

MASCA Counselor's Notebook

MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL COUNSELORS ASSOCIATION

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New Ideas; New Tools

By Melinda Cripps, MASCA 2023-2024 Board Chair and Director of School Counseling, Billerica High School

Hi Folks! I'm freshly back from the North Atlantic Regional (NAR) School Counselor Association's Leadership Development Institute (LDI), the first in-person conference for NAR in over four years. MASCA leadership and emerging leaders met with School Counselor Associations (SCAs) from across the northern region of the United States, and we were graciously hosted by Universal Technical Institute in New Jersey. Their hands-on facilities and unique approach to preparing their students for the workplace is second to none, and for the right student who is passionate about working with their hands to enter a lucrative career, UTI may be a serious contender in their list of options. But, I digress.

One of the things I love about meeting colleagues from across the country is that we are able to open our minds to new ideas and perspectives that we have not perhaps considered be-



Melinda Cripps

fore. And personally, I'm right in that sweet spot of feeling energized about this school year and looking forward to learning and sharing; that period of time right after the craziness of the new school year has settled a bit and there is a rhythm to the days and weeks, but before the rush of the holidays and all that brings when balancing our energy distribution across family, friends, and the needs of our students. And this sweet spot has allowed me to open my mind to something that only a few weeks ago I was vehemently against: AI. Chat GPT, Bard, Claude, and the like. Yep, artificial intelligence as a tool in our school counseling practice. Stay with me, and please allow me to share more.

Recently MASCA held an online PD about artificial intelligence and how it can be used in the school counseling setting. This got me thinking- if MAS-

CA is spending time and energy on this topic, maybe it is something that I should be curious about, instead of how I really felt: scared and uncertain. Hearing the presenters' perspectives, combined with their slides helped me to see that maybe, possibly, AI could be a tool in our toolkit. And then, at the NAR LDI this past weekend, we were treated to a session on Generative AI in school counseling. And, wow.

The presenter first explained that we use AI all the time, but we may not realize it. Siri, Hey Google, Alexa, and even talking to our TV remotes to find our favorite show are just a few examples of how we use AI daily. Highlighting that we are already using AI was key- it made it less scary. And then, something magical happened. We were taught how to use this tool, step by step, to teach it how to be an assistant to our work. "Use it like your own personal assistant", the presenter told us. "It can help you get things done more efficiently, and in less time." Who doesn't love that?! So, I listened and learned.

Here's just a handful of neat things I learned that Generative AI can assist with, and this is not an exhaustive list:

- Developing a list of discussion questions for group counseling or classroom discussion on a topic of your choosing
- Generating writing prompts for student essays
- Creating points of discussion

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Lauren Robillard
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Paige Kenney
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South Middle School Brockton

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Retired School Counselor
Anne Thidemann French
Retired School Adjustment Counselor

School Adjustment Counselors/ School Social Worker SIG

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School Adjustment Counselor
Gardner High School

Kate Nidel
Retired School Adjustment Counselor
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The Academy at Kiley Middle School

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Franklin County Technical School

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Tantasqua Regional High School
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Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School

ASCA NAR LDI - Time Well Spent

By Bob Bardwell, MASCA Executive Director and Executive Director of School Counseling Services Boston Public Schools

For regular readers of these articles, you know that MASCA does many great things. Adding to this list is that from October 19-21 nine of your MASCA colleagues attended the ASCA North Atlantic Region (NAR) Mid-Year Leadership Development Institute (LDI) at the Bloomfield, NJ campus of UTI. The last NAR meeting was held in 2019 and has not been held since then due to Covid. Let's just say it is good to be back.

Mindy Cripps (Board Chair), Jessica Descartes (Board Assistant Chair), Maryann Margiotta (Mentoring Coordinator), Lauren Costanzo, Rani Gould, Paige Kenney, Jon Nardi, Giselle Rojas (Emerging Leaders) and I represented Massachusetts at this regional gathering. We joined 25 other state school counselor association (SCA) leaders from across the region (Vermont, New York, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware) and from as far as South Carolina and Alaska.

Of the nine of us, I was the only one who had been to the NAR meeting before. This was my 8th NAR meeting, the first being in 2005 at Manhattanville College. Back in those days, someone from the region would offer to coordinate and we would ask a college to host us for meetings. Each SCA paid for travel and lodging expenses. I offered to help plan the event in 2007 when we hosted the region in Springfield at Western New England and Springfield Colleges and stayed at the Clarion Hotel in West Springfield.

In 2009 when former MASCA Executive Director and Past President Jan Tkaczyk went to work for UTI, she was able to convince them to host our meetings. This meant that UTI would pick up the cost for housing and food and meant that SCA's would only have to pay for transportation to and from the meeting site. But it did mean we would be meeting at a UTI campus. In the early days we traveled back and forth between Norwood, MA and Exton, PA. When the Norwood campus closed in 2019 it meant that we also would travel south to Bloomfield, NJ, which opened in 2019. From 2020-2022 there were no in-person events due to Covid.

So why is the NAR meeting so important to MASCA? It is important because it allows our board leaders and Emerging Leaders to participate in a regional ASCA meeting at a much-reduced cost due to the generosity of UTI. MASCA cannot afford to send nine folks to the annual Conference and



Robert Bardwell
Executive Director, MASCA

LDI in places like Atlanta, Kansas City or Long Beach (sites of recent and upcoming ASCA National Conferences) but we can send nine people to New Jersey.

Besides the monetary value, the NAR LDI proves to be invaluable for our SCA leaders. They meet dedicated and passionate colleagues who often share the same values, interests and goals, not only around school counseling, but also as leaders of our state SCAs. They share ideas, ask lots of questions and provide resources to support one another. We laugh, we support one another and we eat well thanks to UTI.

There were sessions on artificial intelligence, policy governance, conference planning, advocacy and board recruitment and retention, all of which help MASCA to look at what we are doing and see what we can bring back to Massachusetts to improve our programs and resources. Many

thanks to Maryann Margiotta for spearheading the session on mentoring and providing our NAR peers an overview of our award-winning mentoring program. We got many compliments and inquiries about our program. It is one of the many things that MASCA is knocking out of the park.

Feedback from this meeting gave high marks from participants. Some comments from participants included:

- "I really liked the learning and sharing opportunities and all the topics that were chosen were very relevant and helpful. I walked away with lots of ideas and connections!"
- "I loved how regions in the Northeast came together to express struggles and share best practices from other states. This was an amazing experience to bring together new generations and old guard."
- "Great mix of offerings. Very informative presenters, ability to network! Like the Thursday- Friday schedule."

I would like to thank my eight colleagues for making the commitment to attend this important meeting. Not only does it require being away from their jobs and families for three days, but also is a major commitment of mental and physical energy.

Plans are already be made for the 2024 version, but this time most likely at the UTI Exton, PA campus for next October. Want a chance to experience a future NAR meeting? Here is your chance. MASCA will invite our 2024-25 Board leaders and Emerging Leaders to attend. Let me know if you want to go as well.



Welcome to our Newest Members

The following have joined MASCA in the last month:

Amanda Apostolou	Amy Jo Holmes
Kimberly Arena	Izzat Jarudi
Bri Bradley	Tiana Jordan
Mallory Burke	Murielle Joseph
Linda Carlise	Grace Kenney
Emily Casella	Laney Kleszczynski
Sydney Chory	Cameron Lathan
Ellie Cooper	Jeffrey Lee
Jennifer Costa	Jared Leroux
Kendra Currier	Emma Luiso
Ashley Davis	Morgan McCarthy
Jackie Davis	anna Miranda
Erin Doherty	Aibhlinn Moore
Aries Dong	Caroline Morales
Courtney Erhardt	Jacqueline Olivero-Fernandez
Kathryn Ferencsik	Kelley Paling
jieyi fu	Kim Patrizi
Melissa Greco	nicole pendleton
Nolisha Greer	Anusha Rangu
Jennifer Guerrero	Sydney Smith
Julia Hagan	Kate St Lawrence
Brian Harris	Joshua Sussman
Nicole Henkel	Taunya Wahlers

*If you know any of these new members,
please extend a warm welcome and greeting.*

We are happy you have joined us!

New Ideas...

(continued from page 1)

with students that are processing trauma or tragedy

- Brainstorming a project or problem for a student
- Improving your writing, checking over your writing, creating articles
- Assistance with writing a DRAFT letter of recommendation, to be edited and personalized by the school counselor
- Reviewing emails, letters, and finding out where the pushback points may be
- Language translation
- Creating survey questionnaires
- Summarizing an article so that you can capture the most important points
- Adjust the tone, intensity, and enthusiasm of your writing

What I realized was that I needed to be shown how the technology works, what it can do for me, and how it can benefit my work. By using generative AI and learning how to direct it properly, it can save me time, which means more face to face time with students. I'm excited to share this with my department at our next PD meeting, and perhaps you may want to explore more about AI yourself. While I am certainly no expert, I am happy to share what I am learning with anyone who'd like to reach out and ask. We can learn together!

So, ask yourself, "What am I learning lately? What can I be curious about? How will this benefit my work with students?" Whatever you're diving into this season, I hope you will approach it with a zest for exploring and the curiosity of an open heart.

"You just keep showing up!"

by John S. Steere, Ed.D, MASCA Ethics Committee member

I SO wish that my memory was better! If it was, I could tell you this great story of a podcast that I listened to recently where the reporter's story resonated so much with me that I decided to tell my colleagues on the MASCA ethics committee about it. Sadly, now my memory has failed me when I sit down to write this article on what the exact context of the story was after my colleagues asked me to write a piece for the MASCA Counselor's Notebook about that story. However, my memory does remember a piece of that story that

I feel is very relevant to our continued conversation on ethics.

"You just keep showing up" is the line that has my memory has retained. It is a simple quote, however in the context of ethics, it is something that provides a great idea to us all. You see, ethics for many people is difficult and hard to understand. Furthermore, it can be really boring and tedious to discuss with any real consistency because each ethical situation can be so challenging to traverse when the answer may not be simple and clear cut. Making

people further shy away is that you may not even get an answer for the situation and you're stuck. However, (and this is a big however), "you just keep showing up"! Ethics as a topic need to be discussed consistently and furthermore, each ethical situation does provide the opportunity for us to grow as school counselor in best being able to support our students. All you have to do is simply show up.

So... How are you showing up today...?

Save the Date for MASCA's Premier PD Event!

For more information go to ncyionline.org/conferences/mascac/



Submit your proposal NOW!

The Massachusetts School Counselor Association is soliciting proposals for presentations promoting evidence-based programs in the domains of academic, career, and social/emotional development or highlighting the latest techniques and practices in school counseling. Presentations showcase proven programs, current research, or skills of value to counselors, pre-K to postsecondary as well as district personnel, graduate students and counselor educators. MASCA is committed to providing programming that fosters inclusion, diversity, equity, and access, and we welcome session proposals that address these topics.

[Click here to submit a proposal](#). The deadline to submit is November 15!

Grad Students! Submit your poster presentation!

Interested graduate students can learn more and submit their proposals [HERE](#). Presenting a poster during graduate studies is a wonderful opportunity for you to showcase your work. Proposals are due Friday, December 15, 2023 (no exceptions). Questions about the graduate student poster session can be directed to

Dr. Maria Letasz at mletasz@westfield.ma.edu.

SSGA Takes Flight!

By Ruth Carrigan, MASCA Conference Chair and Director of School Counseling, Whitman-Hansen Regional High School

The first meeting of the year for the South Shore Guidance Association was held at the Bridgewater State University Flight Training Center at the New Bedford Airport. Hosted by BSU Admission Office, school counselors from across the South Shore learned all about the aviation program.



There is a huge industry demand for pilots, so if you have students considering a career in aviation, please encourage them to check out the program at BSU.



The counselors even had the chance to try out the flight simulators and had cockpit visits to several of college planes at the airport. This was really interesting and unique learning opportunity.





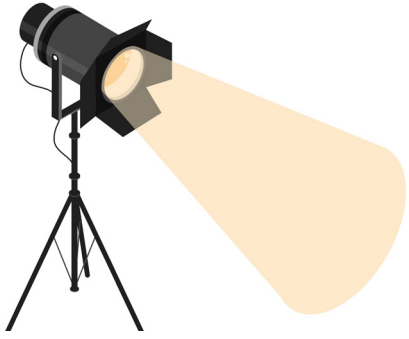
A high-flying fun, inspiring and educational time was had by all!



November 2023 Awareness Dates

Adoption Awareness Month	13-21 National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week
College Application Month	13 World Kindness Day
Military Family Appreciation Month	13-19 Transgender Awareness Week
National Career Development Month	13-17 American Education Week
National Family Caregivers Month	13-19 National Apprenticeship Week
National Homeless Youth Awareness Month	16 International Day for Tolerance
National Runaway Prevention Month	16 Children's Grief Awareness Day
National Scholarship Month	16 National Parental Involvement Day
Native American Heritage Month	18 Family Volunteer Day
Picture Book Month	18 International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day
7-11 Solidarity Week	19 National Adoption Day
11 Veterans Day	20 Transgender Day of Remembrance
	24 Native American Heritage Day
	24 Random Acts of Kindness Friday





SIG Spotlight: Retiree SIG

Attention Retirees and Future Retirees: Become Informed! Advocate for Fairness

Advocate to Eliminate the GPO and WEP!

Retiree SIG co-chairs, Anne Thidemann French and Helen O'Donnell

Note: Although traveling in Italy, Anne is reading the NTA Magazine and forwarded this article for our MASCA Colleagues emailing, "This article seems pretty good. Explains things in plain language and has real life examples."

MA is one of 15 states impacted by the GPO/WEP legislation!!! GPO/WEP deprives millions of public servants of the Social Security benefits they've earned. NEA-Retired members are leading the charge to change the law.

What is the Government Pension Offset (GPO)? *GPO reduces or eliminates the Social Security spousal or survivor benefits of people who also get a pension based on federal, state or local government employment that is not covered by Social Security. It impacts more than 730,000 educators.*

What is the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP)? *WEP reduces*

or eliminates Social Security benefits for people who, over the course of their careers hold jobs covered by Social Security and jobs not covered by Social Security – including educators who take part-time or summer jobs to make ends meet. It affects more than 2 million educators.

KEY ARTICLE TAKEAWAYS

1. **Currently more than 2.7 million hard-working Americans are affected by the WEP and GPO regulations, which slash Social Security and pension benefits.**
2. **These regulations penalize workers who live in GPO/WEP states, but who have had paid into Social Security in previous jobs.**
3. **NEA-Retired members are advocating for legislation to repeal both GPO and WEP – and stop punishing public servants for their decision to serve the public good.**

https://www.nea.org/nea-today/all-news-articles/being-teacher-cost-retiree-111384?utm_source=neatoday&utm_medium=e-

mail&utm_campaign=20231018_newsletter&ms=email_neatoday_20231018_newsletter

How can you be more informed?

- Read this article.
- **Marie Ardito** of **Retirees United** has joined the Retiree SIG several times to talk about GPO/WEP and legislative advocacy. She welcomes your inquiries mariearditto@retireesunited.org
- **Join the Retiree SIG on Thursday, February 15, 3:30 to 4:30 PM** – Ward Johnson, Regional Retirement Specialist for MTA will present *Proactively Planning for Retirement*: an informational meeting to MASCA members about preparing for retirement and also any updates or useful info for those of us who are already retired. You may pre-register [here](#).



May I Recommend...

By Cory McGann, MASCA Governing Board member, Emerging Leader Liaison and
CSchool Counseling Department Head, Ashland High School

High school counselors are in the heat of recommendation letter season, as many students look to apply early to colleges. But sometimes, even the most talented people need a counselor in their corner, writing helpful letters to admission on their behalf. Here's one I wrote. There are sixteen song references. See if you can spot them all!

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
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12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____

October 22, 2023

To the Office of Undergraduate Admissions,

It is with great pleasure that I have this opportunity to write a letter of recommendation on behalf of one of our top seniors, Taylor Swift. Taylor is a kind, hard-working, fearless student with great potential. I have known Taylor since she was a fifteen year old sophomore, just starting to make her way through high school. Back then, never in my wildest dreams could I have imagined how far she has come as a student. I can attribute her growth back to December of her 10th grade year where Taylor really started to come into her own as a student.

There was a period of time where Taylor was struggling with relationship issues, but she was able to shake it off and not let it affect her academic work. Taylor is fastidious about completing assignments, and would never turn in just a blank space for her work.

Taylor has the respect of both her peers as well as the faculty and staff. She is a pleasure to have in class, and not someone a teacher would say "I knew you were trouble" from the moment they saw them. She gets along wonderfully with all of her fellow students and does not create any bad blood between them.

One instance where I saw Taylor take a leadership role was when she participated in a leadership activity this year with the new ninth grade students. One of the students didn't have a group and was lost. Taylor immediately took the initiative, said to the student "you belong with me" and added her to her group. I was impressed that she seamlessly took control of a situation and made the student feel better.

Taylor has discovered a passion for music, specifically playing guitar and has begun to write her own music! Her discovery of music is a bit of a love story for her, finding it to be a release from the rigor of her academics. At graduation she intends to play the school song, and it will be such a treat to hear our song played by such a talented performer.

While we are happy for her opportunities ahead of her, we are sad to see her graduate and leave us. We know we are never ever getting back together, but that's OK because we know she has a bright future.

Forever and Always,

*Tim McGraw
School Counselor
White Horse High School*

Making the MA Model 3.0 work for you and students (instead of the other way around)

The MA Model is a significant program with many elements. Have you ever had the feeling you are working very hard to develop or improve elements such as curriculum and surveys and family engagement and small groups and program audits and time studies and events and referrals and communication and scheduling and community outreach and academic support and attendance and crisis interventions and..... and..... and for you and students and you wonder why it sometimes seems that you are working for the Model instead of the Model working for you? We have a hunch the answer is yes.

Two ways to help make the Model more accessible and work for you are 1) having conversations with fellow counselors about their experiences with the Model and 2) identifying specific elements that make the most sense for your students. Sometimes getting caught up in the process takes away from relying on people for help. Sometimes trying to do too much at once gets overwhelming when it would be better to focus on quality instead of quantity.

Talking about the MA Model 3.0 to Share Experiences

by Dave Elsner, MA Model Co-Chair

We can say that everything in the Model makes sense, but how do we make sense of the best way to use the Model, to improve our programs, to help make everything more efficient, and to prioritize what to work on when and howso that students get the most benefit possible and we can work most effectively? Here are some simple suggestions to begin conversations to help get started or get advice as you consider using the Model and/or continue to implement it as a tool to improve programming and student outcomes.

- Reach out to the MA Model Committee. We are here to help and provide as much resource as we can. You can do this through

email to the Co-Chairs (elsner@tri-county.us or cesielionis@asrsd.org). The Committee would be glad to answer questions and discuss ways to coordinate support. This could be through conversations virtually or in-person, formal or informal consultation, participation in various trainings, or through other means you feel would be most helpful.

- Join a MA Model Committee meeting to talk about resources, strategies, and opportunities to develop the way the Model is implemented at your school and around the state. The Committee meets virtually monthly and is open to anyone interested. Contact Dave Elsner or Cynthia Esielionis above for the schedule and the invitation link.
- Attend one of several Model training opportunities throughout the year such as at the MASCA Conference; the series of professional development resources, workshops, and courses provided by the Model Committee and Helen O'Donnell, MA Model Trainer ([Upcoming Events Calendar](#)); or the New Counselor Workshop, which Cynthia Esielionis, MA Model Co-Chair describes below. These trainings offer Model reviews and strategies, but importantly the chance to collaborate, ask questions, hear about other's experiences, and learn collectively.

Breaking down the MA Model 3.0 into Manageable Chunks

by Cynthia Esielionis, MA Model Co-Chair, MASCA Governing Board Member

I had the opportunity to present The Massachusetts Model 3.0: A Frame-

work for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs at the new counselor boot camp last month to a couple dozen new counselors and graduate students. I was pleased to see that many of these counselors had some familiarity with the Model; this helped me break it down. To create and implement a Comprehensive School Counseling Program pre-K to 12 (or 16) is like eating an elephant; you need to do it one bite at a time.

Chunking a program into those manageable bites, documenting what we are doing, why we are doing it and the outcomes of our work, helps all of our stakeholders know and understand what we are doing and the difference we make. In alignment with the ASCA National Model, The MA Model provides the interconnected and fluid steps to identifying and addressing students' needs specific to local situations.

- School Counselors DEFINE their work through tying their programming to the state and national standards and competencies that direct the purpose(s) of the work we do. An integral component of determining these needs is the finding the data to support the school counselors' efforts.
- This is part of the ASSESS component and allows us to measure our outcomes. Although not an exhaustive list, using data from the student information system about demographics, grades, attendance and/or discipline can be a great place to start. If you have access to the security portal on DESE, you can use the Early Warning Indicator System (EWIS) to look at data compiled by the state categorizing students into risk levels for meeting the next benchmark, as defined by DESE. If you do not

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Making the MA Model 3.0 work

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have access, administrators do and asking about the EWIS data is a perfect segway to discuss creating purposeful interventions. Other data school counselors can access or create come from surveys. There is a survey select students take after they complete MCAS (VOCAL), some districts use PANORAMA or the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), and school counselors can create their own surveys to determine needs.

- School counselors must also incorporate the chunks or bites into a structure that makes sense in their environment. How the intervention is MANAGED, matters. This is the what, who, when and where the intervention takes place. Organizing this is another opportunity to talk with administrators about purposeful interventions that can be documented and shared to stakeholders to demonstrate program effectiveness.
- This conversation can, and should, also include the DELIVER component; how are the school counselors going to implement the intervention? Obstacles and opportunities are discovered during these conversations in addition to collaboration while increasing administration's awareness and understanding of the unique role school counselors play in improving all student outcomes when the programmatic structure exists in a proactive framework for all students.



Tiered 2023-24 MA Model PD Opportunities

Opportunity #1 – Select your Independent Study Offering

- Series #1 -Be Informed (FREE)

Register and a welcome email will include links to free webinars.

- Series #2 – Be Prepared (Guided mentoring available with registration)

15 MASCA PDP's – Cost \$ 80 Resources: https://masca.wildapricot.org/MA-Model_3.0

Earn PDP's while independently exploring the MA Model 3.0, completing a self-study audit to assess your progress implementing the MA Model and identifying target program growth areas, and preparing for/organize the academic year by developing your annual school counseling department calendar.

- Series 3 - Be Accountable and Data Informed (Guided mentoring available.)

20 PDP's - \$125 https://masca.wildapricot.org/MA-Model_3.0

Through Action Research school counselors can document the need for school counseling programs and show the effectiveness of a specific counseling practice, program, or intervention. After reviewing MA Model 3.0 ASSESS webinar and completing the MA Model 3.0 self-study audit, you will: identify a growth area to strengthen or one component of your program to assess. define a SMART student end-goal; Identify alignment to student learning standards; write your research question; gather and assess student progress towards end goal achievement; identify barriers faced; write a next steps action plan. Outline your MARC Jr. document.

Opportunity #2 - Coming Soon

What's working 101? A hybrid "Digging Into DATA" PD series

Featuring a ZOOM webinar, independent study, peer collaboration, and guided individualized project mentoring to assist with MARC Jr. development.

Opportunity #3

MA Model Graduate Classes: Syllabi Summaries available on request helenod@att.net

Academic year courses. Open registration begins in November.

(Registration \$450 includes 45 MASCA PDP's. Additional \$295 for 3 Graduate Credits from Fitchburg State University).

- MA Model Introductory Institute
- MA Model 2: Next Steps
- Counselors in K-12 Classrooms: Delivering Curriculum That Supports Academic Achievement & CCR
- Counselors in K-12 Classrooms: Action Research and Program Assessment

Implementing the MA Model 3.0: A Framework for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs

by Helen O'Donnell, Ed.D, MASCA MA Model Committee, 3.0 Writing Team Co-Chair, PD Institute Trainer

Endorsed by both MA DESE and MA School Counselors Association's Governing Board, the MA Model 3.0: Framework for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs is an evolving document to guide professional best practice. It was presented as a professional courtesy to the field in the spring of 2020 as a public domain resource. This ongoing Counselor's Notebook (CN) series shares steps and strategies for implementing the MA Mode 3.0 and ASCA Model 4.0©. A library of updated MA Model resources and CN implementation articles can be accessed from the MA Model page of the MASCA website. (Choose MA Model option under Resources tab.)

School Counselors Use Action Research to Answer Research Questions and Guide Strategic Action Planning

During the pandemic, **Pam Paynter** MSW, LCSW was working diligently to support academic success for her Freshmen Academy students at MPT-VHS. Enrolled in MA Model Graduate Coursework, she was encouraged to clearly define the outcome goals for her Gr. 9 students and design her program to educate all students about their pathway to Grade 10 promotion. She developed a school counseling calendar and a bilingual website with a vision and mission statement, drafted a curriculum map, and worked to promote the importance of consistent virtual attendance and student active engagement in their academic success. She collected data to document outcome goal progress. Her MARC Jr., referenced in the April 2023 *Counselor Notebook*, summarized her student's progress towards promotion and achievement of targeted goals.

Additional Madison Park TVHS school counselors began program assessment during the 2022-23 academic year by implementing MA Model action research practices and collected data to answer their research questions.

Grade 9 Freshman Academy

Alcindo Fontes MEd, a new Gr. 9 counselor, worked with Pam to answer this question: *In the past 2 academic years, has the Gr. 9 counseling team at Madison Park TVHS made progress preparing and supporting students to meet requirements for promotion and transition to Grade 10?* They presented their freshmen seminar lessons, *Own Your Learning*, informing students about what they need to achieve to be promoted to Grade 10. Multi-tiered instruction educated students about understanding report cards, academic goal setting, promotion requirements, summer school and summer work, and encouraged students to populate their personal MyCAP portfolios by completing identified Naviance activities. Summative data results documented a significant increase in the completion of required Gr. 9 MyCAP Naviance activities.

Learning Styles	Career Cluster	Interest Inventory	Financial Literacy
245/287 85%	258/ 287 90%	248/ 287 86%	73/287 25%

Alcindo reported in his MARC Jr. *"Based on student academic progress reports for 4th quarter, students have become more motivated and engaged in their classes to qualify for summer school instead of repeating the 9th grade ... As the Summer School counselor, I continued supporting at risk and possible failing students with the goals of regular on-time attendance, and owning their academic success (note taking, completing all assignments, asking questions, getting help). He also noted that "After Covid, more students are going to summer school and repeaters also increased."*

Chart 1: MPTVHS Compiled 2023 Grade 9 Promotion Rate (summer school data disaggregated by female v. male)

Summer school- Students enrolled	Term 4 - Assigned to Summer School Total # off Track = 85			8/31 Promoted after summer school	8/31 NOT promoted
	ELA	MATH	BOTH		
	33	8	44	32	53
Male	21	5	28	20	36
Female	12	3	16	12	17

Chart 2: MPTVHS Promotion Rate by Academic Year

	# students enrolled in summer school	Aug. Gr 9 promotion rate.	Repeaters	Transfers
2018-19	35	95%	9	6
2019-20	covid	100%	0	7
2020-21	46	96%	11	5
2021-22	88	92%	15	5

Action Research

Continued from previous page)

Grade 10-12

MPTVHS Grade 10-12 school counselor, **Joao Gomes** MEd, CAGS and **Rosalinda Midence** MEd., designed their research question to assess student progress towards graduation. *After delivering multi-tiered school counseling services at MPTVHS, are the seniors prepared to graduate with post-high school plans?* “As 12th grade counselors, our target goal is to have 100% of the senior class complete their graduation requirements with a post-HS plan by Aug. 2023”. **Joao Gomes**, a veteran counselor, also believed that the MPTVHS female students were more successful than the males, but he had no data to support this belief. The counseling team disaggregated their compiled data by male and female to explore this research question.

Chart 3: MPTVHS Class of 2023 Graduation Data

Summer School		Aug. 23 Grad. Data				
Students in class N = 182	6/30- On Track to Graduate	Summer School		Males	Females	Final Class Data
		# Males	# Females			
M = 80 F = 102	173/182 = 95%	6/80 = 7.5%	3/102 = 2.9%	78/80= 98%	101/102 = 99%	179/182 = 98%

Chart 4: School Promotion** Data

	# in Class	Males NOT promoted	Females NOT promoted
Grade 10	287	36	17
Grade 11	271	27	19
Grade 12	205	11	8
74	34		

**Many non-promoted students were advanced to the next grade and contracted for credit recovery to make up the failed coursework by January of the current academic year.

To prepare for the current academic year, the school counselors tracked the grade level benchmarks achieved and the promotion rates of their rising Grade 10-12 students, disaggregated by male v. female. Thus, the data was consistently disaggregated by female v male totals to research Joao Gomes’ hypothesis that females were more successful than the male students.

Answering the Research Questions

After delivering multi-tiered school counseling services at MPTVHS, are the seniors prepared to graduate with post-high school plans? The summative data affirmed exciting news! Ninety eight percent (98%) of the seniors were ready to graduate by August 2023 after the summer school session. The non-graduates were SLIFE students who entered MPTVHS from their native countries with gaps in their education. This data indicates that the multi-tiered school counseling services successfully assisted students with graduation. No compiled post HS planning data is yet available.

The summarized Grade 10-12 Naviance/MyCAP benchmark activity data documented continued growth of student completion of required Naviance Activities and population of their MyCAP portfolios. The MARC Jr. action plan for the current academic year states: “Guided by compiled entry level baseline data of the rising Gr. 10-12 students, we will actively promote student ownership of their learning by delivering multi-tiered student transcript audit and academic goal-setting lessons, promoting student responsibility to take advantage of credit recovery opportunities, participating in attendance monitoring and interventions, encouraging student CCR/My CAP portfolio development and Naviance activity completion, and assisting with post HS planning. Our target goal continues to be enabling all students to graduate from MPVTHS in 4 years with a post high school plan.”

Grade 9-12 data collection and analysis results also confirmed Joao Gomes belief that female students were more successfully achieving grade level benchmarks and had higher promotion rates than male students. The counseling team is discussing multi-tiered intervention strategies to close that achievement gap.

Compliments to the MPTVHS for their professional work as action researchers and developing data-driven action plans to promote continued student success!

Happy Fall!



The mission of MASCA is to promote excellence in the school counseling profession by advocating for, connecting, supporting, and empowering school counselors in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts through leadership, collaboration, and professional development.

Visit us on the web at www.MASCA.org

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These activities include, but are not limited to, appointment of its Governing Board, hiring or firing of staff, selection of volunteers and vendors, and the providing of services.