



Success

Timely tips for OSBA student achievement liaisons

March 2009

Follow the state budget as it evolves

Gov. **Ted Strickland**'s evidence-based budget dramatically changes the ways Ohio schools are funded. As the budgeting process unfolds, discuss at a board meeting what it means to student achievement in your district. OSBA's advocacy Web page (www.osba-ohio.org/advocacy.htm) will keep you well-informed on the subject.

Charters and your schools

Over 82,000 Ohio students attend charter schools, according to a report funded by the Education Voter Institute and the Forum for Education and Democracy. Most Ohio school districts lose students to charter schools. At an upcoming board meeting discuss how charter schools affect your district. For a list of charter schools in your county, visit <http://links.osba-ohio.org/35629/>. To download the report, "Reclaiming the Education Charter," go to <http://links.osba-ohio.org/13289/>.

Better late than never

Students who graduate late, taking longer than four years to receive their diploma, do better in every aspect of life — not just academic, but work, civic life and even health — than dropouts. A Center for Public Education study examines this phenomenon. To learn more, visit <http://links.osba-ohio.org/22829/>.

Facts or reasoning?

A study of American and Chinese college freshmen counters the conventional wisdom that teaching science facts will improve students' reasoning ability. **Lei Bao**, associate professor of physics at Ohio State University, said that even when students are rigorously taught the facts, they don't necessarily develop the reasoning skills they need to succeed. Read more about this at <http://links.osba-ohio.org/15088/>.

Education Vital Signs

Student achievement liaisons will find a copy of the *American School Board Journal's Education Vital Signs* with this issue of **Success**. This complimentary copy contains interesting information and statistics on academic achievement across the nation.

Student achievement research brief

Each month, *Success* brings you a research brief to share with fellow board members.

Middle school counseling practices have evolved.

What many of us term as “guidance” counseling during the middle grade years has evolved and now include a much wider group of activities and realm of thought. Best practice in middle grades counseling now can encompass staff, students and families through comprehensive, preventive and developmental approaches aligned to the school’s mission. The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) advocates a philosophical model that includes leadership, advocacy and a program-centered approach for all students (ASCA, 2006). Today, school counselors do much more than the traditional vocational guidance, and are often integrally involved in activities associated directly with learning outcomes, student motivation and personal accountability.

Because young adolescents vary widely in their individual physical, emotional and academic development, middle grades counselors are challenged in efforts to promote optimal education, career and social targets for all students. Effective school counseling programs should be aligned with the shared vision of all stakeholders and the school related to student achievement, student-teacher relationships and family participation (Swaim, 2001).

While the research related to school counseling outcomes is somewhat limited, a few studies serve to inform current practice. For example, Lapan, Gysbers and Petroski (2002) found that comprehensive school counseling programs in the middle grades were consistently related to important indicators of student safety and success. For both seventh-grade boys and girls, a full range of guidance activities and support practices led to “better relationships with teachers, higher grades, a belief that education is relevant to their futures and greater perceptions of their personal worth and of their value to the school community.”

Another study (Brigman and Campbell, 2003) investigated the impact of counselor-led classroom guidance programs on student academic achievement and success for fifth- to ninth-graders. Results revealed such programs were directly associated with improvement in behavior related to social and self-management skills. These skills, in turn, were related to increases in math and reading achievement scores.

With the wide variety of school counseling programs across Ohio and the U.S., it is difficult to assess the global impact of these programs on student development and performance. Based on current best practice and research, however, educational leaders can be optimistic that more comprehensive guidance programs can lead to greater and more positive student outcomes.

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