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It is frustrating for me because I know the student is struggling and needs help, and I can’t do anything.

Audrey, School Counselor

Like Audrey, a practicing school counselor in North Carolina, many school counselors feel they are in a frustrating situation when they think of their work with English language learners (ELLs). They know that these students may be struggling but feel at a loss without ideas or strategies to work with them. This book addresses the preparation of school counselors to work with ELLs—professionals such as Audrey who may feel they “can’t do anything” when working with ELLs.

Schools that did not have an ELL population before are now seeing high numbers of ELLs among their students (Pereira & de Oliveira, 2015). Given the increase in numbers of ELLs in American schools, it is vital for education programs to address the needs of these students in their courses. All school professionals, including school counselors, need to be prepared to work with ELLs, not just specialist English as second language (ESL) or bilingual professionals (Paredes, 2010; Holcomb-McCoy, 2004).

This chapter examines the past and present of both the school counseling profession and ELLs in the United States. Topics included are the historical roots of school counseling, current roles and responsibilities of school counselors, legislation regarding ELLs, and an overview of knowledge that school counselors need to work with ELLs.

Introduction
History of School Counseling as a Profession

Since its beginnings in the late 19th century, school counseling has changed in response to shifts in society and education. With its roots in vocational guidance, school counseling was originally a way to prepare school-aged students for employment, including helping channel students into the professions for which they were best suited. George Merrill is thought to be the originator of vocational guidance in the schools. He implemented vocational guidance in 1895 in the California School for the Mechanical Arts. In 1909, Frank Parsons, the father of vocational guidance, published *Choosing a Vocation*. He stressed that vocational guidance involved helping educate individuals about their skills, aptitudes, and strengths, teaching them about the requirements of a variety of jobs and professions, and understanding how those were related. In particular, he was concerned with educating students about the world of work, stating, “There is no part of life where the need for guidance is more emphatic than in the transition from school to work...” (p. 4).

From the late 1800s through World War II, school counseling and guidance was focused on vocational training. Boston schools, for example, had teachers assigned as vocational counselors in each elementary and secondary school building. These teachers were responsible for additional duties including helping students connect their academic education to the world of work, keeping track of students who were failing, urging students to complete their schooling, and maintaining occupational information (Ginn, 1924). Meanwhile, in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Jesse Davis started what is considered to be the first systematic guidance department, including teaching vocational guidance as part of the English curriculum in Grades 7–12 (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006).

While vocational guidance in schools was spreading, the way that it was implemented was not systematic, and varied from principal to principal and counselor to counselor. In 1923, Myers addressed concerns with the degree of specialization required, urging centralization, specialization, and integration into the education process. He also made another point that is still relevant to school counseling—that there is a “tendency to load the vocational counselor with so many duties foreign to the office that little real counseling can be done” (Myers, 1923, p. 141). This will be discussed further when the role of the school counselor is addressed.

During the 1920s, education shifted toward a preparation for life, more so than just preparation for college or career. Psychological measurement and testing gained in popularity and “personal adjustment” grew in prominence for school counselors. Thus, while vocational guidance remained important, it was supplemented by psychological testing and assessment and a holistic focus on students. Concurrently, personal counseling began to be seen as a separate, growing movement.

The economic hardship of the Great Depression led to a reduction in the number of school counseling positions available. This was a temporary setback, as with the onset of World War II, military testing was brought into schools. Although other roles were added, including testing aptitude and psychological
traits and looking at students more holistically, linking students’ education with the workplace remained a primary focus throughout this period.

Linking education with the workplace remained a primary focus until the late 1950s. With the space race that followed the launch of Sputnik came a focus on science, mathematics, and foreign language education. The National Defense Education Act (NDEA) of 1958 provided financial funding of both English as a second language and school counseling and guidance programming. It was shortly after the passage of NDEA that the term “guidance” was replaced by “pupil personnel services” (Tyler, 1960, p. 17).

During the pupil personnel services movement, counseling emerged as a central function of the school counseling profession, along with group work and consultation with parents and teachers (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006). In fact, it was recommended that between two-thirds and three-quarters of a school counselor’s time was spent either counseling students or consulting with student stakeholders (Wrenn, 1962).

As school counseling continued to grow and transform, it became important to look at not just the activities of individual school counselors, but also how to establish comprehensive developmental programs. This focus took greater hold in the 1980s and 1990s, with states developing models based on their needs. A national framework for comprehensive school counseling programs was published by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) in 2003.

**Current Roles and Functions of School Counselors**

School counseling has gone through a series of transformations over the years, but its current form has been defined recently by the third iteration of the ASCA National Model (2012). This model defines school counselors as members of the educational leadership team and holds them responsible for supporting the academic achievement, career development, and personal/social development of all students (ASCA, 2012). In fact, the preamble of the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors states that school counselors are “certified/licensed in school counseling with unique qualifications and skills to address all students’ academic, personal/social and career development needs” (2010, p. 1). In order to become a school counselor, individuals must be certified or licensed by their state department of education as a school counselor, which typically requires a master’s degree in school counseling or a closely related field. Educational requirements include coursework in the following areas:

- Professional Orientation
- Human Growth and Development
- Career Counseling
- Counseling Theories
- Counseling Skills
- Group Counseling
• Social and Cultural Foundations
• Appraisal
• Research and Program Evaluation
• Supervised Field Experiences

Considering that the average student to counselor ratio for school counselors in the United States is 471:1, school counselors need to implement comprehensive school counseling programs that draw not only upon their own time and energy, but also upon resources within the school and the school community. This means collaborating with administration, faculty, staff, parents, and community organizations to ensure that student needs are met without duplicating time and efforts. It also means that school counselors need to have a working knowledge about the needs of all students within the school and how to help them in their academic, career, and personal/social development. When addressing the needs of ELLs, it is important that school counselors understand the diversity inherent in this population, the legislative mandates impacting ELLs, and how to help other school faculty and staff implement curricula and programs that will meet ELLs’ needs.

Demographic Changes in Schools and the Need to Prepare School Counselors for English Language Learners

According to the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA; 2006), more than 10% of the K–12 student population is composed of ELLs, which represents more than 5 million students in U.S. schools. The largest number of these students is found in California, Florida, Illinois, New Mexico, New York, Puerto Rico, and Texas. However, states such as Arkansas, Alabama, Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Nebraska, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, and Virginia have experienced more than 200% growth in the numbers of ELLs in schools from 1995 to 2006 (NCELA, 2006). The numbers of ELLs have increased in all U.S. states (NCELA, 2006). The need to prepare school professionals to work with these students in all U.S. states, then, is pressing.

Legislative Decisions Affecting English Language Learners

Since the expiration of the Bilingual Education Act (BEA; 1968) in 2002, the education of language minority students has been directed by the English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act, or Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB; 2001). In 2001, the passage of NCLB marked a new era defined by the rapid progression of the high-stakes testing movement in U.S. public education. NCLB requires states to
use standardized tests to assess all students in Grades 3–8 (approximately ages 8–13) annually and once in high school. Students are categorized into subgroups if they are identified as belonging to an ethnic minority, are ELLs, have a disability, or receive free or reduced lunch. Test scores are one of the primary ways of determining if a school has made adequate yearly progress (AYP). For example, a school can be deemed “failing” because one of its subgroups did not make AYP. Schools that do not make AYP enter improvement status and are required to take a number of corrective actions. NCLB has had a great impact on the education of ELLs, like no other federal education policy since the passage of the BEA in 1968 (Menken, 2008).

**Title III: Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students**

NCLB provided explicit attention to ELLs. The following excerpts from Title III demonstrate some commendable intentions of NCLB (2001, SEC 3102).

The purposes of this part [Title III] are —

(1) to help ensure that children who are limited English proficient, including immigrant children and youth, attain English proficiency, develop high levels of academic attainment in English, and meet the same challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards as all children are expected to meet;

(2) to assist all limited English proficient children, including immigrant children and youth, to achieve at high levels in the core academic subjects so that those children can meet the same challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards as all children are expected to meet, consistent with section 1111(b)(1).

The related system of accountability provides a different picture with a problematic reality for ELLs. Title III also states the following goal (NCLB, 2001, SEC 3102):

(8) to hold State educational agencies, local educational agencies, and schools accountable for increases in English proficiency and core academic content knowledge of limited English proficient children by requiring —

(A) demonstrated improvements in the English proficiency of limited English proficient children each fiscal year; and

(B) adequate yearly progress for limited English proficient children, including immigrant children and youth, as described in section 1111(b)(2)(B);

One of the major problems for ELLs is that they are required to take the same exams as non-ELLs. NCLB requires states to test the English proficiency of ELLs in kindergarten through Grade 12 in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. ELLs can be granted a one-time exemption from the reading/English language arts assessment if it is their first year of enrollment in a U.S. school. However, assessment in the other content areas is still required.
ELLs can have a number of accommodations on standardized exams, including the provision of bilingual dictionaries and small group administration. States may also assess ELLs for 3 to 5 years using exams in a student’s first language, if possible. In reporting, all ELLs count toward the required 95% test participation rate, but states are not required by law to include the performance of ELLs who have been enrolled in U.S. schools for less than a year. States may choose to include ELLs who have exited the subgroup by attaining English proficiency when calculating AYP for 2 years after being reclassified as fluent English proficient (Burke & de Oliveira, 2012).

The Bilingual Education Act and the Lau v. Nichols Ruling
The BEA signing in 1968 marked an era of support for bilingual education in the United States. Bilingual education had not been a consideration for schools serving high numbers of non-English-speaking children until 1968. Nearly all of these children were in English-only classrooms where they were left to sink or swim, as many have described it (Faltis, 2006; Menken, 2008). This act supported bilingual education and ESL programs (described later in this chapter).

The passage of BEA was followed by the Supreme Court case Lau v. Nichols in 1974, an extremely important case. This lawsuit was on behalf of non-English speaking Chinese students in San Francisco public schools who were placed in mainstream English-medium classrooms. The lawsuit argued that these students were not performing well in these classrooms because of their limited English proficiency. This ruling stipulated that school districts must take “affirmative steps” to address the challenges that language poses for ELLs, by offering programs such as bilingual education or ESL” (Menken, 2008, p. 16). This case was so instrumental for the field that it is still referenced in schools in relation to programming requirements to meet the needs of ELLs (Menken, 2008). The BEA expired and was not renewed under NCLB in 2002. NCLB provides funding for the instruction of ELLs, but these programs are considerably different from those funded under the BEA. Current programs take an English-only and English immersion approach.

English-Only Initiatives
Though it is not the official language of the United States, in many contexts English often takes on that role. In recent years, this has become a topic of much heated debate which has led several states to target English-only efforts. Three significant English-only initiatives were approved in California, Arizona, and Massachusetts. In 1998, California voters approved Proposition 227 (1998), an English-only initiative targeted at the elimination of bilingual education, in a state with the largest numbers of ELLs in the country. Proposition 203 (2000) was approved by Arizona voters in 2000; this proposition limited the type of instruction available to ELLs and was passed by 63% of Arizona voters. Massachusetts voters followed and approved another state initiative, Question 2 (2002), and eliminated the oldest bilingual education law in the entire United States (Menken, 2008).
Programs for English Language Learners

There are many program types that serve ELLs in schools. The various program types are described in the next section.

K–12 English ESL: Immersion

- ESL pull-out/English language development (generally used in elementary school settings): ELLs spend part of the school day in a mainstream, general education classroom but get pulled out for a portion of the day to receive ESL instruction.

- ESL push-in: This model emphasizes keeping ELLs in the same classroom with their peers. An ESL instructor and a regular, general education teacher coteach the class and share the same classroom.

- ESL immersion: ELLs receive ESL instruction during a regular class period and usually receive course credit. They may be grouped for instruction according to their level of English proficiency.

- Structured immersion: Fluency in English is the goal. All students in the program are ELLs. There is content instruction in English with adjustments based on the proficiency level of ELLs so subject matter is comprehensible (such as sheltered English instructional methods). Typically, there is no native language support or development.

- Submersion with primary language support: Fluency in English is the goal. Minority language students within the majority-English language classroom (mainstream) receive help from bilingual teachers who review particular lessons covered in classes, using students’ home language. This model develops very limited literacy skills in primary language.

- The ESL resource room: This model is a variation of the pull-out design, bringing students together from several classrooms or schools. The resource room concentrates ESL materials and staff in one location and usually has at least one full-time ESL teacher.

K–12 Bilingual Programs

- Early-exit bilingual programs (generally early elementary): These programs are designed to help ELLs acquire the English skills required to succeed in an English-only mainstream classroom. They provide some initial instruction in the students’ home language. Instruction in the first language is phased out rapidly, with most students mainstreamed by the end of first or second grade.

- Late-exit programs (generally elementary): The emphasis in these programs is on developing and maintaining both ELLs’ home language and English. There is a significant amount of instruction in the native language with a gradual increase of instruction in English (4–6 years).
Students continue to receive 40% or more of their instruction in their home language, even if reclassified as fluent-English-proficient.

- **Early-exit bilingual programs** (generally early elementary): These programs are designed to help ELLs acquire the English skills required to succeed in an English-only mainstream classroom. They provide some initial instruction in the students’ home language. Instruction in the first language is phased out rapidly, with most students mainstreamed by the end of first or second grade.

- **Two-way bilingual programs** (also called developmental bilingual programs): The goal of these programs is to develop strong skills and proficiency in students’ home language and a second language. About half the students are native speakers of English and half are ELLs from the same language group. Programs provide instruction in both languages throughout the day (“90/10”: begins 90% in non-English, 10% English, gradually increasing to “50/50”: 50% non-English, 50% English), they may alternate using languages morning and afternoon, or they may divide the use of the two languages by academic subject. The program may be taught by a single teacher who is proficient in both languages or by two teachers, one of whom is bilingual.

### A Knowledge Base for School Counselors

Following the framework for understanding teaching and learning presented in Bransford, Darling-Hammond, and LePage (2005), we present a framework for preparing school counselors to work with ELLs (see Figure 1).

The framework has three general areas of knowledge and skills that school counselors need to develop in order to best serve the ELL population in their schools:

- **Knowledge of multicultural school counseling**: an understanding of expectations of multicultural school counseling as they apply to ELLs, counseling interventions and approaches appropriate for ELLs, and issues of language and culture in school counseling.

- **Knowledge of ELLs and second language development**: an understanding of various issues related to ELLs, such as learner characteristics and cultural understanding and second language development and pedagogical principles, including first language and second language development and linguistically responsive practices.

- **Knowledge of roles and responsibilities**: an understanding of school counselors’ roles and responsibilities for the provision of direct and indirect student services to ELLs.

Each of these three areas will be addressed in the next three chapters.
Preparing School Counselors for English Language Learners

- Knowledge of Multicultural School Counseling
- Knowledge of English Language Learners and Second Language Development

A Vision of Professional Practice

Knowledge of Roles and Responsibilities

Figure 1. A Framework for Preparing School Counselors for English Language Learners

INTRODUCTION