

# Strengthening our School Counseling Departments

Leadership Project by Joanna DeJesus





# Theory of Action: The Plan



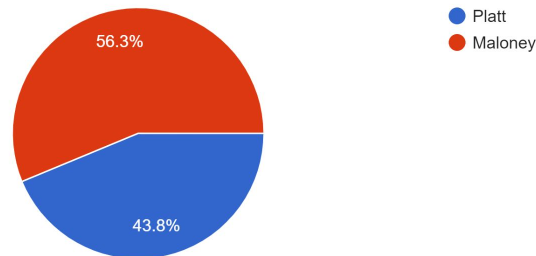
- program assessment using the standards set by the American School Counselors Association (ASCA) to determine which areas we need to strengthen
- A written up mission and vision for the department as well as a formalized curriculum
- Use [National School Counseling Week](#) as an opportunity to raise awareness about the role and impact of school counselors
- The intended outcome: a strong counseling department benefits students
  - School Counselors are a vital part of the school community serving as advocates for students and liaisons between families, school staff, and students. We also support students' mental health and academic needs, among many other roles.



# The Execution

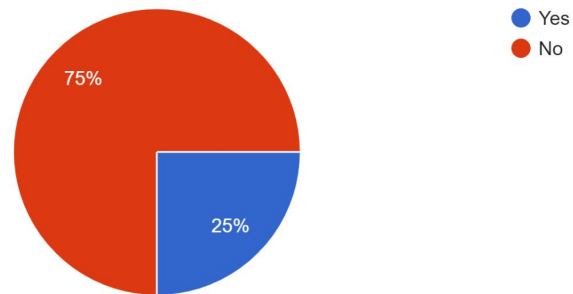
- Two high school counseling departments -
  - 8 school counselors at Platt
  - 9 school counselors at Maloney
  - Together serving over 240 students in Meriden
- Program Assessment
- Drafted Mission and Vision
- Moving Forward

School  
16 responses



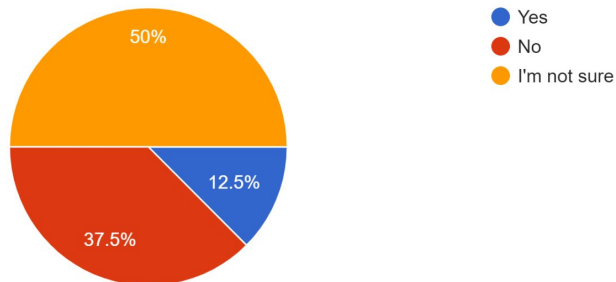
Do you work with your counseling team to review the district improvement plan and identify priorities and outcome goals for your department?

16 responses



Are there written department goals that align with ASCA National Model's criteria?

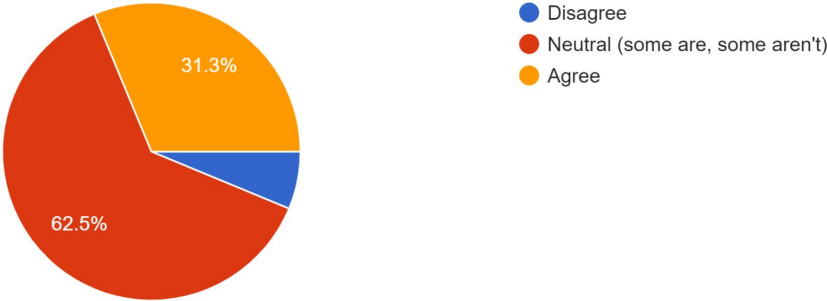
16 responses



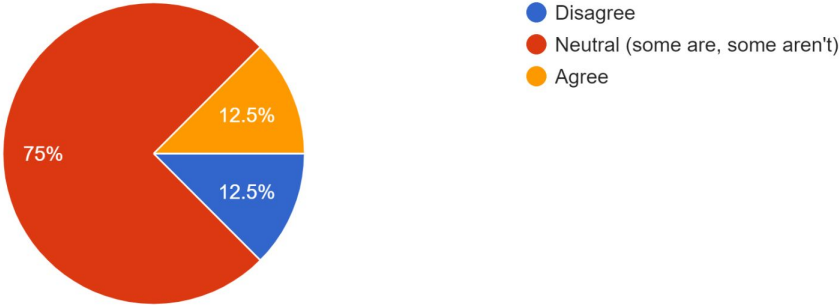
# Classroom Lessons



I feel that classroom lessons are relevant to counseling and align with ASCA Student Standards.  
16 responses



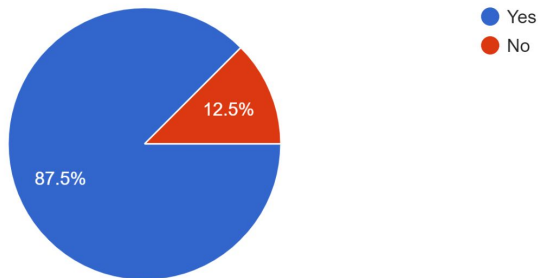
I feel that classroom lessons are thoughtful, well planned, and have a positive impact on student outcomes.  
16 responses



# Methods of tracking time

I use a weekly calendar for scheduling and documenting all of activities, events, and services.

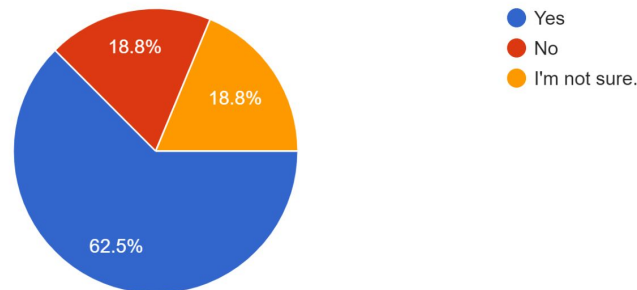
16 responses



- Google Calendar
- Naviance
- Google Doc or Google Form

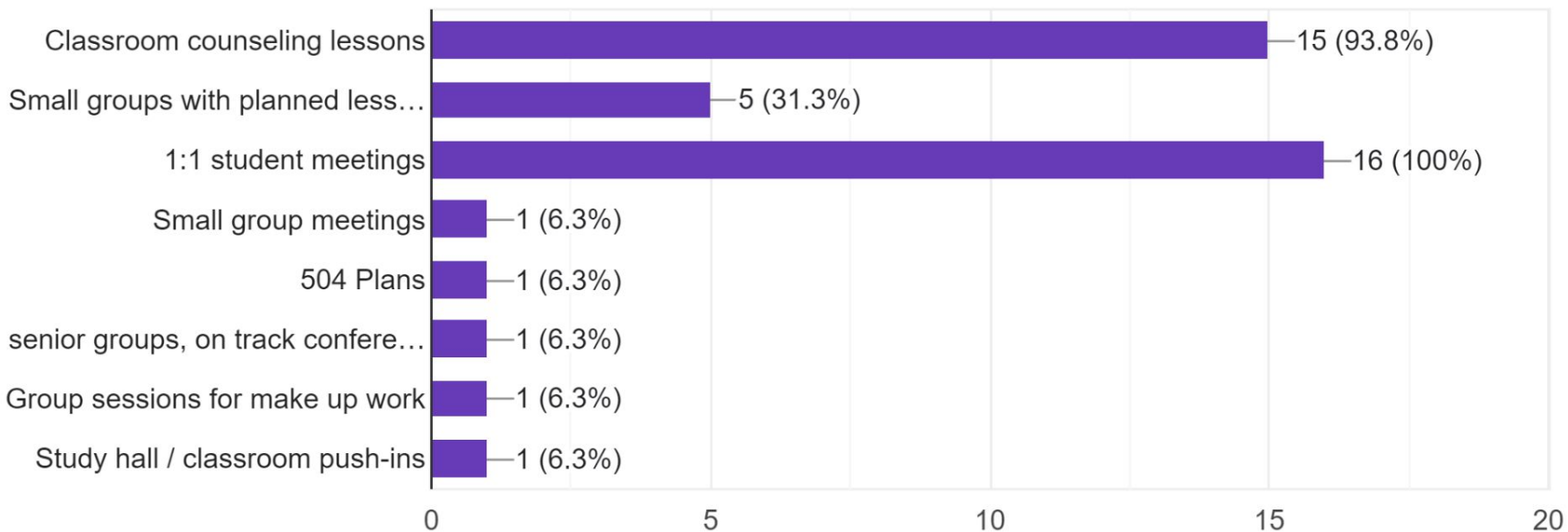
Our department has a shared calendar for scheduling and documenting all of activities, events, and services.

16 responses



## I implement the following direct student services:

16 responses





# Overall Feedback Themes

- Including School Counselors in more district wide initiatives/conversations
- Admin and teachers being more aware of the role of School Counselors - ASCA standards
- More regular department meetings - once a week department, once per month admin/department
- Open up the conversation about caseloads
- Updating the Counseling Curriculum

“Overall, I feel that the counselors here are what bridge the gap between the school and the families. We're the ones lifting up the students when they're at their lowest, whether that's academically, emotionally, or personally.”





# Recommendations Moving Forward

- Ideas:
  - Joint department meetings during PD days - structured, productive planning meetings
  - Revisiting caseloads to discuss ideas for a more effective split
  - School Counseling Advisory Committee
  - Rework classroom lessons and align with ASCA National Model

# Mission and Vision

- [Mission and Vision Draft](#)



# National School Counseling Week





# Reflection

- Strengths:
  - Passion, energy, voice, structure/organization
- Stepping out of my comfort zone
  - Coordinating between departments
  - Fighting imposter syndrome
- Timing - setting realistic, achievable goals
- More work to be done

