state show plans to test secondary school students to identify those students who could be successful in post-secondary education—specifically in the hard sciences. Funding was provided for training secondary education counselors as well as developing counselor educator programs at the post-secondary level (Dierlam, 2000). In 1959, James B. Conant published *The American High School Today*, in which he recommended that each high school have one full-time counselor for every 250 to 300 students (Herr, 1979). In the past, teachers and then the student dean handled guidance responsibilities, to encourage

one counselor for a low number of students was a new concept for public education and a bold move for school counseling.

During the 1960s, the NDEA was amended to emphasize guidance and counseling of all students. This was used as an organizing content for guidance programs. During this time continued growth was seen in vocational and career development theories and movements. The Association for Counselor Educators and Supervisors was established in 1961. In 1962, Hoyt (as cited in Herr, 1979) wrote that guidance needed to be integrated with the educational objectives of the school. These goals focus on a variety of school-wide services including teaching. Many disagreed, contending that it implied that guidance had no goals of its own. It is interesting to note that today educators are again encouraging school counseling programs to be integrated with the educational objectives of the school and be part of the school improvement plan.

In 1962 Mathewson, Peters, and Farwell suggested that guidance was a developmental process that involved all key school personnel helping students understand themselves and their potential (Herr, 1979). The same year the Commission on Guidance in American Schools, led by Wrenn, published *The Counselor in a Changing World*. The book presented an outline for school counseling that acknowledged the role that school counselors play in education, focusing on counseling, consulting, and coordination (Baker, 2000). These ideas encouraged a more developmental approach to counseling. Elementary schools began to have school counselors at this time (Yillik-Downer, 2000).

In 1971, Norman Gysbers of the University of Missouri—Columbia was awarded a U.S. Office of Education grant to develop a model or guide to help schools in the United States implement career guidance, counseling, and placement programs. In

February 1974, Gysbers and Moore developed the first description of an organizational framework for the Comprehensive Guidance Program Model (Baker, 2000; Cobia & Henderson, 2003; Erford, 2003). The original model consisted of three interrelated categories: curriculum-based functions (guidance curriculum), facilitation functions (individual planning), and on-call functions (responsive services). The model was eventually refined to describe three elements: content (student competencies by domain), organizational framework (structural components such as definition, assumptions, and rationale as well as program components: guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services and system support) and resources (human, financial, and political) for the program. It also provided a sample time distribution to run the program.

The program was based on human development theories, including the works of Myrick, Super, Erikson, Loevinger, Piaget, and Kohlberg (Borders & Drury, 1992), educational philosophy, and counseling methodology (Gysbers, 2001b; Gysbers & Henderson, 2000) which focus on a variety of reasons for individual growth. The program concept was to assist educators in understanding how they can help students to achieve developmental indicators. Students were seen as successful when developmental indicators were achieved. According to the program, educators planned curriculum and provided assistance based on the developmental progress of students.

Gysbers proposed that students needed to master their “life career development.” He defined this as “self-development over a person’s life span through the integration of the roles, settings, and events in a person’s life” (Gysbers & Henderson, 1997, p. 9).

During this time of comprehensive guidance program development, the governing board of the American School Counselor Association moved to call the profession

“school counseling” and the program a “school counseling program.” This was to unify the profession across the nation and reflect the feelings of school counselors. In 1997, ASCA created national standards for school counseling programs describing what counseling programs needed to provide for student success in the areas of academics, career, and personal/social (Campbell & Dahir, 1997).

In 2001, the ASCA governing board decided to develop a national model for school counseling programs. Published in 2003, it covers program foundation, delivery, management and accountability. It acknowledges the need for local control but provides a framework and stability for the developing program. It defines the school counselor’s role within the program, emphasizing the school counselor’s leadership role.

There are four main components to the national model: foundation, delivery system, management systems, and accountability. The first section of the model, the foundation, served as an introduction of what each guidance program needs to develop. It describes the beliefs and philosophies which direct the program, the mission statement describing what the program will do, the direction for student outcomes, the domains of academic, career and personal/social, and the ASCA National Standards and competencies that serve as guiding principles (ASCA, 2003).

The delivery system describes how the program will achieve its goals. There are four main areas of delivery: guidance curriculum (developmentally appropriate lessons for students to learn skills to achieve goals), individual student planning (one-on-one time with the counselor for all students to set personal goals and discuss future plans), responsive services (immediate needs of students including counseling, consultation, crises, or information), and system support (professional development, team and program

management). Each area of the delivery system defines the multiple roles of the school counselor (ASCA, 2003).

The management systems section includes the organizational aspects of the program, defining roles, results, and responsibilities. It also defines the need for an advisory council to direct the program and give recommendations from various stakeholders. It includes how the program is centered on data and consists of two action plans. The guidance curriculum action plans are used to show the details of the curriculum and tell how students will achieve goals through lessons and group activities. The Closing-the-gap action plans use data to show how students grow because of the comprehensive guidance program. The management system also defines the need for a master and weekly calendars (ASCA, 2003).

Accountability for school counselors and school counseling programs is also emphasized in the national model for school counselors. The ability to analyze and use school data to improve student success ensures that all students are being equitably served (ASCA, 2003). The National Model of Comprehensive Guidance provides a common language for school counselors to use in meeting the needs of students. It changes the profession from one of position and service to an overall developmental systematic program.

Several states have implemented comprehensive guidance programs in their schools. Sink and McDonald (1998) reported that as of 1997, 24 states had a comprehensive guidance model in place, 10 states were developing models, and 7 states were encouraging districts to create and implement their own models. Sciarra (2004) reported that additional states have developed comprehensive guidance models since

1997. The U.S. Department of Education (2003) found that 50 percent of public high schools had written plans with standards for their guidance programs.

#### *Utah School Counseling Model*

During the 1980s the student to counselor ratio in Utah grew from 430/1 to 550/1 (Petersen, 2002). There was great concern among program administrators in the State Office of Education and leaders of the local vocational directors' group about the counseling and guidance programs in the state. School counselors in the state were criticized for their "one-dimensional 'university-bound' guidance to students" (USOE, 1998, p. v). Many felt that counselors were too focused on helping students get into college programs and neglecting other students with vocational and personal needs. Specific concerns were raised about the availability and amount of vocational guidance offered to students seeking vocational and technical training. In addition the counselor's role was not unified across the state and primarily consisted of non-guidance activities (Petersen, 2002). With reductions in requirements for entry-level counselors being reduced due to a shortage of trained counselors, program administrators at the Utah State Office of Education saw the need for change.

With the state legislature agreeing to commit up to ten percent of federal, state and local vocational education resources for guidance support, a full-fledged education program for guidance was started. Utah followed the model described in *Developing and Managing Your School Guidance Program* (Gysbers & Henderson, 1988 in USOE, 1998) and the *Missouri Model* (Gysbers & Starr, 1993 in USOE, 1998) closely. A specific focus was on student outcomes. Utah used the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) competencies as its desired program content. A unique aspect of the



Utah Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance Program Model was that nearly all secondary schools in the state adopted the model (Petersen, 2002; USOE, 1998).

During the early 1990s, Utah developed its comprehensive guidance model with several goals in mind, including providing services for all students, developing a program approach to school counseling, emphasizing accountability, removing non-guidance activities from the counselor's schedule, and identifying student needs and competencies. By establishing these goals, a more defined role for the school counselor emerged (Petersen, 2002).

By the spring of 2002, most secondary schools had committed to the model. Each school participated in training and met program standards to receive monies from the Utah State Legislature to assist with program support. The program standards included:

- (a) a schoolwide students/parent/teacher needs assessment completed within the last four years prior to the application deadline for funding;
- (b) documentation that a school advisory and steering committee have been organized and are functioning effectively;
- (c) evidence that 80% of aggregate counselor time is devoted to direct services to students;
- (d) a commitment that all students in the school benefit from the comprehensive guidance program;
- (e) approval of the program by the local Board of Education;
- (f) establishment of the SEOP requirement for all students as both a process and a product consistent with board rules, the elementary and secondary 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

Coordinating Committee (NOICC) competencies (available from state 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, materials, equipment, and clerical support (Utah State Board of Education Administrative Rule R277-462-3 as cited in USOE, 1998, p. 12-13).

Comprehensive Guidance is meant to provide a means for counselors to see and respond to more to student needs. With guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and system support, school counselors should be establishing stronger relationships with students, parents, and teachers. This should, in turn, lead to more needs being shared with the counselor. Counselors should then be able to create programs to fill the needs of their students. However, more research is needed for the individual programs to show whether they are effective or not (Foster, Watson, Meeks, Young, 2002; Kuranz, 2002; Lapan & Gysbers, 1997; Sink, 2002b; Whiston, 2002).

#### *History of Service-learning*

Service-learning is not a concept in the field of education alone. In the 1930s, millions of youth benefited from the Civilian Conservation Corps, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's program created to teach career skills to service volunteers (as cited in Bhaerman, Cordell, & Gomez, 1998). Presidents John F. Kennedy, George Bush, and Bill Clinton promoted national and community service as a way of involving youth in the community (Corporation for National & Community Service, n.d.). President Bush signed the National and Community Service Act (now called Learn and Serve America) which provides legislation to offer grants to schools to support service-learning (Conrad

& Hedin, 1991; Corporation For National & Community Service, n.d.). President George W. Bush continues to support service-learning initiatives (Allen, 2003).

Although service-learning has a long history in education and school reform starting in the early 1900s, it was not seen by name in the curriculum until the 1970s (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1999). John Dewey (1956) declared that students must be actively involved in service-learning for education to be effective. He proposed that when students are actively involved in service-learning, they are able to connect what they learn in school to ideas beyond the classroom. Dewey saw the community as the place to use what had been learned in school (1916).

Literature on service-learning is extensive and has been defined in various ways (Jacoby, 1996; Kendall, 1990; Sigmon, 1994). Although differing in wording and not concept, Kendall (1990) found 147 definitions of service-learning. There are even more today (Jacoby, 1996). The following definition was used for the purpose of this study:

Service-learning is a form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs together with structured opportunities intentionally designed to promote student learning and development. Reflection and reciprocity are key concepts of service-learning (Jacoby, 1996, p. 5; Jacoby, 2003, p. 3)

Though there are many definitions for service-learning, there is general consensus about the need for quality standards. The standards used in the creation of the ACCEPT program were developed by the Alliance for Service Learning in Education Reform

(ASLER) (Learn in Deed, n.d.). The research school sought to achieve these standards, which are:

1. Effective service-learning efforts strengthen service and academic learning.
2. Model service-learning provides concrete opportunities for youth to learn new skills, to think critically, and to test new roles in an environment that encourages risk-taking and rewards competence.
3. Preparation and reflection are essential elements in service-learning.
4. Youths' efforts are recognized by those served, including their peers, the school, and the community.
5. Youth are involved in the planning.
6. The service students perform makes a meaningful contribution to the community.
7. Effective service-learning integrates systematic formative and summative evaluation.
8. Service-learning connects the school or sponsoring organization and its community in new and positive ways.
9. Service-learning is understood and supported as an integral element in the life of a school or sponsoring organization and its community.
10. Skilled adult guidance and supervision are essential to the success of service-learning.
11. Pre-service training, orientation, and staff development include a philosophy and methodology of service-learning that ensures that program quality and

continuity are maintained (Alliance for Service-learning in Education Reform, n.d, n.p.)

Service-learning has been defined as a program, philosophy, and pedagogy (Jacoby, 2003). As a program, service-learning emphasizes meeting human needs in conjunction with meeting community needs. At the same time, the learning goals are combined with reflection and analysis (Jacoby, 1996; Kendall, 1990). Programs include direct services where students engage in tutoring, working in shelters, assisting in hospitals or participating in other community activities. Delivery styles of service-learning can vary. They can be inside or outside of school, mandatory or voluntary, or connected with an academic course or an extracurricular activity (Waterman, 1997).

As a philosophy, service-learning can be seen as a set of values that encompasses “human growth and purpose, a social vision, an approach to community, and a way of knowing” (Kendall, 1990, p. 23). Service-learning also contains a philosophy of reciprocity. Reciprocity is based on the idea that the server is receiving as much as the served (Jacoby, 1996, 2003; Kendall, 1990; Shumer, 1997). Both the giver and the recipient receive during service-learning. The concept of doing something *with* someone rather than *for* someone is emphasized (Jacoby, 2003).

As a pedagogy, service-learning is based on the work of John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Kurt Lewin, Donald Schön, and David Kolb. Service-learning seeks to combine action (service) and reflection (learning) to achieve student success (Jacoby, 2003; Reynolds, 2000). Reflection is what sets service-learning apart from other service activities. It is a form of experiential education and emphasizes that learning and development do not

happen because of the activity itself, but with the pondering of that activity (Jacoby, 2003).

Historically, the goals of service learning fall into five main categories of student involvement: academic learning, personal development, civic responsibility, citizenship development, and community social benefits (Waterman, 1997). These five areas may include a variety of benefits such as leadership, career education, ethical development, spiritual development, critical thinking, analytical or creative writing, citizenship or civic education, social justice, dropout prevention, tolerance, communication skills, and commonality (Brown, 1996; Jacoby, 2003; Reynolds, 2000; Shumer, 1997; Tenenbaum, 2000).

### *Review of Literature*

#### *Comprehensive Guidance*

The push for counselors to help with academic achievement is great—especially in the era of school reform. Some school districts require school counselors to identify a certain number of at-risk students and develop programs to help increase their academic abilities (Brown, 1999). Other districts imply the same without explicitly requiring it. The question in this study is whether service-learning programs assist in achieving comprehensive guidance goals.

Nelson & Gardner (1998) researched how comprehensive guidance has been implemented across Utah and how the implementation has impacted schools. The two-part study surveyed 193 Utah public secondary schools that implemented comprehensive guidance and received funding before October 1997. In part one of the study, each school received a questionnaire for the principal, counseling department, and three random

teachers. There was a 91% return rate of the targeted schools. The study found that teachers, principals, and counselors reported that comprehensive guidance had a major impact on student planning. For example, it reported that students participated more in educational planning, focused more on educational efforts, participated more in school programs such as school-to-careers and concurrent enrollment, and improved students' decision making skills in schools.

In part two of the study, Nelson et al. (1998) compared two databases—the statewide ACT and the annual survey of intentions and accomplishments of Utah high school seniors—to see if there was a difference between schools that had high implementation of comprehensive guidance programs and schools that had low implementation of comprehensive guidance programs. Nelson and Gardner (1998) used part one of the study to determine high-and low-implementing schools on an undisclosed scale. High-and low-implementing schools were matched based on size, location, and socio-economic levels. Through database comparisons, the study found that students in high-implementing schools reported more positively on a question regarding how well their school prepared them for employment and higher education ( $p=.05$ ). The study also found that students in high-implementing schools found their schools to be more educational/career focused than low-implementing schools ( $p=.01$ ). In addition, the study found that students in high-implementing schools scored higher on all five ACT scales ( $p=.01$ ). High-implementing schools outscored the state, which outscored the nation in each area of the ACT test.

Part one of the Nelson and Gardner (1998) study also found that teachers, principals, and counselors reported that career exploration opportunities for students

improved. The study found that 99 percent of schools reported that students were exposed to a wide range of career options and 94 percent of schools reported that students participated in career days, career fairs, job shadowing, and field trips in a variety of career areas. Unfortunately, this study did not explain how the program implementation was perceived by students personally nor did it survey students or parents as participants. The study did not show how many schools reported implementation of these activities before comprehensive guidance was started.

Sink and Stroh (2003) studied the effect of comprehensive guidance programs in Washington. Elementary students (grades 3 and 4) continuously enrolled in schools with well-established comprehensive school counseling programs scored higher on achievement tests (Iowa Tests of Basic Skill—Form M and The Washington Assessment of Student Learning) than students continuously enrolled at non-comprehensive guidance schools.

Lapan, Gysbers, and Sun (1997) explored the relationship between high and low implementing comprehensive guidance programs in Missouri on specific student outcomes. Taking data from 22,964 students attending 236 schools, they found that schools with higher implementation of comprehensive guidance programs had students who reported higher grades, felt better prepared for their future, felt more safety and belonging at school, reported fewer behavior problems from peers in class and felt more college information was available to them. The data were analyzed using a hierarchical linear model (HLM) with several significant correlations ( $p < .001$ ). The HLM model allows correlation to be seen but cannot determine causation. For example, higher implementing schools had higher student self-reports of grades. This does not show that



counseling programs helped; however, it does show that schools with higher implementing comprehensive guidance programs “did not detract from the student academic progress but may, in fact, have played a positive role in enhancing student academic achievement” (p. 8). This finding provided further support to prior research that suggested that comprehensive guidance programs can become a central contributing factor to student academic success. The authors also noted the limitations of using self-report data, including the possibility of student and counselor bias and measurement error. However, participants did not know that their answers would be compared with other schools and the analysis statistically controlled for covariate relationships.

Lapan, Gysbers, and Petroski (2003) conducted a study analyzing the school counselor impact on student development. The survey focused on the Missouri model of Comprehensive Guidance factors. It examined whether or not student and teachers at higher implementing comprehensive guidance schools gave higher ratings than those at low-implementing to questions of (a) perceptions of safety in school, (b) satisfaction with their education, (c) satisfaction with grades, (d) perceptions of their relationships with teachers, and (e) perceptions of the importance and relevance of education to their future higher than low implementing schools. The study found that implementation of comprehensive guidance programs was significantly associated with indicators of school safety and success ( $p=.001$ ).

### *Service-learning*

The concept of service-learning is not new to schools (Fertman, White & White, 1996; Shumer, 1997). However, much of the research around service-learning is new and more research is needed (Billig, 2000). The first reliable national survey indicating the

prevalence of service-learning was conducted in 1999 by the U.S. Department of Education. The report found that “sixty-four percent of all public school, including 83 percent of public high schools, had students participating in community service activities recognized by and/or arranged through the school” (USDOE, 1999, p. 1). The report also found that 32 percent of all public schools use some form of service-learning as a specific part of their curriculum (USDOE, 1999). There are many reasons for the increase in service-learning programs. Conrad and Hedin (1991) found an increase in service-learning programs. They found that the reason for more programs included the need for youth reform, educational reform, and a sense that youth were growing alienated from their communities and society, as indicated by a decrease in voting populations and less volunteerism. With the new growth of service-learning programs, states are beginning to develop policies around issues such as mandatory service, funding, safety, and standards/guidelines (National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, n.d.).

The service-learning movement has focused on student success using the academic, career, civic, and personal/social indicators. National studies, including the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development Task Force and the Learning First Alliance, have found that “learning is possible only after students’ social, emotional, and physical needs have been met” (Fredericks, 2003, p. 11). Service-learning programs aim to secure the social, emotional, and physical needs of the students so that academic and career success can be achieved. Multiple studies have shown that service-learning enhanced progress in these areas. Serow (1997) defined four categories in which service-learning outcomes benefit individuals: competence (academic achievement, occupational or leisure skills), participation (involvement in community affairs, political campaigns,

and voluntary associations), understanding (social attitudes, values, motives, self-perceptions) and relationships (recurring interactions, networks, friendships, mentoring).

Under Serow's (1997) category of competence, Conrad and Hedin (1991) found that peer tutors' skills often increase as much or even more than the student they are tutoring. They concluded that service-learning would be a method for increasing academic abilities. Continuing the work of Conrad and Hedin (1991), Billig (2000) examined the progress of service-learning research in K-12 schools through 2000. Using multiple research evaluations on service-learning, she found that much of the research findings done in K-12 schools was similar to service-learning research in higher education. The studies used included quantitative and qualitative research including self-reports or pre- and post-surveys. Billig acknowledged that most studies lacked theoretical foundations and tested hypotheses. Her analysis concluded that service-learning has a positive effect on students' personal development, interpersonal development including tolerance, "risk" behaviors, citizenship skills, academic skills and knowledge, motivation, attendance, career education, and school and community climate.

Using qualitative and quantitative research methods, Melchior (1999) researched the Learn and Serve America programs in seventeen middle and high schools in the United States. Approximately 1,000 participants and control group members were evaluated. The evaluation researched the impact of program participation on participants, institutional impacts of the program on schools and community and investment returns. The study found that most students rated the experience positively and showed short-term impacts on personal and social responsibility, civic and educational attitudes and behaviors, communication, and a sense of educational competence. The study

acknowledged that it represented only one step in understanding service-learning; it did note that “well-designed” programs make a difference. The study did not provide detailed information regarding the administration of the evaluation.

Looking at the effect that service-learning had on seven civic education variables, Morgan and Streb (n.d.) sampled 220 high school students during the 1997-98 school year. The survey studied service-learning activities related to political attentiveness, social action, social networks, hours participating in out-of-school activities, attitudes toward the elderly, attitudes toward the disabled, and efficacy. Limited differences were found between pre- and post-testing.

Evaluating multiple programs (n=165 studies), Wilson, Gottfredson, and Najaka (2001) found that service-learning programs improved dropout rates and school attendance. Similarly, Kirby (2001) examined 250 primary prevention programs specifically aimed to prevent teen pregnancy. The study found that service-learning programs demonstrated the strongest evidence to reduced teen pregnancy rates. The research does not specify why service-learning is most effective, but offers suggestions such as adult role models, peer relationships, feelings that individuals can make a difference, or greater sense of autonomy.

Rosenberg, McKeon, and Dinero (1999) investigated a service-learning leadership training program for students who did not find attachment in school. The research findings involving over 1000 participants and a control group showed that students who participated in the program demonstrated improved attitudes toward school, more ownership of personal growth and maturity, more initiative, more cooperation and tolerance of differences, and increased social responsibility.

In addition, the Roger L. Putnam Vocational-Technical High School in Springfield, Massachusetts, found service-learning to be of benefit to their students (n=1,552). Data were collected pre- and post-service-learning in 1995 and 1999. The drop-out rate fell from 25 percent to five percent; student referrals for discipline fell from 12 percent to one percent; students reporting being postsecondary education bound increased from 40 percent to 62 percent; grade point averages increased, with students having a 3.0 or above increasing from six percent to 17 percent. The number of families living below poverty line remained at 80 percent (Pickeral, 1999).

#### *Relationship between Comprehensive Guidance and Service-learning*

While most studies in the service-learning literature discussed the role of the teacher and school administrators as key facilitators in service-learning programs, counselors were rarely mentioned (Pritchard & Whitehead, 2004; Wade, 1997). Furthermore, the comprehensive guidance literature failed to recognize service-learning as a method of delivery for counseling programs. Likewise, few counseling articles mentioned service-learning by name. Miller and Neese (1997) discussed one service-learning program in *Professional School Counseling* and reported benefits from student evaluations in academic, career, social, personal, and civic areas. The study concluded that by providing service-learning opportunities, middle school students have a way to increase feelings of self-worth, responsibility, and social interest. The article briefly mentioned the role of the school counselor but neglected to explain how the program could be integrated with comprehensive guidance goals. Because of their similar concepts, there is a need to look at service-learning programs as a way of achieving comprehensive guidance program goals.

### *Summary*

This chapter addressed important aspects of comprehensive guidance and service-learning. The history of school counseling and service-learning were detailed. The needs of the research school were discussed as well as the history of the ACCEPT service-learning program. Current research on comprehensive guidance and service-learning was highlighted. Research indicates that academic, career, and personal development have been enhanced in schools where there is higher implementation of these programs. Researchers in both comprehensive guidance and service-learning have called for additional research to study student outcomes.

Previous studies found benefits from both comprehensive guidance and service-learning programs individually. This study focused on the interface between comprehensive guidance and service-learning. It differs from previous research in that it sought to understand the students' perceptions of service-learning as they relate to goals of a comprehensive guidance program.

## Chapter II: Method

This study used qualitative methods to gather and interpret data from participants. While quantitative methods are commonly used to gather and interpret statistical evidence from large groups where inferences can be drawn from the large number of participants, qualitative research is frequently used to explore the meaning of the participants' experiences at a deeper and more personal level (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Kvale, 1996). Both methods are used in the social sciences and are helpful tools that can interact with each other (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Kvale, 1996; Patton, 2002). While a survey questionnaire would measure a variety of group attitudes and provide valuable information, it would not access the data that can be found by conducting individual in-depth interviews. In education, interviewing is the "most common qualitative tool that researchers use" (Tierney & Dilley, 2002, p. 454). This study used qualitative interviews to gain a deeper understanding of the students' experiences at a more personal level that may not have been achieved through quantitative research.

### *Philosophical Foundations*

This study employed phenomenological inquiry. Phenomenology is a philosophical perspective based on the work of Edmund H. Husserl (1859-1938) and Alfred Schutz (1899-1959). The fundamental purpose of this approach is to inquire how the individual makes sense of an experience—"how they perceive it, describe it, feel about it, judge it, remember it, make sense of it, and talk about it with others" (Patton, 2002, p. 101)—and relate that to how others have been influenced in similar or different ways by the same experience. Van Manen described phenomenology as "gaining a

deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of our everyday experiences” (1990, pp. 9-10) and the “pure description of lived experience” (p. 25).

The phenomenological approach focuses on experiences as interpreted by the participant, rather than on the factual events. It focuses on the nature of the learning experience, not on the “why” of the experience (Van Manen, 1990). Phenomenological studies are not used for empirical generalizations or to establish relationships. Rather, they are used to understand how participants experience the same event.

Phenomenology assumes that there are “essences” or “core meanings” that are understood by those involved in a given program or activity (Patton, 2002; Van Manen, 2003). An essence is a “description of a phenomenon” (Van Manen, 2003, p. 39). It is by investigating individuals’ essences that the general meaning of an experience is found.

#### *Participants*

The research site was a junior high school in a suburban Utah community. During the 2003-04 school year, the school had a student body of 1463 students. There were 476 seventh-graders, 499 eighth-graders and 488 ninth-graders. The students at the junior high school come from seven elementary schools and advance to two high schools. The mobility rate for the school is very small (less than 10%) due to the high number of home owners (88%) versus renters in the community. The school has average ethnic diversity for the district. The research school scored highest in the district in most areas of the SAT-9 test.

The participants in this study were former students, their parents, and teachers who participated in the ACCEPT program from 1998-2004. Current ACCEPT participants were not suited for this phenomenological study, as “a person cannot reflect



on lived experiences while living through the experience” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 9). For example, if someone tries to reflect on an emotion while he or she is experiencing the emotion, they find that the emotion has changed.

All former ACCEPT students (n=142) were mailed two copies of a letter of explanation (Appendix A) with the request that one copy be returned to the researcher in the postage-paid envelope. The letter included an informed consent to be signed by the student and his or her parents if under 18, and a question regarding whether or not the parent was willing to be interviewed. From the returned letters, five students and one alternate from each year were randomly selected and these participants were contacted to arrange interviews. A total of 30 students, ten males and twenty females, were interviewed. Ages of students interviewed ranged from 13 to 19 years old. Six parents were also chosen randomly and interviewed, one from each year. All teachers, except the author of the study, were interviewed. As an incentive, students who returned the letter and were interviewed were given movie tickets.

### *Data Collection*

The data were collected in a series of individual semi-structured interviews (Kvale, 1996) conducted with students, parents, and teachers of the ACCEPT service-learning program. Kvale defines seven stages of interview research which were used in this study: “thematizing, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analyzing, verifying and reporting” (1996, p. 88). The semi-structured interviews were conducted according to an interview guide but were neither rigorously structured nor open conversations (Kvale, 1996). The guiding questions are outlined in Appendix B. Interviews in educational research are a key tool in eliciting the type of information needed in this research.

Without such interviews, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to examine the nuances or finer levels of meaning in a study based primarily on changes in attitudes or beliefs (Tierney & Dilley, 2002).

The sole interviewer was a doctoral candidate with training in quantitative and qualitative research methods. Interviews were conducted at the school (with the exception of two students interviewed at home) and lasted approximately 15-20 minutes. Although interviewing adolescents presents unique challenges (Eder & Fingerson, 2002) such as developmental issues relating to communication and insight, it is important that the student participants voice their own interpretations, rather than relying solely on adults. Randomly selected parents of student participants were also interviewed separately after the student interviews. Teachers were interviewed after the student/parent data were collected. Interviewing parents and teachers added additional perspectives to data collected from the students. Although, the perception of the various parties may conflict at times, this study looked for the perceptions that are in common among the three groups. This triangulation of data is essential in validating qualitative research (Guion, 2002).

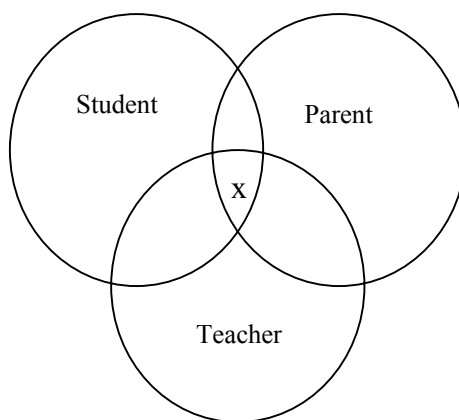


Figure 1: Study triangulation for additional perspectives

The researcher and an assistant transcribed the interviews using a standard transcription machine. The researcher also noted information that would facilitate interpretation of the transcription such as location, interviewing situation, and time of day, as well as student, parent, and teacher appearance, expression, tone, and affect.

#### *Assumptions*

The study assumed that the participants responded in meaningful, truthful, and valuable ways, albeit their perspective may have been partial to the program. Because the study requested volunteers, students who enjoyed the program may have volunteered more readily than those who were disappointed in the experience. The researcher also acknowledges that her participation as a teacher in the program may have influenced some student answers. Despite these potential confounds to the study, it was assumed that the participants would provide meaningful responses and that the researcher could identify the essential meaning in those responses.

#### *Methods of Analysis*

Analysis and interpretation of the qualitative data followed the same phenomenological assumptions used during data collection. This approach aimed at understanding how individuals see their world by investigating the core meanings they describe and how they create meaning by analyzing the interview transcriptions. The focus is not on categorization or classification but on the meanings of an event (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

Data analysis consisted of a series of interrelated steps designed to refine and interpret different levels of data. These steps included:

1. Developing a sense or overview of the entire text. Although interpretation starts during the first interview (Rubin & Rubin, 1995), it was necessary to set aside preconceived ideas and develop a sense of all interviews as a whole (Kvale, 1996).
2. Reviewing individual texts multiple times to gain a deeper meaning into individual experiences. This was necessary to find the core meaning of the whole experience revealed through individual statements, expressions, and tones (Kvale, 1996; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). To validate the interpretation of the interviews, two independent parties with experience in qualitative research (one clinical psychologist and one doctoral student) analyzed five randomly chosen transcripts. These transcripts were fresh copies that did not have previously interpreted material or comments on them. The researcher then compared core meanings found among the three interpretations.
3. Selecting a language that assisted with describing the experience (Kvale, 1996) by finding various concepts and themes that were shared among participants (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). The researcher used the language of all three individuals to identify themes that represented the core meanings found.
4. Discussing data with an independent evaluator with qualitative research experience (a counseling psychologist not affiliated with the school district or ACCEPT program), after initial analysis to determine the trustworthiness of the interpretation and study (Kvale, 1996).

## Chapter III: Results

*Participant Information*

The purpose of this study was to analyze the use of service-learning in connection with a school counseling comprehensive guidance program. All students who participated in the ACCEPT service-learning class from 1998 to 2003 (n=142) were contacted by mail (Appendix A) regarding participation in the study. A follow-up phone call was made to students not responding by the deadline listed in the letter. Fifty-five percent of the students responded by the second request. Sixty-two students were willing to be interviewed; 16 students were not willing to be interviewed. Out of the 16 students not willing to be interviewed, three students returned the postcard with a negative response. The other 13 students contacted by phone said that they would like to be interviewed but were unable for a variety of reasons including time constraints and living out of state. Nine student letters were returned with no forwarding address or contact information.

Table 1

## ACCEPT student interview request responses

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of Students in class</i>	<i>Yes 1<sup>st</sup></i>	<i>No, 1<sup>st</sup></i>	<i>Yes, 2<sup>nd</sup></i>	<i>No, 2<sup>nd</sup></i>	<i>Total Response Percentage</i>	<i>Total Yes</i>	<i>Total No</i>	<i>Mail returned, no phone</i>
98-99	27	5	1	2	3	.41	.26	.15	2
99-00	20	3	0	3	0	.30	.3	0	2
00-01	28	6	1	3	4	.50	.32	.18	5
01-02	23	4	0	7	0	.48	.48	0	0
02-03	30	11	1	10	4	.87	.70	.17	0
03-04	14	3	0	7	3	.92	.71	.21	0
Total	142	32	3	30	13	.55	.44	.11	9

Out of the 62 affirmative responses, students were randomly selected from each year for a total of five students from each year with one alternate student if one of the five were unavailable. A total of 30 students were interviewed. Six parents were randomly selected out of the student group, one parent per year. Three (of the four) ACCEPT teachers were interviewed. (The researcher was the fourth teacher at the beginning of the ACCEPT program). For a summary of participants see Appendix D. Approximately 148 single spaced pages of transcribed interviews were gathered from students, parents, and teachers.

### *Themes*

A wide range of responses came from the semi-structured interviews. Many thoughts, feelings, and opinions were repeatedly expressed by the participants (Appendix E). Using Kvale's (1996) qualitative interviewing and triangulated analysis (Guion, 2002), eight main themes emerged (see Appendix F). Each theme included various core meanings or essences (Appendix G). The main themes included:

- Personal Awareness
- Social Skills Development
- Learning Skills
- Career Interests
- Character Education
- Application of Class
- Class Satisfaction
- Program Administration

Each theme is described below with participant quotations for illustration. Effort was made to select quotations that represent a larger group of similar sentiments. Little additional narrative was provided, as the students', parents', and teachers' language best demonstrate the theme.

*Theme 1: Personal Awareness*

Junior high school is a time of change. Students' bodies, families, schools, friends, and society are changing—and those groups are demanding that the adolescent change as well. The combination of physical, social, emotional, and intellectual changes make life difficult for most students (American Psychological Association, 2002). With these demands building, many students need a place where they can learn about themselves. This was one determining factor in creating the ACCEPT program.

According to the students, parents, and teachers interviewed, many students found that ACCEPT provided a place where they could be themselves. One mother said that she had heard students say that ACCEPT was “the class that you could go and be who you really are” (Parent 000116). Throughout the interview process, students, parents, and teachers referred to a greater personal awareness students developed in ACCEPT. One student said, “The lessons that we talked to the children about—accepting others, yourself, and responsibility—kind of carried over to yourself” (Student 989906).

The theme of personal awareness had several essences that described a process students experienced to gain greater understanding of themselves: self-discovery, self-confidence, self-monitoring, and self-acceptance. Initially, the child learns more about himself or herself (self-discovery) in the class. “ACCEPT really helped your inner self and learning more about you and children; instead of ‘let’s cram this down your brain and

learn it” (Student 989906). Regardless of whether ACCEPT was easier or harder than other classes, as students participated more they gained greater self-confidence.

Interestingly, in the ACCEPT class, students were able to see and reflect their own progress (self-monitoring), which eventually led to a greater sense of self-acceptance.

*Self-discovery.* The following quotes illustrate this theme.

Student 000114: [ACCEPT] was harder [than other classes] because you had to come out of your shell. Other classes you could just sit there and not really do anything and this rather forced you to do things. And be outgoing and . . . yeah. You had to really know the lesson and you had to listen and talk to others.

Student 010220: In [ACCEPT] it was okay not to be perfect. In other classes there was such a high academic push. You didn’t quite learn as much about how people interact and all that kind of stuff. You learn more about stress in other classes. The [ACCEPT] class helped you with social stuff and interaction. [It was] really nice ’cause a lot [of classes] aren’t like that.

Student 000115: I learned that I have a lot more to offer than I thought.

[Laughter] Like with service. Before I just thought it was, you know, that I didn’t have a lot to give but when I started going, I realized that I have a lot more to give. And I do have time to give if I can just find it.

Student 989906: ACCEPT was not . . . it was more learning for me and learning for the children instead of “this is what you have to do – this is what you have to learn.” It was more of a “let me learn about myself and let me learn about these children.”



*Self-confidence.* The following quotes illustrate this theme.

Parent 010205: I noticed a difference in him after he had ACCEPT. He was more open. He would talk about things that happened in ACCEPT. He would talk about the kids down there and how he was. Sometimes my son would be like a clam. You would have to pry things out of him. I don't know if it was because he had to do things one-on-one with the [elementary] students but he would talk more. He opened up more at home. He even opened up more with the things that were happening at school.

Student 020324: I learned that I am kind of shy and that I get embarrassed easily. I sometimes don't like to be part of the group because I am shy or embarrassed. I am more laid back and sometimes it's easier to let other people do it. And I put in my little two words. But as we started to work more [in ACCEPT] it was easier for me to, like, be more into things and stuff.

Student 030429: At first we were really nervous. When we got in front of the kids we were just reading our parts. We were monotone and we were just really nervous. But then we got better . . . fast.

Student 989906: I think the purpose of ACCEPT was to help kids be more confident with self and others [and to] teach them responsibility.

*Self-monitoring.* The following quote illustrates this theme.

Student 989906: The lessons that we talked to the children about accepting others kind of carried over to yourself, because sometimes you do things without realizing and you need to pay more attention to what you are doing.

*Self-acceptance.* The following quotes illustrate this theme.

Parent 010204: School can be a downer and real depressing for my son. But in ACCEPT, he knew that he had succeeded that day. He knew that he had helped someone. And he loves that. That makes him feel . . . more accepting of himself.

Teacher 03: One student comes to mind . . . he was such a pain in the butt at the middle school and even as we walked down to [the elementary school]. But as soon as he would go through the doors at the elementary school, he was a different kid. He watched his language, spoke kindly, and was a model of respect and kindness. I could not believe the difference! When he knew that children would be watching him and learning from him, he rose to the challenge.

This change was not uncommon with my students.

Student 030430: I learned that you really need to accept yourself before you can accept anyone else. ACCEPT helped me do this.

### *Theme 2: Social Skills Development*

As students developed a greater personal awareness, they were able to gain a greater understanding of how they interact with their peers and society. One teacher said, “ACCEPT teaches social skills like no other class does. The students are not confined to their seats, subject to the lecture of the teacher. The students are the teachers. It is up to them to share the lesson, help their students who are struggling, and . . . resolve conflicts” (Teacher 03). As the students described developing friendships in the ACCEPT class, they explained that there was an increase in cooperation which helped them better achieve the class goals. The students also described learning from each other and

developing a greater awareness of each others' talents and abilities. This awareness led to a better acceptance for others that is not often seen in adolescents.

The second theme, social skills development, included the following core meanings or essences: friendship, cooperation, awareness of others, and acceptance of others. Also included in the theme of social skills development is the concept of reciprocity.

Reciprocity is a service-learning term which means that all participants are being served—not just the recipient, but the giver as well (Jacoby, 1996).

*Friendship.* The following quote illustrates this theme.

Student 989904: I think it was really cool because we had all that time to walk together and we then would joke about the funny things that kids said and it just made us a lot closer than just in a normal class.

*Cooperation.* The following quotes illustrate this theme.

Student 010219: It was, we all got along really well and you got to know other kids that you'd never seen before and you'd see them in the halls and stuff. In junior high it's usually all grade level and not as many [opportunities] to mingle together.

Teacher 03: As far as my "model" students, I noticed that their social skills—specifically in the area of conflict management—increased as they worked with the students who normally struggled themselves to learn the lessons. It was hard for them to show self-control, respect, and kindness when the other [junior high] students were the ones creating the problems, but they did.

Student 000114: You really had to work as a team. When we would go we would be in groups with kids . . . and you have to learn to work with people that are real different from you and you learn things from them and vice versa.

Student 000113: The whole time you would be working with each other and helping each other and trying to understand things yourself. And it was a group effort. You had to. That's what you got graded on too.

*Awareness of others.* The following quotes illustrate this theme.

Student 989906: I remember one girl in particular. She always seemed to have a harder time . . . and a little bit sad. She struggled with some of the subjects. And I just remember buddy-ing up with her and being really good friends with her and she always wanted to be my partner. And it was fun because she didn't seem to have too many friends. Because she had a little bit lower self-esteem and you saw her kind of not go through that as much by the end of the year. So that made me happy.

Student 990009: I remember one of the kids that I worked with he was super shy. Me and him we would have laughs. I saw him a couple of years ago and he recognized me and I didn't really recognize him because when you are little you grow up so much. But he recognized me. And we started talking and he is totally different. And he has outgrown his shyness. And I said, 'wow you are totally different' and he said, 'Yeah. I think it was from mostly when you came and you showed me that life is more funner [sic] this way.'

Student 990011: I got to learn that people have different personalities. I think that [one peer] was really different. He threw desks at me. I've never had anyone

like that. It was really different. That was the first real, 'you're not like me,' and I was like 'why?' People are very different. I had to accept that we are just not all the same.

Student 989904: I don't know if [ACCEPT] was more to help the kids or to help us. Because it helped the kids and how they interacted with other people, older kids. But I think it gave us like a break and also we were able to see other kids' backgrounds and like some kids that have different learning styles. It taught you how to get along with others.

Student 010218: [ACCEPT] helped everyone. It helped [the elementary students] because we were just a little bit older than them. It wasn't just teaching, sometimes they would tell us things, cool things, that they had done today or yesterday and we would say 'oh cool' and they just told us more.

Student 030430: ACCEPT is a good program. It will make the elementary school kids that come here more comfortable when they come [to junior high school].

Parent 030406: I loved the idea of the older children here going down to visit and talk to the younger children. They become friends. They watch out for one another. [My daughter] has a friend who is in the third grade who transferred and was hoping to get into her class because she is really struggling in school. She just moved here and is thinking about dropping out. [My daughter] could have made a difference for that child.

Parent 010205: The students [at the elementary school] are struggling academically and some of them, my son even noticed that, they were struggling

emotionally. And I think having a kind of brother-atmosphere helped turn their lives around.

*Acceptance of others.* The following quotes illustrate this theme.

Student 010219: There was [student name]. He was a funny kid. I can't remember the girl's name but she had French with me. She was awesome. I can't remember specific names but they all contributed a special element into ACCEPT.

Student 010218: When I was little, we, [pause] I, would not think about accepting others. You have your own friends. You would just play and if you don't know them, you would ignore them. But when we taught [the elementary students] we would ask them who their friends were and encourage them to be friends with everyone. Each day they would be, like, sitting with other people. By the end of the year, they were all friends in the class.

Parent 989901: I think that [ACCEPT] helped [my daughter] become more aware of not judging people because they are a little bit different or they might not be as quick. I know sometimes that I have made comments over the years about things like, 'I can't believe that they . . .' and [my daughter] is the first one to say 'Mom, maybe they can't help it.' I wasn't meaning to be judgmental but right away she comes to their defense because she had that opportunity to work with children that were shy or not thinking they were popular.

Student 989904: There was this boy in my class. I remember there were kids in the halls who didn't like him very much. And then in ACCEPT everybody loved him. Not that they thought he was funny or anyone different. But everyone just

got along. I mean he still did stupid things, I remember one time that we were walking to the elementary and he found a donut on the ground and picked it up and started eating it. And everyone was so disgusted but by the time we got to the elementary we were all laughing with him. So I think it brought us together. I've said that a lot, I know. But even the kids, the kids that were a little bit different were okay.

### *Theme 3: Learning Skills*

Throughout the interviews, student and parents referred to specific skills that were learned during the class: planning/goal setting, communication, service, tolerance, adaptation, leadership, and academics. The first six core meanings (planning/goal setting, communication, service, tolerance, adaptation and leadership) give place for improving academic work; a core goal of the ACCEPT class and comprehensive guidance programs. Many students mentioned that they were able to take what they had learned and apply it to other classes or areas of their lives.

*Planning/goal setting.* The following quotes illustrate this theme.

Student 030428: In ACCEPT you learned things that you could use every day and throughout your life—like working in groups. We always had to write these papers about goals and responsibility, so we learned a lot about it.

Student 010222: ACCEPT just helped me, like, be more selfless. That's good, not for, like, a career, you know, but for life in general. It helped me be responsible and plan things and stuff. You could actually see the outcome of the things you planned and stuff. You can learn from that.

*Communication.* The following quotes illustrate this theme.

Student 020324: [In ACCEPT] you learn to communicate with others and work with others. You learn to mix your ideas and not always have your way. You learned to figure it out together.

Parent 989901: Now, in working with adults, she has learned to read what someone is thinking. She learned to read how someone might be feeling. Because if a child is looking that way, there are probably adults feeling that way when they look the same.

*Service.* The following quotes illustrate this theme.

Student 010219: ACCEPT is a hands-on experience through service. There is no way of just telling someone about it and having them understand what it means. You kind of have to go out and do it.

Student 020326: [ACCEPT] taught me a lot about teaching people and what you need to do for little kids. Not just teach them how to do math and English but teach them how to live a good life.

*Tolerance.* The following quote illustrates this theme.

Student 989904: I didn't really like kids that much [Laughs]. That sounds so rude, but I didn't really like them because I didn't know what to do with them. I have one little brother, you know, and [ACCEPT] made me see them differently and made me a lot more patient.

*Adaptation.* The following quotes illustrate this theme.

Student 989905: I think the girls in ACCEPT were more focused on how the kids were developing and what they needed to change to do better. With one of the



girls, she became a lot more . . . she noticed more when she was working with kids. If her student was doing something different then she needed to change how she was teaching him. She tried to work more with the kids rather than do it a certain way. She was more adaptive and flexible with others.

Parent 989901: Some of [the children] were not at the same point as others and for [my daughter] to really have to think okay, I've tried this and it didn't work.' She would really have to think about what to do next if the first thing didn't work . . . and then to see that alternative work, to see that every child is not the same. Using some of her skills, she learned in ACCEPT to have to try alternatives.

Student 010219: [The teacher] not only taught the class but helped us think of ways to change things around. She would say "here is your lesson, how many different ways do you think you could do it?"

*Leadership*. The following quotes illustrate this theme.

Student 030433: ACCEPT helped me to know that I do have leadership skills. Sometimes I am indecisive, but I can do it. If I am given an assignment and I know what to do then I am really good at it.

Teacher 03: They took their jobs as teachers seriously and really tried their best when we were with the little children. They also took a lot of pride and ownership in the relationships that they created with the children.

Student 020324: ACCEPT helped me through other classes in school where I had always been quiet and felt stupid to say something. It helped me more to be just, like it doesn't matter, just say what you think.

Parent 010217: For [my son] where he struggled himself academically, for him to go down to the elementary school and help other students who also struggled . . . he knew what it was like to struggle. But for him, in that role, he was the leader now and he was helping them. It was just a boost for his self-esteem and we saw a huge difference in him on the days that he went down there and then the little kids that he tutored would come up to him and call his name, and give him big hugs, and that was the best. And that, that helps everyone's self-esteem.

*Academics.* The following quotes illustrate this theme.

Student 990009: In seventh grade, I didn't really care about grades. But in eighth grade I think because of ACCEPT, I actually started caring how I did in the school and stuff like that I tried to be better and get better grades. [In] seventh grade [it] was pointless to do it. But after [ACCEPT] that was where I really started caring about grades.

Student 030431: ACCEPT helped me [in other classes] because I did my homework more often . . . I took responsibility for it. I stopped procrastinating.

Student 990009: [In ACCEPT] I learned about learning. Grades *are* important. [ACCEPT] showed that people actually cared. Not just my family members – people in the class, classmates and teachers.

Student 030432: [ACCEPT] gave me a better attitude about things. It helped me turn in assignments in other classes and you know, think better about things. It helped me with how to think about life.

Student 990011: [ACCEPT] changed my GPA from a D to an A. I was finally good at something and if I can do good here, I can be good other places.

*Theme 4: Career Interests*

Students take the learning skills they gained in school and transfer them to life and careers. Another determining factor in designing ACCEPT was to provide students an opportunity to learn more about careers on a junior high school level. Many times, student have the opportunity for internships, job shadowing, and practical work in the high school, but rarely do they have an opportunity at a younger level to learn more about occupations in which they have interest. With secondary education providing more concurrent enrollment and early graduation, it is necessary for lower grades to provide career exploration opportunities for their students. Throughout the interviews, students mentioned that ACCEPT provided for this need. The theme of career interests has three core meanings or essences: experience, career-related people skills and inspiration.

*Experience.* The following quotes illustrate this theme.

Student 989902: [Student is currently attending college studying elementary education.] I really like teaching and I was thinking about all the experiences that I have had. In ACCEPT, I really did teach. And I liked that. It was one of the experiences that led up to me wanting to be a teacher.

Student 010218: I want to become a school teacher not only because I love kids but because I enjoyed being in the ACCEPT program. ACCEPT helped me have more interaction with the kids. At first I thought that I would be sitting in the back of the classroom and just watch the teacher teach. But then, when I learned that I would actually be teaching, I was excited.

Student 990008: In junior high I wanted to be a teacher or someone who helps special education programs. That is definitely why I wanted to take the class. I wanted to get some experience.

Student 090432: I took ACCEPT because I've always wanted to be a dolphin trainer and you have to have child psychology and be involved with kids and stuff.

*Career-related people skills.* The following quotes illustrate this theme.

Student 010220: My dream is to make Broadway. ACCEPT helps because in acting you have to work with a lot of difficult people. I guess that's how it is in any job. You have to deal with hard-to-work-with people. And some of the kids were really hard to work with.

Student 990011: ACCEPT also involved the counselor so I was never afraid to come into the counseling office to talk about scholarship and stuff in high school. I was always in here getting information. I wasn't afraid to ask.

*Inspiration.* The following quotes illustrate this theme.

Parent 010221: I think ACCEPT made [my son] think about what he needs to do in the future. It's the responsibility of teaching the students down there. I think it helped him realize that when he gets out on his own he will have to provide for himself.

Student 000114: Working with the kids you would see their dreams and stuff and how they live their lives and things. You reflected back on the year and it really opened your mind up for what you want to be and be excited for it.

*Theme 5: Character Education*

Alpine School District has developed a strong Deweyan philosophy that emphasizes educating the whole child. In addition to being academically successful, the district seeks to educate students to become better people and citizens. The fifth theme of the ACCEPT interviews emphasized this district goal. Character Education is strongly encouraged as a school district. During the interviews, many students mentioned skills that they had gained that would be considered character education topics. The theme includes core meanings or essences of responsibility, altruism, respect, humility, empathy, and gratitude.

*Responsibility.* The following quotes illustrate this theme.

Student 989902: We were really responsible for someone else's learning. I mean, we have to be responsible for our own learning from the teachers. But we were the teachers! And it's just so different.

Student 020323: [In ACCEPT] we learned responsibility for what we do. [Smiles.] When I did something at home, I would want to blame it on someone else. Now it's different.

Student 020321: I learned to help others 'cause when you see someone in need you will want to help more, if you feel responsible for that.

*Altruism.* The following quotes illustrate this theme.

Student 000115: In my other classes we were learning for ourselves and in ACCEPT we were actually teaching and helping other people.

Student 030428: ACCEPT's not like other classes. Like when I go to Math, I don't come home and say "hey, do you guys know how to do equations?" But

with ACCEPT, I want to go home and you don't say things like that but I went to the grocery store on the weekend and we were just shopping and there was an older lady who knocked over some bread and it was like right away I went over to help her.

Parent 989901: I think that ACCEPT made these kids more aware of giving of themselves. I would assume that because of the things that it taught them and the values that it taught them that as they went through the next year and throughout their lives that they learned skills to give service in the community and because they had a pleasant experience in ACCEPT, they learned that community service is not drudgery. They learned that doing something for someone else can be a good thing.

*Respect.* The following quote illustrates this theme.

Student 989902: I really liked going down and teaching the little kids. And also, you respect teachers a little more. I listened to my teacher more 'cause I know what it would be like if [my student] didn't want to listen to me. I was like 'might as well help teachers do their job.'

*Humility.* The following quote illustrates this theme.

Student 010219: I hope I had some sort of influence on the kids. I know that when I was in elementary, I was kind of always the kid picked on and I hope that just being there gave them some sort of friend. And to have given the hope that they can get through – eventually.

*Empathy.* The following quotes illustrate this theme.

Student 030429: We were assigned to do acts of kindness. Those helped a lot.

Once I sat next to a girl who doesn't speak English and that was hard. But she always says "hi" now in the hall. She is always alone so I think that means a lot. I am sure it helped to have someone to sit with. It just makes a small difference. I think the small differences helped.

Student 010220: We helped the younger kids with reading, confidence and things like that. I worked with a little girl that kind of reminded me of me that she was really shy and didn't believe that she could do the work and when it got too much for her you would step in and help her. So that she wouldn't get too frustrated. But she did really well.

Parent 010204: My son learned that he is not the only person who struggles academically or in reading, that there are children who also struggle. I know that when it's you that has the problem you think that you are the only one. And going down [to the elementary], where he struggled in reading, and working with the other children that had a similar problem, he formed a bond with them.

Student 010220: ACCEPT puts me in a mood to help rather than look at what I need. It was more, [pause] it put me in a giving mood. A lot of people are in a selfish mood. ACCEPT puts you in a more helpful mood, asking how can I help them. There were some kids that I was able to help a lot. It was hard to see the little kids that were going through a hard time. When I was younger I went through a really hard time. And it was hard to not know their background

information because you know that they were thinking about stuff. And you wanted to help.

*Gratitude.* The following quotes illustrate this theme.

Student 000116: Even though I took it three years ago, I think about ACCEPT all the time. Just, like, working with the little kids, gaining a respect for other teachers, what I have learned, how far I got with my education, and how lucky I am to be doing what I am doing. There was this kid that I was helping at [a local school for the mentally and physically disabled] and he was a senior in high school and he had everything and he had a stroke and now we are teaching him words like cat and dog. It was really impactful.

Parent 010205: [My son learned] how he was, more, um, I don't know how to put it, [pause] more spoiled. He had things different from kids down there [at the elementary school].

Student 010221: [In ACCEPT] I learned [Pause. Laughter.] I learned how much I have and how much others don't have.

#### *Theme 6: Application of Class*

Several students mentioned ways that they used ACCEPT after the class was over. Many students said that they used ACCEPT after the class was over. Some said that it gave the direction and definition for their lives: "ACCEPT served me. [Laughter] I learned more than the kids. I think the kids taught me more about what kind of person I wanted to be. And what kind of goals I wanted to pursue" (Student 990011). Other students spoke of how they used the actual class in programs after high school. For



example, college classes were easier for them because they had experienced similar projects in ACCEPT.

Student 989905: I have a lot of classes in college where I am required to do logs and where I am required to notice certain things about children and my other peers that are in the classes and notice the ways that they teach and notice things, critique them, notice what things that I would do different and what things they are doing that I want to do. And I think that it helped me a lot to do that. When I was looking at my [ACCEPT] packet, all the observations I was making, I'm doing that exact same thing now [in my college classes].

Student 989902: One of the good things about it was where we were required to do certain things. [ACCEPT] helped with learning to do lesson plans, which was a big thing in my major. When I got to those high school and college classes, I already had an idea of how I wanted to do that and my creative mind was already going because of this class.

Other students spoke of using the experience for resumes or applications:

“ACCEPT. That's where I start everything off on my internships and stuff” (Student 989906). Other discussed using ACCEPT during interviews for school or work programs and having a surprised reaction from the interviewers.

Student 989904: I used [ACCEPT] on my resume to get into my social work program. They asked me about it [during the interview] and I told them that I did it in ninth grade and they were like “Wow, you did that in ninth grade?” It seemed more interesting to them that I did it in junior high rather than high

school. They haven't heard about things like that. It helped me get into my program.

*Theme 7: Class Satisfaction*

Students and parents consistently indicated that they enjoyed the program. Several students mentioned that they took the class because they had been elementary students when ACCEPT students came to their class. Of the 30 students interviewed only two students mentioned that they did not get out of the class what they wanted to. Even then, both students repeatedly said that they would take the class again. It was striking that every student said that they enjoyed the class. Possible reasons for this high level of satisfaction are discussed in Chapter 4. However, the satisfaction seemed to break down into three essences: the class improved attitude (the class was uplifting to the students' mood), provided a break (from academically challenging classes) and became personally meaningful.

*Improved attitude.* The following quotes illustrate this theme.

Student 989905: I definitely think I was a lot more happy during the day. I would come to school and say, "Okay, if I can get through half of my classes, then it's time for ACCEPT." And then after ACCEPT, it's "okay, now I can do this." I had more of a positive attitude for the rest of the day. I think it helped my other classes in that way because it put me in a better mood.

Parent 020307: Going down to the elementary school was definitely a highlight. They loved working with the younger children. It was a part of the class that they loved the best. For my daughter, it was the day, the week! The highlight of the week, "if I got to go to the elementary school . . ."

Student 010219: If I had been having a lousy day, I would feel better afterwards. I'd be a lot happier. I was ready to go again. It made me energized, you could say.

*Provided a break.* The following quotes illustrate this theme.

Student 990007: If I had ACCEPT, the rest of my day was going to be better. Cause it was a break in my day. Especially when I was going to be with the kids—that was a really great thing for me. And I was always so excited the whole week. That was really nice.

Parent 989901: I think that ACCEPT gave her a break from all her other academic classes. It was something that she really enjoyed and she could use some of her creative abilities that she has and it kind of made the day lighter. She knew that she was going to ACCEPT or she had just been to ACCEPT, so the rest of the afternoon was a lot easier or lighter because that was something that she really enjoyed doing. Part of it was the service, part of it was because she loved working with kids and part of it was that she could use her creativity, because in academic classes her creativity wasn't used much.

*Became personally meaningful.* The following quotes illustrate this theme.

Student 010219: I haven't had a class like it. I absolutely loved it. Although I like moviemaking and the classes that I have now, nothing has come as close to being as fun and exciting. And all that was ACCEPT and that has just been the cream of the crop.

Student 030428: I think that, well, I think that we rarely thought about ourselves but about serving the kids and other people in our class. We just wanted to make

it funner for everyone else besides ourselves and it ended up being fun for everyone including ourselves.

Student 010219: ACCEPT was fun. They always look up to you and just, “ah, he knows everything.” It was awesome.

Parent 989901: She referred back to the ACCEPT booklet for other things - resumes, classes, concurrent enrollment. She used the book and obviously saved it [five years] because it was meaningful to her.

#### *Theme 8: Program administration*

The final theme represents a collection of program factors, including teacher influence, student selection, and concerns.

*Teacher influence.* Many students mentioned the effect that the teacher had in the program. Teachers who were trained in comprehensive guidance and/or service-learning approached the class in a different manner than teachers who did not have extensive training.

The ACCEPT elementary teacher and co-founder of the ACCEPT program has remained the same for the seven years of the program and is a favorite teacher at the elementary and junior high school. Many students in the class already knew her in the community as she had children their age.

The junior high ACCEPT teacher has changed three times over the last six years. After the first year of the class, the administration determined that the counselor could supervise the program, but that a classroom teacher needed to be assigned to the class. The following year, the class was co-taught by the counselor and a foreign language teacher. After three years of teaching ACCEPT, the foreign-language teacher moved

from the state and the new teacher taking her place took over ACCEPT as well. She had limited training in a service-learning curriculum and comprehensive guidance and did not have the opportunity to co-teach the class with anyone. When asked about her interest in the ACCEPT program, she expressed that she “inherited the class when I moved to this school” (Teacher 03). This led to some strained relationships with her students. At one point students even petitioned to have a different teacher. One parent expressed admiration of the class in theory but felt that the teacher prevented it from becoming what it could. “My thought is that if there was someone in here who really loves it, and knew where we were going with this, it would work so well” (Parent 030406). Both students and parents mentioned the importance of having someone teach the class who “buys into” the philosophy of service-learning and comprehensive guidance (Parent 020306, Student 030433, Student 030428).

Teachers who were able to see and respect the individual needs of students were appreciated by students and parents. One mother mentioned that her student had struggled with teachers in elementary school. The counselor noticed her son’s behavior in class and recommended him as one who would benefit from the ACCEPT program.

Parent 020305: I think that he had a real sense of confidence because of [the teacher]. She was really . . . she is one of the finest teachers that embraced his personality. Some teachers on elementary level found his personality interesting because he is so impulsive. She encouraged it and embraced it with some teaching underneath there. He just really liked her as a teacher.

Other students mentioned that the relationship with the teacher was more personal. “I felt like I was closer to the teacher because the class was smaller and I felt

like we had the opportunity to get to know the teacher and instead of the teacher standing at the front teaching us a lesson we were interacting with her. It was more like a friend instead of teacher” (Student 010222). This proved very significant to students. Students mentioned that it was different from academic-based classes. “With math stuff you don’t really know the teachers. You see the teacher as evil. They always give you homework and are cracking down on you. But in this class, you got to know the teachers. We got to know [them], but not just as teacher-student” (Student 990009). One student mentioned that his GPA actually improved because he knew that someone outside of his family cared about him (000113).

*Student selection.* Students applied to be in the ACCEPT class. The first year the program was offered as a class, the counseling department received over a hundred applications. Each semester 12-15 students participated. The selection was generally made in the spring and students were accepted into the class based on essays explaining why they wanted to take the class, parent request, or faculty referral. Students with career interests in a helping profession or at-risk students were given priority. Many students expressed appreciation for being selected for the class. “I’ve been wanting to ask you. I’ve always wondered out of all the kids that she could have chosen, why did she pick me? I just, really, I’ve never been able to figure that out” (Student 010219).

Teachers also discussed the selection process. “The ACCEPT teacher has little control over who is placed in the class. And this is a *very* difficult class to handle when there are too many kids. Also, it is difficult to handle when the wrong students are in there. Yes, we want some students who are [at-risk], but how much they are [at-risk] and in what areas, does matter” (Teacher 02).

The selection process didn't always work in the intended way. There were three counselors making schedule changes and one counselor supervising ACCEPT. The supervising counselor did not always have an opportunity to interview the student wanting to take the class. One student expressed, "I didn't sign up to take ACCEPT. There was just something wrong with my schedule. I had to change my class and he said that this was an option. I thought it was kind of funny. Like lots of people turned in their applications and it just happened. I'm glad. It was fun" (Student 030432). Students did not mention this happening often; however, teachers said that they could tell which students were assigned to be in ACCEPT and which student wanted to be in ACCEPT. This was evident to the researcher as well as students discussed their motivation to be in the class and class outcomes. Teachers mentioned that those who have access to putting students in the class need to fully understand what the class is about and which students could benefit most from taking it.

At times, the counseling department selected students because they were at-risk academically. This information was not always available to the ACCEPT teacher who made class assignments. Academically challenged students found some of the ACCEPT assignments to be difficult. This, at times, was embarrassing to the student.

Student (990008): Sometimes I felt that my skills weren't quite what they needed at times. When we got to the [third] grades there were times when I couldn't really figure out the work to help them. It was like I could remember things but I have to have a calculator to do it. It was hard because I wanted to be the teacher and it was like "this is kindergarten and first grade stuff and I am having a hard time with it."

Another student said that he struggled with the academics of some of the assignments but instead of being embarrassed, he found that it created a certain bond with the students. He said that the elementary students saw that he had to ask questions to know how to do the activities and that it was “okay.” He said that the students seemed a little more relaxed and willing to ask him questions. He became “more real” to them (Student 010217).

*Concerns.* Some students expressed concerns about the program ranging from “the transportation” (students had to walk one mile round trip to the elementary school) to situations where the teacher left students unsupervised and uncomfortable. One parent mentioned that she went to visit with the teacher because of an incident that took place during school:

Parent (030406): When they were walking back to the junior high, they were left unsupervised and they did take advantage of the situation. They began scheming and making plans for the next time that it was going to happen. That’s junior high. And you could just see it coming. And they were right to make the plans, because, yeah, it would happen again. So I just kind of gave the teacher a heads up. She hadn’t been aware. But she didn’t take responsibility for her actions.

But it was the end of the year.

### *Summary*

Thirty students, six parents, and three teachers, were interviewed to examine the influence that a service-learning class had on a comprehensive guidance program. Students, parents, and teachers shared significant information with the interviewer. From the data collected, eight themes emerged: personal awareness, social skill development,



learning skills, career interests, character education, application, class satisfaction, and program administration.

Students, parents, and teachers described the ACCEPT class having impact in the comprehensive guidance domains of academic/learning, life/career, multicultural/global citizenship, and personal/social. In addition to the comprehensive guidance domains, students gleaned significant traits and experiences from the ACCEPT class.

## Chapter IV: Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine whether a service-learning class assisted in accomplishing comprehensive guidance program goals of academic/learning development, life/career development, multicultural/global citizenship development, and personal/social development, as reflected in student-, parent-, and teacher-perceived outcomes. It was also designed to identify additional student perceptions of a service-learning class.

School counseling began as a profession in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Brewer (as cited in Herr, 1979) said that the four most important conditions were “division of labor, growth of technology, the extension of vocational education, and the spread of modern forms of democracy” (Herr, 1979, p. 22). We can see immense growth in these four areas over the last century. As we enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we see similar growth in the school counseling profession. It has moved from a position oriented focus to a program focus (Gysbers, 2001a).

At the same time that the school counseling profession was starting, the progressive movement in education was occurring. Dewey (1916) believed that education and democracy should work together and found that students learn best by actively doing. Progressive education encouraged Dewey’s form of pragmatism and experimentalism and proposed a curriculum that was based on the needs of the child (Semel & Sadovnik, 1999). In 1964, Cremin (as cited in Herr, 1979) stated that the remaining ideas of the progressive movement are seen in the role of the school counselor. According to Gibson and Mitchell (1995), many of these ideas can still be seen in school counseling today.

Comprehensive guidance program models define domains, standards, and competencies for student achievement. Researchers have found that students at schools where comprehensive guidance was implemented achieve more in various areas (Nelson et al., 1998). Comprehensive guidance leaders have suggested to counselors ways of measuring student outcome (USOE, 2004). Even with such assistance, there is a continual need for rigorous program evaluation research studies including studying “the impact the programs are having on students, the schools where they learn, and the communities in which they live” (Gysbers, 1995, p. 1). Research is needed to support comprehensive guidance program growth and improvement efforts.

The ACCEPT program combined the structure, theory, and curriculum of comprehensive guidance with the concept of active learning from Dewey in the service-learning class. This study was unique in that it evaluated a method to assist in achieving the comprehensive guidance program goals through a service-learning class as perceived by students, parents, and teachers. In effect, it did as Gysbers petitioned: it looked at the impact programs have on students, the schools, and the community.

### *Findings*

Participants in the ACCEPT program shared ideas, thoughts, feelings and perceptions for this study. Interpretation of the interviews yielded eight themes: personal awareness, social development, learning skills, career interests, character education, application, class satisfaction, and program administration

*Personal development.* Junior high is a time of change for most students. By having students participate in their community greater personal development including greater self discovery, confidence, monitoring and acceptance can be development. Many

students interviewed said that the purpose of ACCEPT was to learn to “accept yourself, others, and responsibility.” Most lessons plans were based around this concept. Junior high school students found that what they were teaching the younger students “kind of carried over to” themselves (Student 989906). Students reported accepting themselves more. Other studies have found that one of the most valuable outcomes of participation in a service-learning activity is an increase in self-esteem (Obert, 1995). This study also found that students in the class reported feeling better about themselves as they were able to help others.

*Social skills development.* Throughout the interview process, students discussed interactions with their peers and society. They described an awareness of others’ talents and abilities. They described relationships in ACCEPT as being “closer than just a normal class” (Student 989909). Students were able to see how they are interdependent. This concept in social awareness allowed students to see how individuals were influenced by others. The ACCEPT class provided a physical experience to understand the interdependence of others, not just cognitive process as a traditional class would typically provide. If someone did not do their “job,” then the class suffered in teaching and working with the elementary students, not just in a group grade.

The social skills development was not just for students who needed increased social skills. The improvement was also seen in students who were described as “model” students. Teachers described increases in social skills, conflict management, and character skills for most students. Students reported greater friendship, cooperation, cooperative learning, awareness of others, appreciation of others and acceptance of

others. These skills create more aware citizens. These skills create more aware citizens and is essential in the cultural development of students. Vygotsky stated,

Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological). This applied equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All higher functions originate as actual relationship between individuals (Vygotsky as cited in Pritchard & Whitehead, 2004, p. 1).

*Learning skills.* Throughout the interviews, student and parents referred to specific skills that were learned during the class: planning/goal setting, communication, service, tolerance, adaptation, and leadership. Each of these skills reflected areas in which students felt that they gleaned from ACCEPT. Students applied what they learned in ACCEPT to improve academic work. Many students said that learning to accept responsibility helped them to overcome procrastination and other problems in their other classes. This ability to transfer skills is a higher level of thinking (Lewis, n.d.).

*Career interests.* The history of the school counseling profession is rooted in career education. Employable and economically productive citizens are essential to our democracy. Because of this, school counselors assist students in learning about the world of work. With a changing world, the ability to learn new skills and the ability to work with others are essential skills. In addition to those skills, it is important to learn more about career areas. ACCEPT provided an opportunity for students interested in the helping profession. It would be interested to see the ACCEPT class concept taken to

other career interest areas such as business or other professional fields. Different classes could be offered for various Holland career interest types.

*Character education.* The theme of character education involves the middle school reform movement as well as Utah's comprehensive guidance domain of creating a good citizen. By teaching character education, we create good citizens. Many of the ACCEPT students reported learning character education skills such as responsibility, service, respect, humility, empathy, and gratitude.

*Application.* Many students mentioned that they are able to use ACCEPT in other situations. The situations can be divided into two categories. The first is that they are able to use the class for another experience – an application, a resume, or a job interview. The second is that they are able to take what they learn and use it in other life situations – another class, different relationships, and the community.

Within application is also the opportunity that students and teachers mentioned that they had to discuss what happened in the class. This connection of what students learn in the classroom to the world outside the classroom is essential to their understanding and retention. Hope (1999) said,

Central to the process in middle school are informed teachers who understand adolescents and are willing to devote energy and time to their growth and development. Middle school teachers must realize that the curriculum needs to be made relevant to their students' lives. The subject matter taught in today's middle schools rarely relates to events unfolding in students' communities and to those things that students believe to be important (Perrone, 1993), and it is the rare

student who, on his or her own, makes connections between what transpires in the classroom and the “outside world” (p. 1).

During the interviewing process, students and teachers mentioned that they were able to discuss what they had learned. In addition, they discussed that they were able to use what they had learned to do better in other classes. This recognition of transferability showed understanding and application on the students’ part.

*Class satisfaction.* While discussing the ACCEPT class, students repeatedly said that ACCEPT made a difference because someone “outside of my family” (Student 990009) showed that they cared. Krystal (1998/99) said,

Teachers, therefore, do have a profound influence on their students, but this influence needs to go beyond such traditional teacher roles as standing in the front of the classroom solving for  $x$ ; interactions must occur in a more collaborative and social environment. This is what service-learning provides. Teachers and students work together on a community service project; share ideas; and analyze situations, other people, and their own reactions and feelings. (p. 2)

The relationships that students developed with their teacher and peers provided great satisfaction for the students.

During the interviews every student ( $n=30$ ) reflected positively about the class or said that they would take the class again. There were few students who provided criticism of the class; even then, they said that they would take the class again. Study design may account for some positive feedback because students having a positive experience may be more likely to volunteer for an interview. However, even the students who reflected a negative experience said that they would take the class again. This

supported Williams' (1990) similar findings in students who participated in field education or experiential service-learning that 90-100 percent of participants responded that the programs they participated in were beneficial or believed the program should be continued.

Perhaps one of the reasons for such high class satisfaction was the in-class reflection time. Many students mentioned the time used discussing how the class was progressing and how the students/teachers could perform better. According to Vygotsky, students need this structured, "continual, mentor-guided analysis of experience" time for proper intellectual development (Pritchard & Whitehead, 2004). It is interesting to note that one student was able to connect her experiences with ACCEPT to Vygotsky's work as she mentioned his "zone of proximal development" during the interview.

*Program administration.* It was clear from student, parent, and teacher interviews that the teacher makes a difference in the service-learning class. It is essential that if comprehensive guidance is a part of the ACCEPT program, the counselor needs to stay intimately involved in the program or personally train teachers who are taking over. This is supported by Wade (in Hope, 1999), who said that the preparation phase is the most important aspect of creating a service-learning program: "Teachers must receive in-service training in how [service-learning] can enhance the teaching and learning process, how it addresses the unique needs and characteristics of adolescents, and how it can be integrated into the classroom" (Hope, 1999, p. 3).



*Research Questions*

*Research question one.* Research question one attempted to identify whether or not a service-learning class assists in accomplishing the goals of a comprehensive guidance program at the research school as measured by students, parent, and teacher perceptions. In order to answer this question, we must first identify the goals of a comprehensive guidance program.

In the state of Utah, there are four identified domains which outline the student knowledge and skills that are desired of comprehensive guidance programs. They are academic/learning development, life/career development, multicultural/global citizen development, and personal/social development. Each domain is defined by standards with competencies to show how the domain is achieved. After interview analysis, the eight themes can be seen in each of the four domains. The ACCEPT program assisted in accomplishing the goals of comprehensive guidance program as perceived by students, parents, and teachers. Each competency can be directly linked to an interview theme (see Table 2).

TABLE 2: Comprehensive Guidance Goals and ACCEPT Interview Themes

The four Utah Comprehensive Guidance Program goals are listed in the first column, followed by the standard the student should achieve and what competency the student will develop if the standard is met. In the final column, the related ACCEPT theme is listed to answer research question one: Does a service-learning class assist in accomplishing the goals of a comprehensive guidance program at the research school as reflected by the students, parent, and teacher perceptions?

Domain	Standard	Competency	Related ACCEPT Theme(s)
<b>Academic/Learning Development</b>	Students will acquire the attitudes, knowledge, and skills that contribute to effective learning in school and across the life span.	Improve academic self-concept	Personal Awareness Learning Skills Character Education
		Acquire skills for improving learning	Learning Skills Character Education
		Achieve school success	Learning Skills
	Students will understand the relationship of school experiences and academic achievement to the world of work, home, and community.	Relate school to life experiences	Personal Awareness Social Skills Learning Skills Career Interests Character Education Application
		Students will complete school with essential coursework that provides a wide range of substantial post-secondary options.	Plan to achieve goals through the implementation of a Student Education Occupation Plan (SEOP)
	Understand the opportunities available and know how to access an array of post-secondary options		Program Administration Career Interests
<b>Life/Career Development</b>	Students will become aware of self in relation to the world of work.	Gain self-knowledge through experience and exploration	Personal Awareness Learning Skills Career Interests Character Education
		Understand self in the world of work	Personal Awareness Social Skills  Career Interests

	Students will explore the world of work.	Locate and evaluate life/career information	Social Development Career Interests
		Understand the relationship between work and society/economy.	Career Interests
		Experience the world of work	Career Interests
	Students will use strategies to achieve future life/career goals.	Learn to make life/career decisions	Personal Awareness Social Development Career Interests
		Learn to make life/career plans	Career Interests Learning Skills
		Learn to set goals to achieve life/career plans	Career Interests Learning Skills
<b>Multicultural/ Global Citizen Development</b>	Students will develop the ability to evaluate and to approach life as a contributing citizen in the global community.	Demonstrate a deep regard for self and others	Personal Awareness Social Development Character Education
		Demonstrate a personal commitment to basic democratic principles	Personal Awareness Social Development Learning Skills Character Education
		Demonstrate a civil and considerate spirit while participating in society.	Personal Awareness Social development Character Education
<b>Personal/Social Development</b>	Students will develop skills to understand and appreciate themselves and others.	Acquire self-knowledge	Personal Awareness
		Demonstrate interpersonal skills	Social Development
	Students will identify and utilize processes to set and achieve goals, make decisions, and solve problems.	Demonstrate skills for goal setting	Learning Skills
		Demonstrate skills for decision-making	Personal Awareness Learning Skills
		Demonstrate skills for problem solving	Learning Skills
	Students will develop the resiliency skills necessary for safety and survival.	Develop skills for physical self-care	Personal Awareness
		Develop skills for emotional self-care	Personal Awareness Class Satisfaction
Develop skills for self-advocacy		Personal Awareness Social Development Character Education	

*Research question two.* Research question two attempts to identify what students gleaned from the ACCEPT service-learning class: do they use experiences gained in the service-learning class after the class is over and has the ACCEPT program had long-term effects on students? In other words, have students been able to use the material/information/skills they gained in ACCEPT for other classes and experiences?

From the interviews, the researcher found that ACCEPT clearly had a positive effect on students, as shown by theme 7. The students continue to use the experiences after leaving the program in a variety of ways, including personal awareness (Theme 1) and social development (Theme 2).

Future uses of the material learned in ACCEPT appeared more obvious in students who have had more time and opportunities since taking the class. The students who took the class at the beginning of the program discussed the career development aspects that the ACCEPT program had on them (Theme 4) more so than students who recently took the class. This was also apparent in the discussion of applying ACCEPT to future school assignments, resumes, applications and interviews (Theme 6).

Long-term effects were also mentioned by students as they discussed the influence that the ACCEPT class had on them as elementary students and their desire to take the class as a junior high school student. Many students mentioned that the elementary school students will have an easier time transferring to the junior high school. This not only shows a long term effect of the program, but also gives insight into how much the students were able to glean from the program. They demonstrated care and concern about the futures of the elementary students with whom they worked

### *Theoretical Implications*

Examination of the eight themes shows similarity to other theories. For example, the eight themes identified in this study can easily be compared to Yalom's (1995) therapeutic factors. ACCEPT was designed to assist students by changing how they accepted themselves, others, and responsibility. The therapeutic factors describe "an enormously complex process that occurs through an intricate interplay of human experiences" (Yalom, 1995, p. 1) which also bring a greater understanding of self, others, and responsibility. Table 3, shows which themes parallel Yalom's therapeutic factors.

Table 3: ACCEPT Themes compared to Yalom's Therapeutic Factors

Yalom's Therapeutic Factor	Description of Therapeutic Factor	ACCEPT Interview Theme
Instillation of hope	Seeing others with similar problems get better. Knowing the group would help.	Personal Awareness Social Development
Universality	Seeing that everyone is alike.	Social Development
Imparting information	Direct guidance from others.	Learning Skills
Altruism	Helping others gives self-respect.	Character Education
Family group	Group members interact as they did with their family of origin.	Social Development
Development of socializing techniques	Developing basic social skills in the group.	Learning Skills
Imitative behavior	Leader models behavior	Program Administration Teacher Influence
Interpersonal learning	Importance of interpersonal relationships. Corrective emotional experience (exposure to feared situations with support). Group as social microcosm.	Social Development Learning Skills
Group cohesiveness	Relationships in group are deeply valued	Social Development
Catharsis	Being able to say what one wants and feels.	Program Administration Reflection Time
Existential factors	Learning that one must take responsibility for the way he or she lives.	Personal Awareness Character Education

In addition to Yalom's Therapeutic Factors, analysis of the data found that the ACCEPT class emphasized Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences (1983). Gardner's approach suggested that there are various ways of being intelligent and that each student has a different intellectual composition. One factor that led to the development of this theory was Gardner's concern about the school's emphasis on "linguistic symbolization and logical-mathematical symbolization" (Gardner & Hatch, 1990, n.p.). Gardner proposed that K-12 curriculum be organized so that curriculum reflected various methods to teach to multiple learning styles.

At the research school, school counselors helped all seventh graders ascertain their individual learning styles using Gardner's Multiple Intelligences theory. Because of this, the students taking the ACCEPT class were aware of the various learning styles to help children. During the interviews students mentioned that they used a variety of ways of teaching that helped the ACCEPT students learn the lessons and also helped the elementary students learn. Students described various ways of using multiple intelligences, as seen in Table 4.

Table 4

## ACCEPT application of Gardner's Multiple Intelligences

Intelligence	Description	Application in ACCEPT
Linguistic	Capacity to use language to express what is on your mind and understand people.	ACCEPT students read weekly with younger children.
Logical/Mathematical	Capacity to understand the underlying principles of some kind of causal system.	ACCEPT students prepared the lesson in a way that students would be able to best understand. They logically planned out the lesson and determined the time it would take to present it.
Musical/Rhythmic	Capacity to think in music, hear patterns, recognize them, and perhaps manipulate them.	ACCEPT students assisted the younger students in finding ways of recognizing patterns in school work. Music was also used during the class to assist in the lessons.
Bodily/Kinesthetic	Capacity to use your whole body or parts of your body to solve a problem, make something, or put on a production.	ACCEPT students were able to move around the classroom with the younger children. They also did puppet theater and played games to achieve the lesson goals.
Spatial	Ability to represent the spatial world internally in your mind.	ACCEPT students visualized how they were going to use the elementary classroom while they were preparing at the junior high.
Intrapersonal	Having an understanding of yourself: knowing who you are, what you can do, what you want to do, how you react to things, which things to avoid, and which things to gravitate toward.	ACCEPT students developed an understanding of their own abilities, interests, and feelings during the class.
Interpersonal	Ability to understand other people.	ACCEPT students developed an understanding of other's abilities, interests, and feelings during the class.

Based on Gardner's seven multiple intelligences as defined in *Frames of Mind* (1983). The eighth & ninth MI, Naturalist & Existential Intelligence, from *Intelligence Reframed* (1999), are not discussed in the ACCEPT class

### *Limitations*

The researcher was an Alpine School District employee and worked at the research school for eight years. Students completing interviews may have been former students of the researcher. This may have biased student, parent, or teacher responses, as the participants may not have wanted to share negative feelings with someone they knew. The study was limited to ACCEPT service-learning class participants at one school in Alpine School District. A small, homogenous sample size was used. Caution is needed in generalization to other populations.

It is important to note that the phenomenological findings showed service-learning to be an effective method of assisting in achieving the goals of a comprehensive guidance program. The findings reflect the experiences of students, parents, and teachers of the ACCEPT program. However, the findings do not imply that it is the only way to accomplish program goals. Many other methods of delivery may be used to achieve the goals of a comprehensive guidance program. It was clear from the interviews that the ACCEPT program was a consistently positive experience for students and made a genuine difference in the lives of students who participated in the program.

### *Research Recommendations*

Further studies investigating the relationship between service-learning and comprehensive guidance may be beneficial to the field. The following suggests future direction:

1. An experimental design comparing a service-learning study skills class (using the same ACCEPT principles) with a control group non-service-learning study skills



class looking at comprehensive guidance domains of academic/learning, life/career, multicultural/global citizen, and personal/social factors.

2. A quantitative outcome study comparing ACCEPT students to non-ACCEPT students measuring comprehensive guidance competencies pre-and post-course.
3. A study of other school districts within the same state (bound by the same state requirements for comprehensive guidance) to see what delivery methods they have for comprehensive guidance programs and compare the effectiveness to service-learning.
4. An investigation of counselor delivery methods of comprehensive guidance material and compare effectiveness to service-learning.
5. An investigation of counselor knowledge of service-learning programs and methods.

#### *Implications/Concluding Remarks*

This study supported the use of a service-learning class to assist in achieving the goals of a comprehensive guidance program. The class utilized standards and concepts of service-learning to create a program to assist in achieving the goals of a comprehensive guidance program. The findings demonstrate that students who participate in a service-learning class benefit in the following areas: academic/learning development, life/career development, multicultural/global citizen development, and personal/social development. In addition, students develop greater personal awareness, social skills, learning skills, and character. They also have opportunities to investigate career interests and use the experience in future activities. Students and counselors

would be well serviced if there was more literature on the integration of service-learning in comprehensive guidance programs.

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## APPENDIX A: Informed Consent Form

Dear Former ACCEPT Students & Parents:

Seven years ago we started the Alliance for Children: Collaborative Exceptional Peer Tutors (ACCEPT) service-learning program at Oak Canyon Junior High. As we continue to work with the ACCEPT program, we desire to understand better what effects ACCEPT has on students. In order to do so, we would like to interview former ACCEPT participants. We are looking for positive and/or negative feedback on how the program influenced or affected you.

Please sign this letter by \_\_\_\_\_ indicating whether or not you would like to participate in the study. A copy of the letter has been provided for you. Interviews will be at Oak Canyon Junior High and will take 20-30 minutes.

All the information gathered from the interview will be anonymous. Your real name will not be used at any point of the information collection or in the written case report. Instead you and any other person you mention will be given pseudonyms that will be used in all verbal and written records and reports. We would also like to record the interview. If you grant permission for audio taping, no audiotapes will be used or played for any reason other than this study. At the end of the study the tapes will be destroyed.

The research will be conducted with Brigham Young University Counseling Psychology and Special Education Department. If you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in a research project, you may contact Dr. Shane S. Schulties, Chair of the Institutional Review Board, 120B RB, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 84602; phone (801) 422-5490.

Please know that your participation in this research is voluntary; you have the right to withdraw at any point and for any reason. There are no penalties for non-participants. In return for your participation in the study, you will be given movie passes.

Thank you for your willingness to participate. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Kathy Stott at (801) 785-8760 or [stott@alpine.k12.ut.us](mailto:stott@alpine.k12.ut.us).

Sincerely,

Kathryn A. Stott  
Counselor

Paul R. Olson  
Principal

Please sign and return in the postage paid envelope with your return name on it.

I **would not** like to be interviewed. \_\_\_\_\_ Student signature

I **would like** to be interviewed & have read the above information sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_ Student signature

\_\_\_\_\_ Parent signature (if under 18)

\_\_\_\_\_ (initials) I give my permission to be quoted directly without using my name.

\_\_\_\_\_ (initials) I agree to be audio taped knowing my answers are anonymous.

\_\_\_\_\_ (initials) My parents are willing to be interviewed as well.

## APPENDIX B: Interview Guide

**Unstructured interviews do not follow specific questions as structured interviews would. Instead, the conversation determines the questions asked. Interview questions will fall under the following four categories: academic achievement, personal/social development, career development and citizenship. Sample questions are listed below.**

- How did you become interested in ACCEPT?
- Tell me about a typical day in ACCEPT.
- What was the class purpose?
- How did you learn about the class?
- What did you learn from ACCEPT?
- What do you remember about ACCEPT?
- What did you like about ACCEPT?
- What would you have changed about ACCEPT?
- Why did you take ACCEPT?
- Did your service in ACCEPT improve your academic skills (like reading, writing, and math)? If so, how?
- How was ACCEPT different than your other classes?
- How did ACCEPT influence your typical day in your other classes?
- Were your other class grades affected by the work you did in ACCEPT?
- How did ACCEPT make you feel as you were helping others?
- How was the interaction among Oak Canyon students? What was it like with the elementary students?
- What did you learn about yourself in ACCEPT?
- How did the things you learned in ACCEPT relate to your life outside of school?
- What was the interaction like among your peers in ACCEPT?
- What was your contribution to ACCEPT?
- How did people change in the class?
- What did you learn from the class that you still use now?
- How did ACCEPT help you learn more about careers?
- Were you interested in a helping profession (teacher, doctor, police, etc.) before taking ACCEPT? Are you now?
- How did your service in ACCEPT help others in the community?
- How do you serve the community now?
- What leadership skills are taught in ACCEPT?

## APPENDIX C: Research Question and Interview Questions

**Two main research questions were examined during this study. The following interview questions assisted in answering those questions.**

Research Question	Interview Question
<p>(1) Does a service-learning class assist in accomplishing the goals of a comprehensive guidance program at the research school as reflected by student, parent and teacher perceptions?</p>	<p><b>Academic/Learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did your service in ACCEPT improved your academic skills (like reading, writing, and math)? If so, how?</li> <li>• How was ACCEPT different than your other classes?</li> <li>• How did ACCEPT influence your typical day in your other classes?</li> <li>• Were your other class grades affected by the work you did in ACCEPT?</li> </ul> <p><b>Career/Life</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did ACCEPT help you learn more about careers?</li> <li>• What careers interest you?</li> </ul> <p><b>Multicultural/global citizen</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you serve the community now?</li> <li>• What leadership skills are taught in ACCEPT?</li> <li>• How did your service in ACCEPT help others in the community?</li> </ul> <p><b>Personal/Social</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did ACCEPT make you feel as you were helping others?</li> <li>• How was the interaction among Oak Canyon students? Elementary students?</li> <li>• What did you learn about yourself in ACCEPT?</li> <li>• What change did you see in the class?</li> </ul>
<p>(2) What did students glean from the ACCEPT service-learning class? Do students use experiences gained in the service-learning class after the class is over? Has the ACCEPT program had long-term effects on students?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did you become interested in ACCEPT?</li> <li>• Tell me about a typical day in ACCEPT.</li> <li>• What was the class purpose?</li> <li>• How did you learn about the class?</li> <li>• What did you learn from ACCEPT?</li> <li>• What do you remember about ACCEPT?</li> <li>• What did you like about ACCEPT?</li> <li>• What would you have changed about ACCEPT?</li> <li>• Why did you take ACCEPT?</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX D: Participant Information Summary

ID Code	Year	Gender	Availability/ Interview Location	Parent Interview
989901	1998-1999	M	Unavailable	
989902	1998-1999	F	School	
989903	1998-1999	F	Unavailable	
989904	1998-1999	F	School	
989905	1998-1999	F	School	Mother
989906	1998-1999	F	School	
990007	1999-2000	F	School	Mother
990008	1999-2000	F	School HS	
990009	1999-2000	M	School HS	
990010	1999-2000	M	Unavailable	
990011	1999-2000	F	School HS	
990012	1999-2000	M	Unavailable	
000113	2000-2001	F	School HS	
000114	2000-2001	M	School HS	
000115	2000-2001	M	School HS	
000116	2000-2001	F	School HS	Mother
000117	2000-2001	M	Unavailable	
000118	2000-2001	F	Home	
010219	2001-2002	M	Home	
010220	2001-2002	F	School HS	
010221	2001-2002	M	School HS	
010222	2001-2002	F	School HS	
010223	2001-2002	M	School HS	Mother
010224	2001-2002	F	School HS	
020325	2002-2003	F	School	
020326	2002-2003	F	School	
020327	2002-2003	M	School	
020328	2002-2003	M	School	Mother
020329	2002-2003	M	Unavailable	
020330	2002-2003	F	School	
030431	2003-2004	F	School	
030432	2003-2004	F	School	
030433	2003-2004	F	School	
030434	2003-2004	M	School	
030435	2003-2004	M	School	
030436	2003-2004	F	School	Mother

## APPENDIX E: Common themes among students, parents, and teacher

**Common themes were identified through interview analysis. For additional verification after theme identification, the researcher re-analyzed the interviews to see if the themes were present in the individual interviews. If the participants mentioned the theme it is represented by a dot.**

ID	Personal Awareness	Social Skills	Learning Skills	Career Interests	Character Education	Course Satisfaction	Application	Program Administration
989902	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
989904	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
989905	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
989906	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
990007	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
990008	•	•	•	•	•	•		•
990009	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
990011	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
000112		•	•	•		•		•
000113	•	•			•	•		•
000114	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
000115	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
000116	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
010217	•	•	•	•	•	•		•
010218	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
010219	•	•	•	•	•	•		•
010220	•	•	•	•	•	•		•
010221	•	•	•		•	•		
010222	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
020323	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
020324	•	•	•		•	•	•	
020325	•	•	•	•	•	•		•
020326	•	•	•			•		
020327	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
030428		•	•	•	•	•		
030429	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
030430	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
030431	•	•	•		•	•		•
030432	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
030433	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
P989901	•		•	•	•	•	•	
P990002	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
P000103	•		•	•	•	•	•	

P010204	•	•	•		•	•		•
P020305	•		•	•	•	•	•	•
P030406	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
T01	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
T02	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
T03	•	•	•		•	•		•

## APPENDIX F: Triangulation of Themes

Personal Awareness	Social Development	Learning Skills	Career Interests
Compliance with authority Confidence Humility Increased awareness of self Introspection Motivation Overcome fears, challenges Personal growth Personal growth Reflection Responsibility Scholarship Self-acceptance Self-appreciation Self-awareness Self-confidence Self-development Self-direction Self-discovery Self-exploration Self-understanding	Social growth Increased awareness of others Reciprocity Desire to serve Fostered peer relationships Positive class environment Acceptance of others Appreciation of others Awareness of others Awareness of community service Cooperation Cooperative learning Encourage others Friendship Interpersonal bonding Interpersonal learning Learning differences Learning similarities Learning to be around children Recognizes growth in others Tolerance	Improved academics Class activities Communication Scheduling Adaptation Applied learning Coping skills Transferable skills Emotional Friendship Incorporation of class principles Learning styles Motivation Competence Confidence in work, skills Planning Reflection Service Sharing Teaching Vicarious example vicarious learning	Career exposure Experience Applied learning Career path Hands-on learning Planning Responsibility Career exploration Teaching Helping professions
Character Education	Application	Class Satisfaction	Program Administration
Community awareness Compassion Service Empathy Emulation Example Humility Kindness Motivation Perspective taking Recognizes growth in others Respect Responsibility Sharing Tolerance	Civic responsibility Continued uses Influenced others Significance Future direction Academics Influences class choices Community service Adapting knowledge from children to adults Awareness of community Community service Compliance with authority Respect for authority Cooperation, after the fact Interpersonal skill building Service: desire, motivation Share skills with others (experienced teaching) Teaching outside of class Tolerance	Anticipation Captivating Excitement Loneliness Fun Happiness Interest Physical activity Relax Unique Friends Positive impact Experiential Positive class environment Positive impact on recipients Reciprocity	Concerns Selection process Motivation for class success Administrative support Teacher influence Influence of class on others in school

## APPENDIX G: Themes with Sub-themes

- Personal Awareness
  - Self-discovery
  - Self-confidence
  - Self-monitoring
  - Self-acceptance
- Social Development
  - Friendship
  - Cooperation
  - Awareness of others
  - Acceptance of others
- Learning Skills
  - Planning/Goal setting
  - Communication
  - Service
  - Tolerance
  - Adaptation
  - Leadership
- Career Interests
  - Experience
  - People Skills
  - Inspiration
- Character Education
  - Responsibility
  - Service
  - Respect
  - Humility
  - Empathy
  - Gratitude
- Application
  - Future school assignments
  - Resumes, internships application
  - Interview
- Class Satisfaction
  - Improved mood
  - Break from academic work
  - Personally meaningful
- Program Administration
  - Teacher influence
  - Participant selection
  - Concerns



## APPENDIX H: Journal Manuscript

*Jesse, a 7<sup>th</sup> grader, was referred to the counselor's office because the Art teacher was disturbed by some of Jesse's "death" drawings. Although low achieving academically, he was quiet and non-disruptive in class. He did not present as a behavior problem. Yet, when questioned about his drawings, he told of his plans to commit suicide. Jesse had two back-up ideas in case his first plan didn't work.*

*Lisa was a talented 8<sup>th</sup> grader who liked to act. However, she struggled academically and appeared to have few friends. During a Student Education Occupation Plan (SEOP) meeting, her mother shared with the counselor Lisa's history of mental illness.*

*Linda came into the counseling office for her SEOP with enthusiasm. Having recently taken a career interest inventory, she wanted to know more about "helping" professions. Because Linda was only in 8<sup>th</sup> grade she could not yet participate in the job shadowing program offered to 9<sup>th</sup> graders.*

*Heidi described her experience at the junior high school during lunch to the counselor—she had friends betray her, she struggled with grades, and she was confused about family situations. During her SEOP, Heidi's mother asked if there were any classes that would allow her daughter to help others. Her mother felt that this would help with her daughter's depression.*

These vignettes reflect true and common experiences for school counselors.

There are many students today who struggle with complex issues. Junior high school is a time of change. Students' bodies, families, schools, friends, and society are changing—and those groups are demanding that the adolescent change as well. The combination of

physical, social, emotional, and intellectual, changes make life difficult for most students (American Psychological Association, 2002).

With students facing new challenges, school counselors face new challenges as well. School counseling is a changing profession which is influenced by political, economical, educational, and social reforms (Lapan, 2001). It continues to evolve to meet the needs of students, communities, and society (Johnson & Johnson, 2003).

Recently, developments in the school counseling profession have been made to better meet the challenging needs of students. School counselors are no longer isolated in an office waiting to help students that come to them. They are integral parts of a comprehensive guidance and counseling program that affects the whole school (Johnson & Johnson, 2002).

One pedagogical method school counselors use to reach students is service-learning. Service-learning is an opportunity for students to implement what they are learning in the classroom by performing acts of service that benefit the community and then reflecting on what they have learned in class. It is based on community needs which complement the curriculum, reinforcing what the students are learning using an experiential approach (Billig, 2002). Traditionally, service-learning was used in post-secondary education to encourage college students academically, civically, and socially. Recently, it has expanded to all grade levels (Pritchard & Whitehead, 2004). Generally, it is a method used by classroom teachers. However, it has been adopted by school counselors, in various forms, as comprehensive guidance programs allow more development of guidance curriculum. Many times aspects of service-learning are seen in counseling programs such as peer helper programs, peer tutoring programs, or

community service. Whereas these programs are progressing towards service-learning, they fail to integrate full service-learning standards and concepts. This article discusses the relationship of a comprehensive guidance program and service-learning standards and concepts through evaluation of one service-learning class designed to assist in achieving the goals of a comprehensive guidance program at the middle school level.

### *Comprehensive Guidance Programs*

The 2003 American School Counselor Association [ASCA] National Model provided an organizational framework for school counseling programs. The framework defined the role and work of school counselors on an unprecedented level. In the past, school counselors have developed individual programs in response to the needs of their school based on suggestions of the school administration (Gysbers, 2004). The National Model represents a continuing shift from administrative-based practice of school counseling to a program-oriented approach of school counseling. It provides a model for school counselors to follow. By standardizing the practices of school counseling programs, educators are able to see the counselors' roles, make valuable connections to school mission statements and accreditation goals, and evaluate comprehensive guidance programs using a common language.

The ASCA National Model outlines a comprehensive national school guidance program with flexibility to accommodate local needs (Myrick, 2002). Using the model, counselors and other educators can integrate the counseling program into the overall school mission. The model outlines direct services for all students, not just the high-risk or high-performing students that counselors may have focused on in the past. The model assumes that all students need academic, career, personal and social competencies to

succeed in school and develop skills for the transition after school (ASCA, 2003; Baker, 2000; Downs, et al, 2002; Herr, 2001; Johnson & Johnson, 2003; Paisley & McMahon, 2001; Sink, 2002b).

The National Model is developmental in nature and based on the ASCA National Standards (ASCA, 2003; Campbell & Dahir, 1997), which are divided into three main competency areas: academic, career, and personal/social. Academic development includes “skills, attitude, and knowledge contributing to effective learning in school and across the life span” (Campbell & Dahir, 1997, p. 18). Career development includes “skills, attitude, and knowledge that enables students to make a successful transition from school to the world of work” (Campbell & Dahir, 1997, p. 19). Personal/social development includes the “skills, attitude, and knowledge which help students understand and respect self and others, acquire effective interpersonal skills, understand and practice safety and survival skills and develop into contributing members of society” (Campbell & Dahir, 1997, p. 19).

Many states have adapted the national model to meet their specific state needs (Gysbers, 2004). The Utah State Office of Education [USOE] added a fourth competency area of multicultural global/citizenship (USOE, 2004). This domain is designed to support students in developing “the ability to evaluate and to approach life as a contributing citizen in the global community” (USOE, 2004, p.1). The addition of this competency was intended to encourage students to “demonstrate a deep regard for self and others, personal commitment to basic democratic principles, and a civil and considerate spirit while participating in society” (USOE, 2004, p.1). It is based on students’ need to acquire skills, attitude, and knowledge to become “responsible,

productive, and healthy citizen[s] contributing to society in a changing world” (Sink, 2002a, p. 131). This addition to the national standards and emphasis on citizenship is not new; the 1992 Strategic Planning Act states that the mission of public education is to

Assure Utah the best educated citizenry in the world and each individual the training to succeed in a global society by providing students with skills for lifelong learning, occupational skills, character development, literacy, and basic knowledge through a responsive statewide educational system that guarantees local school communities autonomy, flexibility, and client choice, while holding them accountable for results. (USOE, 1998, p. 1)

To meet this challenge, the Utah Model of Comprehensive Guidance was designed to provide all districts and schools in Utah a comprehensive program designed to offer prevention, intervention, and crisis and referral services. Such services were designed to assist students in becoming respectful, responsible, and contributing citizens (USOE, 1998). Making multicultural citizenship development a fourth domain area (with academics, career, and personal/social development) displays an added emphasis on the need to assist students in citizenship development.

Utah has implemented a state-wide comprehensive guidance program in secondary education, establishing a structured programmatic approach with a developmental foundation for counseling that reaches all students, ensures accountability, defines the school counselor’s role (eliminating the non-guidance activities) and defines student competencies (USOE, 2004). The state also provides suggestions as to how individual schools can measure student outcomes. All secondary schools in Utah have participated in the program initiative, and all but five schools have implemented the Utah

Model of Comprehensive Guidance model. All 40 school districts in Utah have schools that participate in the comprehensive guidance program (USOE, n.d.).

In 1993, the Utah state legislature began allocating funds for the comprehensive guidance program. Utah is currently the only state with specific appropriations for comprehensive guidance (Gysbers, 2004; J. Petersen, personal communication, February 6, 2004). During 2003-2004 over six million dollars were allocated to comprehensive guidance (Kay, 2004). The State Board of Education established program standards that must be met in order to receive funding.

Over 73 percent of the state comprehensive guidance funds were used for personnel costs to hire counselors that brought the student-to-counselor ratio in secondary schools statewide from 550:1 in 1988 to 380:1 today (USOE, n.d.). In 2002, the national average of *high school* counselor-to-student ratio was 315:1 (U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Science, 2003). The American School Counselor Association recommends that counselor-to-student ratios not exceed 250:1. Research shows a strong relationship between low counselor-to-student ratio and schools who have a high level of comprehensive guidance program implementation (Nelson et al, 1998).

The Utah State Office of Education, the Utah State Board of Education, and the Utah State Board for Applied Technology Education employed independent researchers from The Institute for Behavioral Research in Creativity [IBRIC] to investigate how the comprehensive guidance program has affected students in Utah. IBRIC developed a scale to rank order nearly 100 schools on key implementation items from the counselors, administrator, and teacher surveys. A matched set of high and low implementing schools were evaluated. The report found that students in schools that had high comprehensive

guidance program implementation rated their overall education and job preparation higher; took more advanced math, science and vocational/technical courses; scored higher on the ACT in all test areas; and rated their guidance and career planning experience better overall than in low implementing schools (Nelson & Gardner, 1998). IBRIC also found that between 1991 and 1999 the number of students participating in concurrent enrollment courses, electronic high school, applied technology center programs, Advanced Placement courses/tests, early graduation, and the Centennial Scholarships have increased dramatically in high implementing comprehensive guidance schools (Nelson & Gardner, 1998; USOE, 2000).

Accountability is a key element of the national comprehensive guidance model and expresses the need for program results and evaluations. The National Model encourages all counselors to be accountable by demonstrating how they help students achieve (ASCA, 2003; Paisley & Hayes, 2003). Accountability establishes school counselors as critical players on the school team (Dahir & Stone, 2003). The national model urges counselors to ask themselves how students are different *because* of what school counselors do? (Wong, 2002). Data are essential to show the success or failure of programs. Unfortunately, such studies are sparse (ASCA 2003; Baker, 2000; Borders, 2002; Campbell & Dahir, 1997; Foster, Watson, Meeks, Young, 2002; Gysbers & Henderson, 2000; Sciarra, 2004; Whiston, 2002). However, there is some evidence that this is being addressed (Borders & Drury, 1992; Kuranz, 2002; Whiston & Sexton, 1998).

#### *Service-learning Programs*

Similar to the National Model of comprehensive guidance, service-learning focuses on academic, career, and personal/social development. In addition, a primary

goal of service-learning is civic development. Service-learning has been defined as a program, philosophy, and pedagogy with specific tasks that are combined with reflection and reciprocity (Jacoby, 1996, 2003; Pickeral & Bray, 2000). It is more than community service alone (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1999).

Service-learning is based on the theories of Frank Parsons (1909) and John Dewey (1916). Although he did not use the term “service-learning,” Parsons, known as the “father” of the guidance movement, encouraged a balance of traditional education, vocational learning, and society (Cobia & Henderson, 2003; Herr, 2001). This is consistent with the American School Counselor Association and Utah State Office of Education desire to balance academics, career, personal/social, and civic development.

Similarly, Dewey encouraged traditional education with a balance of experiential education within the context of a democratic society (Dewey, 1916). He felt that the role of the community in a student’s education was just as important as the role of the school and that learning should include hands-on experience in addition to traditional methods. This was often referred to as *progressive education*. It was based on the premise that children needed an educational model that was consistent with their developmental level (Sadovnik & Semel, 1999; U. S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1999). Recent legislative reforms that fund service-learning have encouraged the growth of service-learning programs nationwide (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1999).

Research shows that service-learning programs have a positive effect on students. Building on the work done by Conrad and Hedin (1991), Billig (2000) summarized



current service-learning research. Throughout the research, students who participated in service-learning activities showed measurable increases in personal/social development, civic responsibility, academic learning, and career exploration. In addition, the community and school environments also received benefits.

Scales, Blyth, Berkas, and Kielsmeier (2000) studied 1,153 middle school students from racially and socioeconomically diverse backgrounds in three different states. They found that social responsibility – defined as students’ concern for others welfare, felt responsibility to help others, and perceived ability to be effective helping others – increased among students who were enrolled in a service-learning program compared to control groups. Because learning has been found to be a social process as well as a cognitive process, increases in social responsibility create a social awareness that is valuable for academic learning. The study also found greater parental involvement with students who participated in service-learning programs.

The call for additional research is strong in the service-learning field (Billig, 2000; U. S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1999). Many schools have service-learning programs, and multiple resources are available to find methods of evaluation for the programs (Bringle, Phillips & Hudson, 2004; National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, n.d.).

Most often, service-learning programs are associated with an academic class. For example, a middle school science class studying the environment may adopt a service-learning project to help preserve a local canyon. Throughout the class they would learn about the environment, including trees, animals, water, and soil. They would develop a service project such as cleaning the area, developing a hiking trail, or creating a water

preservation system. Throughout the project, students would discuss and write about how their service is related to the science class and their community.

*Value of Service-learning in Meeting Comprehensive Guidance Goals*

In addition to classroom teachers, school counselors have adopted service-learning as a method to implement comprehensive guidance curriculum and goals. Both comprehensive guidance and service-learning programs strive to help students understand and develop needed skills to succeed in today's changing world. These skills include academic development, career development, personal/social development and multicultural citizenship development. However, there is a paucity of literature that discusses school counseling programs and school service-learning programs together, despite the similarity of goals. Many school counseling programs use aspects of service-learning as a method to teach guidance curriculum, provide responsive services, and assist with individual planning. This study looked at one junior high school to determine if using a service-learning class assisted in achieving the goals of a comprehensive guidance program.

*ACCEPT: A Service-learning Program*

Junior high school is a time of transition and can be difficult for many students (Lapan et al., 2001). Through Student Educational Occupational Plan meetings, an aspect of individual planning in comprehensive guidance, counselors at the research school found students who struggled both socially and personally as they developed academic and vocational skills. The department set goals to assist these students. The counselors started the Alliance for Children: Collaborative Exceptional Peer Tutors [ACCEPT] program. The program was designed to meet the needs of students based on the school

accreditation needs assessments, counseling department needs assessments, and district goals using the standards and concepts of service-learning programs.

The ACCEPT program began in Utah's Alpine School District, which has adopted a strong Deweyan philosophy of educating the whole child. Superintendent Vernon M. Henshaw stated that the district's success can be measured by the "happiness and well-being of every student" (Alpine School District [ASD], 2004, p. 3). In the annual district report, Henshaw reflected on the launch of Sputnik, the first Russian-made satellite that created national concern that the United States might lose the Cold War. This was also an important time in the history of school counseling. During this time, administrators and politicians were afraid schools had failed to prepare students for the future. School reform efforts brought about a greater emphasis in teaching students (specifically math and science), preparing teachers, and providing guidance for students in school. "We had to catch up [to the other countries]; it was imperative" (ASD, 2004, p. 3).

Henshaw supported comprehensive guidance by emphasizing that students in Alpine School District not only need to develop academic skills and vocational skills but also personal, social and civic attributes (ASD, 2004). The district seeks to educate students to become better people, workers, family members, and citizens. The school board has approved six areas of focus for the district: student achievement, community relationships, K-12 literacy, professional development, school and district culture, and technology.

The ACCEPT class attempts to balance Parson's vocational theories of education and Dewey's ideas of educational reform using a service-learning approach to education.

Students have traditional classroom instruction on academic, personal, social and career skills two days a week and an opportunity to develop career interests and employ experiential learning by teaching younger students the skills they have learned the other two days. (The research school provided a modified schedule where students attend class four days a week with one of the four days being an extended amount of class time.)

ACCEPT was designed to achieve district goals (student achievement, community relationships, K-12 literacy, and school and district culture) and to fulfill the individual students development needs of the junior high school. On the elementary level, kindergarteners were provided literacy education and third graders were provided character education regarding self acceptance, accepting others, and accepting responsibility, in addition to academic tutoring. On a junior high level, students were provided personal and social skill development, career training, academic encouragement, and citizenship skill development.

The school in this study has met state guidelines and approval for Utah comprehensive guidance program funds since the 1995-1996 school year. Data from needs assessments are available from 1994-2003. Based on the information gleaned from the counseling department and accreditation needs assessments and individual Student Education Occupation Plans [SEOP], in 1996 counselors developed the ACCEPT program to meet student needs.

Data showed that various stakeholders wanted the counseling department to assist with personal/social development and career development. Parents reported to counselors that their children did not feel accepted at school. Research shows that students who do not feel that they have a place in school disengage from school—emotionally or

physically—and will not be as academically or personally successful (Nelson, Covin, & Smith, 1996). Students and teachers reported that students had difficulty relating what they learned in class to the outside world. In addition, students reported that the counselors needed to do a better job explaining vocational options to the students. Comprehensive guidance research has demonstrated that counselors can assist with both these elements of career development (Lapan et al., 2001; Lapan, Gysbers, & Sun, 1997; Nelson & Gardner, 1998; Sink & Stroh, 2003; Whiston, 2002).

While considering different ways to help students relate what they learn in class to situations outside of class and different ways to help students feel more comfortable at school, counselors determined that a service-learning class could be implemented to achieve the goals of both groups. The class was designed for students who had a career interest in teaching or another helping profession, as well as for at-risk students. A one-year pilot program was started, with the counselor teaching the class during a weekly “enrichment period.”

A grant received from the district using federal safe and drug-free school monies was used to support the program. During this enrichment class period junior high students who were at-risk or who were seeking career interests were able to help at the elementary school by teaching character education lessons and providing academic tutoring to the students. Students then reflected on what they learned in the class through discussion, class assignments, and journal writing. Each student left ACCEPT with a booklet of reflection activities.

After the first year, many students and parents were interested in the ACCEPT class. There were over 100 applications for 12 openings. The counseling department

decided to move ACCEPT to a regular elective class period instead of the enrichment period. This enabled the students to have more experience tutoring and reflecting, as the program time increased from one day to four days a week.

ACCEPT has been an elective class since 1998. When the administration saw that it was a long-term program, they chose to have a teacher, rather than a counselor, teach the class. The author continued to oversee the program and write curriculum. Over 150 students have participated in the program.

During the seven years that the ACCEPT program has been in place no formal evaluation has been performed. Class-end evaluations have been given, but the data have not been evaluated. In order to investigate how service-learning relates to comprehensive guidance work together a qualitative study was done.

#### *Qualitative Study Findings*

Data were collected using phenomenological qualitative methods (Patton, 2002) for this study. Qualitative studies are an accepted method in school counseling research (Baker, 1995). The data were collected in a series of individual semi-structured interviews (Kvale, 1996) conducted with students, parents, and teachers of the ACCEPT service-learning program. Kvale defines seven stages of interview research: “thematizing, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analyzing, verifying and reporting” (1996, p. 88). Semi-structured interviews are conducted according to an interview guide but are neither rigorously structured nor open conversations (Kvale, 1996). The interviews generally followed a list of suggested questions. Interviews in educational research are a key tool in eliciting the type of information needed in this research. Without such interviews, it

would be difficult, if not impossible, to examine the nuances or finer levels of meaning in a study based primarily on changes in attitudes or beliefs (Tierney & Dilley, 2002).

Although interviewing adolescents presents unique challenges (Eder & Fingerson in Gubrium & Holstein, 2002), it is important that the student participants voice their own interpretations, rather than relying solely on adults. Selected parents of student participants were also interviewed separately after the student interview. Teachers were interviewed after the student data were collected. Interviewing parents and teachers added additional support for data collected from the students. This triangulation of data validates the material collected (Guion, 2002).

Analysis and interpretation of the qualitative data followed the same phenomenological assumptions used during data collection. This approach aimed at understanding how individuals see their world by investigating the core meanings they describe and how they create meaning by analyzing the text. The focus is not on categorization or classification but on the meanings of an event (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

Data analysis for the qualitative aspect of this study consisted of a series of interrelated steps designed to refine and interpret different levels of data. These steps included:

1. Developed a sense or overview of the entire text. Although interpretation starts during the first interview (Rubin & Rubin, 1995), it was necessary to set aside preconceived ideas and develop a sense of all interviews as a whole (Kvale, 1996)
2. Reviewed individual texts multiple times to gain a deeper meaning into individual experiences. This was necessary to find the core meaning of the

whole experience revealed through individual statements, expressions, and tones (Kvale, 1996; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). To validate the interpretation of the interviews, two independent parties analyzed five transcripts. The researcher then compared core meanings found among the three interpretations.

3. Selected a language that assisted with describing the experience (Kvale, 1996) by finding various concepts and themes that were shared among participants (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). The researcher used the language of all three individuals to identified themes that represented the core meanings found.
4. Discussed data with an independent evaluator, after initial analysis to determine the reliability of the interpretation (Kvale, 1996).

### *Findings*

Participants in the ACCEPT program shared ideas, thoughts, feelings and perceptions for this study. Interpretation of the interviews yielded eight themes: personal awareness, social development, learning skills, career interests, character education, application, class satisfaction and program administration

#### *Personal development*

Junior high is a time of change for most students. By having students participate in their community greater personal development including greater self discovery, confidence, monitoring and acceptance can be development

Many students interviewed said that the purpose of ACCEPT was to learn to “accept yourself, others, and responsibility”. Most lessons plans were based around this concept.



Junior high school students found that what they were teaching the younger students “kind of carried over to” themselves (Student 989906). Students reported accepting themselves more. Other studies have found that one of the most valuable outcomes of participation in a service-learning activity is an increase in self-esteem (Obert, 1995). Students found that they felt better about themselves as they were able to help others.

### *Social Skills Awareness*

Throughout the interview process, students discussed interactions with their peers and society. They described an awareness of others talents and abilities. They described relationships in ACCEPT being “closer than just a normal class” (Student 989909).

Students were able to see how they are interdependent. This concept in social awareness allows students to see how individuals are influenced by others. The ACCEPT class provided a physical experience to understand the interdependence of other, not just cognitive process as a traditional class would typically provide. If someone did not do their “job” then the class suffered in teaching and working with the elementary students, not just in a group grade.

The social development was not just for students who needed increased social skills. The improvement was also seen in students who were described as “model” (Teacher 03) students. Teachers described increases in social skills, conflict management, and character skills for most students.

Students reported greater friendship, cooperation, cooperative learning, awareness of others, appreciation of others and acceptance of others. These skills create more aware citizens and are essential in the cultural development of students. Vygotsky stated,

Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological). This applied equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All higher functions originate as actual relationship between individuals (Vygotsky as cited in Pritchard & Whitehead, 2004).

### *Learning Skills*

Throughout the interviews, student and parents referred to specific skills that were learned during the class: planning/goals setting, communication, service, tolerance, adaptation, and leadership. Each of these skills reflected areas in which students felt that they gleaned from ACCEPT. Students applied what they learned in ACCEPT to improve academic work. Many students said that learning to accept responsibility helped them to overcome procrastination and other problems in their other classes. This ability to transfer skills is a higher level of thinking.

### *Career Interests*

The history of the school counseling profession is rooted in career education. Employable and economically productive citizens are essential to our democracy. Because of this, school counselors assist students in learning about the world of work. With a changing world, the ability to learn new skills and the ability to work with others are essential skills. In addition to those skills, it is important to learn more about career areas. ACCEPT provided an opportunity for students interested in the helping profession. It would be interested to see the ACCEPT class concept taken to other career

interest areas such as business or other professional fields. A class could be offered for various Holland career interest types.

### *Character Education*

The theme of character education involves the middle school reform movement as well as Utah's comprehensive guidance domain of creating a good citizen. By teaching character education, we create good citizens. Many of the ACCEPT students reported learning character education skills such as responsibility, service, respect, humility, empathy, and gratitude.

### *Application of Class*

Many students mentioned that they are able to use ACCEPT in other situations. The situations can be divided into two ways. The first is that they are able to use the class for another experience – an application, a resume, or a job interview. The second is that they are able to take what they learn and use it in other life situations – another class, different relationships, and the community.

Within application is also the opportunity that students and teachers mentioned that they had to discuss what happened in the class. This connection of what students learn in the classroom to the world outside the classroom is essential to their understanding and retention. Hope (1999) said,

Central to the process in middle school are informed teachers who understand adolescents and are willing to devote energy and time to their growth and development. Middle school teachers must realize that the curriculum needs to be made relevant to their students' lives. The subject matter taught in today's middle schools rarely relates to events unfolding in students' communities and to those

things that students believe to be important (Perrone, 1993), and it is the rare student who, on his or her own, makes connections between what transpires in the classroom and the ‘outside world’ (Hope, 1999, p. 1)

During the interviewing process, students and teachers mentioned that they were able to discuss what they had learned. In addition, they mentioned that they were able to use what they had learned to do better in other classes. This recognition of transferability showed understanding and application on the students’ part.

### *Class Satisfaction*

While discussing the ACCEPT class, students repeatedly said that ACCEPT made a difference because someone “outside of my family” (Student 990009) showed that they cared. Krystal said

Teachers, therefore, do have a profound influence on their students, but this influence needs to go beyond such traditional teacher roles as standing in front of the classroom solving for  $x$ ; interactions must occur in a more collaborative and social environment. This is what service-learning provides. Teachers and students work together on a community service project; share ideas; and analyze situations, other people, and their own reactions and feelings (Krystal, 1998/99, p. 2).

The relationships that students developed with their teacher and peers provided great satisfaction for the students.

During the interviews every student ( $n=30$ ) reflected positively about the class or said that they would take the class again. There were few students who provided criticism of the class; even then, they said that they would take the class again. Study

design may account for some positive feedback because students having a positive experience may be more likely to volunteer for an interview. However, even the students who reflected a negative experience said that they would take the class again. This supported Williams (1990) similar findings in students who participated in field education or experiential service-learning that 90-100 percent of participants responded that the programs they participated in were beneficial or believed the program should be continued.

#### *Program administration*

It was clear from student, parent and teacher interviews that the teacher makes a difference in the service-learning class. It is essential that if comprehensive guidance is a part of the ACCEPT program that the counselor needs to stay intimately involved in the program or personally train teachers who are taking over. This is supported by Wade who said that the preparation phase is the most important aspect of creating a service-learning program. "Teachers must receive in-service training in how it can enhance the teaching and learning process, how it addresses the unique needs and characteristics of adolescents, and how it can be integrated into the classroom" (in Hope, 1999, p. 3).

The researcher was an Alpine School District employee and worked at the research school for eight years. Students completing interviews may have been former students of the researcher. This may have biased student, parent, and teacher responses.

The study was limited to ACCEPT service-learning class participants at one school in Alpine School District. A small, homogenous sample size was used. Caution is needed for generalization to other populations.

It is important to note that the findings showed service-learning to be a successful method of assisting in achieving the goals of a comprehensive guidance program. However, the findings do not imply that it is the only way. Many other methods of delivery may be used to achieve the goals of a comprehensive guidance program. It was clear from the interviews that the ACCEPT program was a consistently positive experience for students and made a genuine difference in the lives of students who participated in the program.

### *Research Recommendations*

Further studies investigating the relationship between service-learning and comprehensive guidance may be beneficial to the field. The following suggests future direction:

1. An experimental design comparing a service-learning study skills class (using same ACCEPT principles) with a control group non service-learning study skills class looking at comprehensive guidance domains of academic/learning, life/career, multicultural/global citizen and personal/social factors.
2. A quantitative outcome study comparing ACCEPT students to non-ACCEPT students on comprehensive guidance competencies pre and post course.
3. It would be helpful to compare other districts within the same state (bound by same state requirements for comprehensive guidance) to see what delivery methods they have for comprehensive guidance programs.

4. An investigation of counselor delivery methods for comprehensive guidance material.
5. An investigation of counselor knowledge of service-learning programs/methods.

### *Concluding Remarks*

School counseling began as a profession in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Brewer (Herr, 1979) said that the four most important conditions were “division of labor, growth of technology, the extension of vocational education, and the spread of modern forms of democracy” (Herr, 1979, p. 22). We can see immense growth in these four areas over the last century. As we enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we see similar growth in the school counseling profession. It has moved from a position oriented focus to a program focus (Gysbers, 2001).

At the same time that the school counseling profession was starting, the progressive movement in education was occurring. Dewey (1916) believed that education and democracy should work together and found that students learn best by actively doing. Progressive education took Dewey’s form of pragmatism and experimentalism and developed a curriculum that was based on the needs of the child (Semel & Sadovnik, 1999). In 1964, Cremin (Herr, 1979) stated that the remaining ideas of the progressive movement are seen in the role of the school counselor. Many of these ideas can still be seen in school counseling today (Gibson & Mitchell, 1995).

Comprehensive Guidance provides clear domains, standards, and competencies for student achievement. It has been found that students at schools where comprehensive guidance is implemented achieve more in many areas (Nelson, Gardner, & Fox, 1998).

Comprehensive guidance leaders have also suggested various ways of measuring outcome (USOE, 2004). Even with such assistance, there is a continual need for rigorous program evaluation research studies including studying “the impact the programs are having on students, the schools where they learn, and the communities in which they live” (Gysbers, 1995, p. 1). The research is needed to encourage comprehensive guidance program growth and improvement efforts.

The ACCEPT program combines the structure, theory, and curriculum of comprehensive guidance and the concept of active learning from Dewey in the service-learning class. This study was unique in that it evaluated a method to assist in achieving the comprehensive guidance program goals through a service-learning class as perceived by students, parents, and teachers. In effect, it did as Gysbers petitioned, it looked at the impact programs have on students, the schools, and the community.



Abstract for journal article: This study supported the use of a service-learning class to assist in achieving the goals of a comprehensive guidance program. The findings suggest that students who participate in a service-learning class benefit in the following areas domains: academic/learning development, life/career development, multicultural/global citizen development and persona/social development. In addition, students develop greater personal awareness, social skills, learning skills, and character. They also have opportunities to investigate career interests and use the experience in future activities.

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