Teacher and Administrator Perceptions on Preparation for Advisory

by

Paul Eric Bottorff

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education (Ed.D.)
College of Education, Health, & Human Services
(Educational Leadership)
in the University of Michigan-Dearborn
2025

Doctoral Committee:

Dr. Paul Fossum, Chair
Dr. Brian Boggs
Dr. Youssef Mosallam

Paul Eric Bottorff

pbottorf@umich.edu

ORCID iD: 0009-0002-1920-4954

© Paul Eric Bottorff 2025

Dedication

To my wife Colleen: You have been patient and supportive throughout the process of writing this dissertation. You have been a sounding board for my frustrations and the one to remind me to eat when I am burning too hard. I love you.

To my parents: Let there be no question of who the favorite child is … at least for today. Thank you for supporting my curiosity throughout my life. This support developed the confidence to even consider this project.

Acknowledgements

To my committee: Each of you guided my education through coursework, career experience, and deep questioning. You selflessly shared your personal resources and continue to dedicate your energies to the benefit of all children.

To the educators in this study: Your willingness to participate in this study is a testament to the care and attention you bring to your interactions with students each day. Let your voices be used to improve the quality of advisory for all students.

Table of Contents

Dedication ..... **iii**

Acknowledgements ..... **iv**

Table of Figures ..... **x**

List of Tables ..... **xi**

List of Appendices ..... **xii**

Abstract ..... **xiii**

Chapter 1: Introduction **1**

Statement of the Problem *2*

Student Mental Health 3

Professional Preparation 6

School Staffing Challenges 7

Teacher Needs 11

Teacher Pay. 12

Mentorship. 13

Potential Importance of This Study *15*

Research Questions *16*

Summary *17*

Chapter 2: Literature Review **19**

Advisory History and Definitions *20*

Benefits and Challenges of Advisory Structures *23*

Student Social Outcomes and Identity 24

Teacher Student Relationships (TSR) 27

Psychological Foundations of Teacher Student Relationships. 28

Academic Outcomes 31

Academic Tracks 33

Teacher Perspective and Dispositions *34*

Teacher Training for Advisory 39

Summary *43*

Chapter 3: Methods **45**

Researcher Positionality *45*

Research Questions *47*

Research Design *48*

Data Collection *50*

Meeting Recording and Transcription *52*

Data Analysis *52*

Settings and Participants *53*

Location 1 56

Location 1 School Description. 56

Location 1 Advisory Description. 58

Location 2 59

Location 2 School Description. 60

Location 2 Advisory Description. 61

Location 3 63

Location 3 School Description. 63

Location 3 Advisory Description. 64

Informants *66*

Delimitations *67*

Limitations *68*

Ethical Considerations *69*

Conclusion *70*

Chapter 4: Findings and Understandings 71

Understanding: Compound Focus *72*

Executive Function and Metacognition. 77

Understanding: Cultural Impacts of a Skills Focused Curriculum *81*

Understanding: Personal Capacity *83*

Relational Skills 84

Professional Identity 85

Hiring Practices 86

Adaptive Abilities 87

Understanding: Desire for a Semi-Structured Curriculum *90*

High Structure: Location 3 91

Low Structure: Location 1 92

Limited Structure: Locations 2 93

Understanding: Belief is Not Enough *94*

Universal Expression of Value 94

The Role of Continuous Improvement 95

Understanding: Designed Roadblocks Preventing Positive Purpose *96*

Insufficient Time Allocation 96

Lack of Schedule Protection 97

Inadequate Professional Preparation 98

Restrictive Contract Language and Compounding Factors 99

Implications for Advisory Design *101*

Conclusion *101*

Chapter 5: Discussion 103

Suggestions *104*

Suggestion 1: Advisory Time Must Be Protected 105

Schedule Compression. 106

Suggestion 2: Semi-Structured Guidance Should be Provided to Advisors 108

Semi-Structured Supports and Teacher Capacity. 110

Peer Mentoring as Professional Development. 112

Suggestion 3: An Age-Appropriate Curriculum, Designed for Advisory, Should be Provided to Advisors 114

Executive Function for Skills focused Advisories. 118

Suggestion 4: Protect Opportunity for Skill and Relationship Formation Through "Compound Purpose" Advisory 119

Suggestion 5: On Days Focused on "Invigoration," Time Must Remain Structured 121

Implications for Future Research *123*

Conclusion *124*

References **128**

Appendix A: Documents Obtained from Case Locations for the Purpose of This Study .. **143**

Location 1 ..... *143*

Location 2 ..... *143*

Location 3 ..... *144*

Appendix B: Informed Consent Form **145**

Appendix C: Notice of Exemption **147**

Appendix D: Semi-Structured Interview Questions **149**

Table of Figures

Figure 1: SAMHSA Client Health Data by Age (2016-2022) 4

Figure 2: Percentage of public schools reporting students seeking mental help (NCES, 2023) 5

Figure 3: Percentage of public schools reporting 'too few candidates applying for open teaching positions' by school level (NCES, 2024) 8

Figure 4: Percentage of Public Schools Reporting Vacancies in the 2022-23 school year by school level: October 2022 (NCES, 2023) 11

Figure 5: New Teacher Retention Rates (NCES, 2015) 14

Figure 6:Logic Model: How SEL Works (CASEL, 2007) 26

Figure 7: Data Collection Plan 51

Figure 8: Flow Chart of Observed Typology Alignment 74

Figure 9: Bottorff's Framework of Advisory Typologies 77

Figure 10: Levels of Structure by Case Location 91

Figure 11: Expectation Poster for Location 2 Middle School 99

List of Tables

Table 1: SAMHSA Client Health Data by Age 2016-2022 4

Table 2: Galassi et al. (1998) advisory typology (p 19) 22

Table 3: Phillippo (2013) Schema vs Resources quadrants (p 102) 38

Table 4: Case Location Advisory Program Descriptions 55

Table 5: Table of Informants 67

Table 6: Location Advisory Type Codes from Interviews aligned with Bottorff Framework 73

Table 7: Advisory Typology Re-imagined 75

List of Appendices

Appendix A: Documents Obtained from Case Locations for the Purpose of This Study 143

Appendix B: Informed Consent Form 145

Appendix C: Notice of Exemption 147

Appendix D: Semi-Structured Interview Questions 149

Abstract

This study investigated administrators' and teachers' perceptions of preparation and support needs for advisory roles in secondary schools through a comparative case study of three diverse educational settings: an international private school, a large public school district, and a medium-sized public school district. Through semi-structured interviews with 12 educators and analysis of program documents, the research identified several key understandings of advisory implementation: the prevalence and importance of compound-focused advisory structures, the impact of cultural context on skills-focused curricula, the critical role of teachers' personal capacity, and the need for semi-structured guidance in advisory programs. The study found that, while advisory programs often aimed to serve multiple purposes, teachers perceived factors such as protected time allocation, curriculum design, and teacher preparation as negatively affecting the efficacy of the programs. The research provides specific recommendations for enhancing teacher readiness and efficacy in advisory roles, including protecting dedicated advisory time, providing semi-structured guidance to advisors, and ensuring age-appropriate curriculum.

KEYWORDS: Advisory programs, teacher preparation, secondary education, student support, social-emotional learning, teacher-student relationships

Chapter 1: Introduction

"For me, success is not about the wins and losses. It's about helping these young fellas be the best version of themselves on and off the field."

Ted Lasso (Season 1, Episode 3)

Advisory structures are potential solutions to the challenges of students' mental health, social needs, and behavioral shortcomings. Creating opportunities for students to have a time within their day to focus on aspects of life — such as relational needs or unstructured times to work with a caring adult — provides opportunities for students to make improvements and experience growth in these areas. Students, just as adults, must prioritize the attention they give to the challenges in their lives. Through relationships formed in advisory, a caring adult can ensure that students are recognized and receive the services required.

Advisory structures are "small group of students assigned to an adult for the purpose of developing trusting relationships and discussing young adolescent issues and concerns" (Thompson & Homestead, 2004, p 59), and have been an important component of the middle school movement since its foundation in the 1970s. These structures are experiencing a post-pandemic renaissance in response to increased negative school behaviors, attendance challenges, and student academic needs.

Advisory structures are not new to the field of education, having been a notable feature of schools between 1900 and 1920 (Briggs, 1920). The early 1900's were a significantly different landscape in public education from today. However, Briggs notes the importance for students to have an advisor "in order that the individual pupil may not be neglected by his several teachers" (p 253). This both personalizes a student's educational experience while eliminating the passivity and anonymity of student life (Cushman, 1990). The presence of these advisors in students' lives is as important, if not more so, than it was when Briggs stated their purpose. In the 100 years since Briggs' comments, all aspects of American society have changed: from the presence and design of the nuclear family, presence of extrafamilial support in child raising, cost of living, inflation in relation to wages, to the academic expectations of students within the American school system. Despite these changes, the need for students to have an adult with whom they have an advisor-advisee relationship remains pivotal.

This chapter reviews the current landscape of education in relation to advisory structures. It does so by examining the different levels and expressions of need of students and teachers within the American public school system. Aligning the strengths of advisory structures with the needs of the school community members.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the demonstrated benefits of advisory programs in secondary schools, teachers are often inadequately prepared to serve in advisory roles. While advisory structures have been implemented to address rising student mental health concerns and declining school engagement in the post-COVID-19 pandemic era, a critical gap remains between the expectations placed on teacher-advisors and the professional development they receive. This misalignment between role demands and preparation can lead to teacher burnout, inconsistent program implementation, and

the unrealized potential of advisory programs to support student well-being and academic success.

The challenges are threefold: teacher advisors are expected to shift from content specialists to holistic student advocates without adequate training or support, schools often lack structured approaches to developing teacher capacity for advisory roles, and there is limited research on effective models for preparing teachers to serve as advisors, particularly in terms of building both dispositional readiness and practical skills. This study addresses these problems by examining how teachers and administrators perceive preparation needs for advisory roles across different school contexts, aiming to develop actionable recommendations to strengthen teacher preparation and support systems for advisory programs.

The urgency of addressing this preparation gap becomes clear when examining the current landscape of student mental health challenges and their impact on educational outcomes. Schools are increasingly called upon to support students' emotional and social development, making effective advisory programs more crucial than ever.

Student Mental Health

The COVID-19 pandemic has left lasting effects on students' mental health and learning outcomes, in many ways exacerbating previously existing challenges. Following the COVID-19 pandemic and the worldwide response that resulted in interruptions of in-person learning, schools across the world have increased their focus on "needs based" approaches to helping their students. This was in response to the negative trends in student academic, behavioral, and social performance that resulted from the pandemic, its response, and other preceding factors. Advisory is uniquely aligned as a strategy to affect student mental health outcomes as school-based

activities “can make a profound difference in the lives of teens with a relatively small infusion of support to schools” (Modan, 2023).

The American Substance and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is a government agency focused on behavioral health services. This organization tracks and categorizes records of mental health client data. Table 1 and Figure 1 show the increase in minors receiving mental health services has increased prior to and following the COVID-19 pandemic. There was a temporary decrease in the 2020 calendar year which quickly rebounded for all age ranges except for ages zero to eleven. The most common mental health diagnosis for referral were mood disorders (such as depression) and anxiety (SAMHSA, 2023).

AGE	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
0 to 11 years	789,831	812,974	898,783	918,325	923,686	811,660	821,837
12 to 14 years	390,461	404,702	445,648	478,247	495,010	466,775	507,579
15 to 17 years	430,652	449,367	476,077	493,980	499,598	476,347	524,220
18 to 20 years	250,346	273,151	293,004	310,098	325,467	317,917	350,683

Table 1: SAMHSA Client Health Data by Age 2016-2022

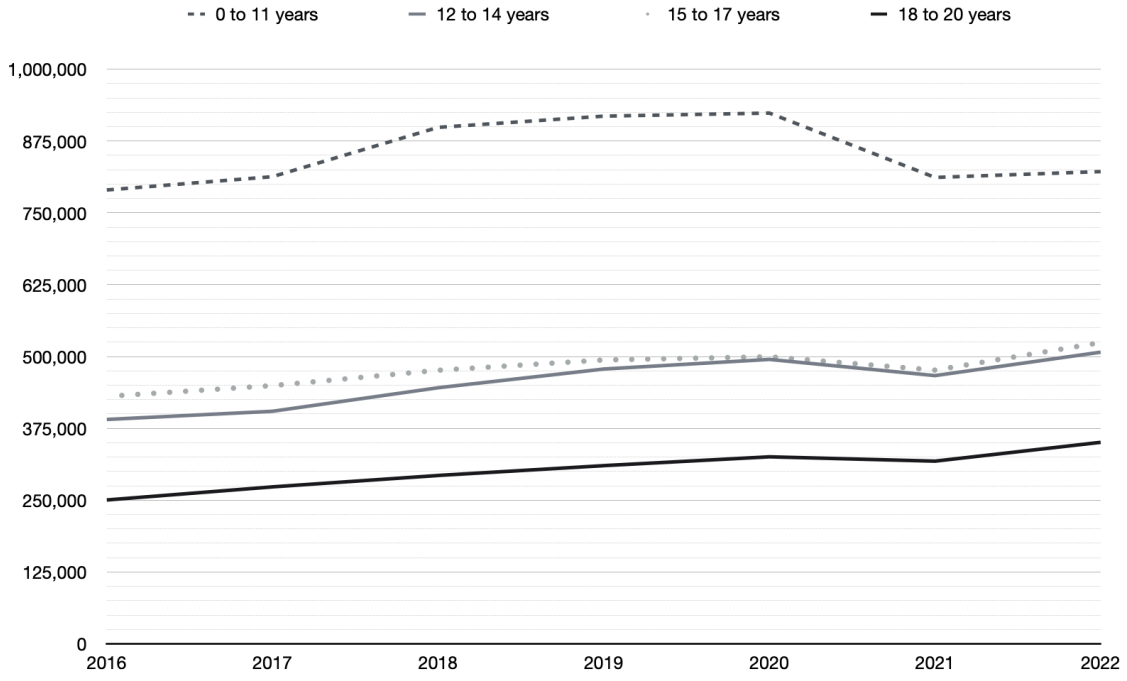


Figure 1: SAMHSA Client Health Data by Age (2016-2022)

The United States Centers for Disease Control *Youth Risk Behavior Survey* (CDC, 2023) recognizes "school connectedness" as a protective factor in adolescent risky behavior (p 74). The report points to an increase in student suicidality, risky sexual interactions, experiences of violence, and mental health challenges between 2011 and 2021. Figure 2 shows the percentage of public schools reporting students seeking mental help based on rate change year-over-year.

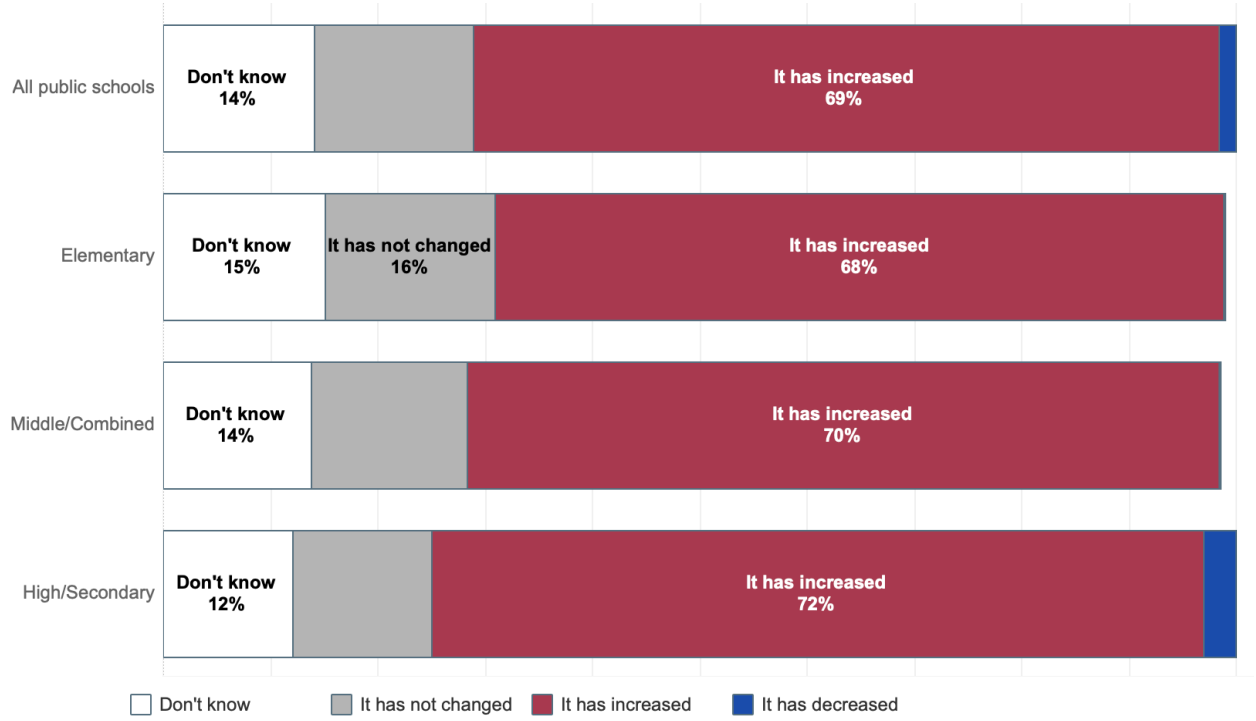


Figure 2: Percentage of public schools reporting students seeking mental help (NCES, 2023)

Attention to students' affective needs is often the role of school counselors and psychologists. However, United States public schools may have a shortage of up to 100,000 counselors and mental health professionals below recommended numbers (Wasser Gish, 2023). The American School Counselor Association (n.d.) recommends a load of 250 students to one counselor, but instead recognizes an actual average of 431:1, with 613:1 in grades K-8, 204:1 in grades 9-12. When counselors and social workers in the school are over extended, their ability to provide needed services to students in crisis are limited and student needs will fall upon other

members of the school community. Grant et al. (2018) provides a recommendation to help alleviate this challenge of imbalanced student and counselor ratios: task shifting. Within task shifting, non-credentialed personnel can provide immediate but limited intervention to students in need of mental health services. Within schools, this responsibility often falls on teachers. Student mental health interventions, such as task shifting, can be better supported through advisory structures. However, Phillippo (2013) warns against such role expansion by referring to it as "pro-bono" work (p 5) connected to teacher advisor burnout.

Professional Preparation

Advisory structures have already had a long history in education, but this history is riddled with the failures that come with lack of professional preparation. To provide proper intervention through this task-shifting perspective, teachers require proper training. It is important to recognize the teacher role limitations that may arise as challenges through task shifting and mental health focus within advisory. It is not possible, nor should it ethically be an expectation, for teachers to function as primary mental health providers. Doing so would put students at risk and teachers, schools, and districts in danger of legal repercussions. Instead, through preparation and supports for student mental health within an advisory and task-shifting perspective, students may be properly recognized before a dangerous incident requires more severe intervention.

Rates of student absenteeism and truancy — possible indicators of student mental health struggles — have increased year-over-year and has been a consistent challenge for American schools. Dee (2023) reports rates of chronic absenteeism by students increased 91% following return to in-person learning following the COVID-19 pandemic. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reports 8 out of 10 public schools note seeing stunted behavioral

and social-emotional development (NCES, 2023). Of responding schools, 69% reported an increase in students seeking mental health services compared to before the pandemic. These negative mental health effects for both teachers and students imply a need to adjust our focus in education from a purely academic focus to an expanded, needs-based approach.

Despite decreasing mental health indicators, student academic attainment has been steadily improving for years. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, attainment of Carnegie Credits by American students was at an all-time high. Academic credits raised from 18.7 credits in 2000 to 20.2 credits in 2009 and peaked at 20.8 credits in 2019 (NCES, 2023). The increase in earned credits suggests a heightened focus on academic achievement among American educational institutions. This trend indicates fewer perceived alternatives for non-academic paths after high school, resulting in substantial investments of both time and money in education. This singular focus may be misguided as education progresses beyond the pandemic response. The evidence suggests that students are facing mental health issues and social difficulties, rather than academic deficiencies. This implies that our efforts, such as advisory programs, might be more effectively directed towards improving mental well-being and fostering social connections among students. This can provide a more holistic approach to education through recognizing student needs as an antecedent to academic achievement.

School Staffing Challenges

The nationwide teacher shortage has worsened in recent years. This shortage disproportionately impacts rural areas (Diliberti & Schwartz, 2023). Moreover, poor teacher recruitment and retention, high retirement rates, and fewer college students majoring in education have led to a mismatch between the number of vacant positions in demand and the skilled teachers available to fill them (Kilbride et al., 2023). The COVID-19 pandemic created

substantial staffing difficulties for school districts (Redding & Nguyen, 2024). This includes numerous challenges for schools, such as providing students with access to remote instruction, meeting health and safety concerns, and maintaining educational quality (Redding & Nguyen, 2024). Figure 3 shows percentages of public schools in the United States reporting too few applicants for the 2022, 2023, and 2024 school years. A high teacher attrition rate provides fewer opportunities for students to form meaningful relationships with their teachers and succeed academically.

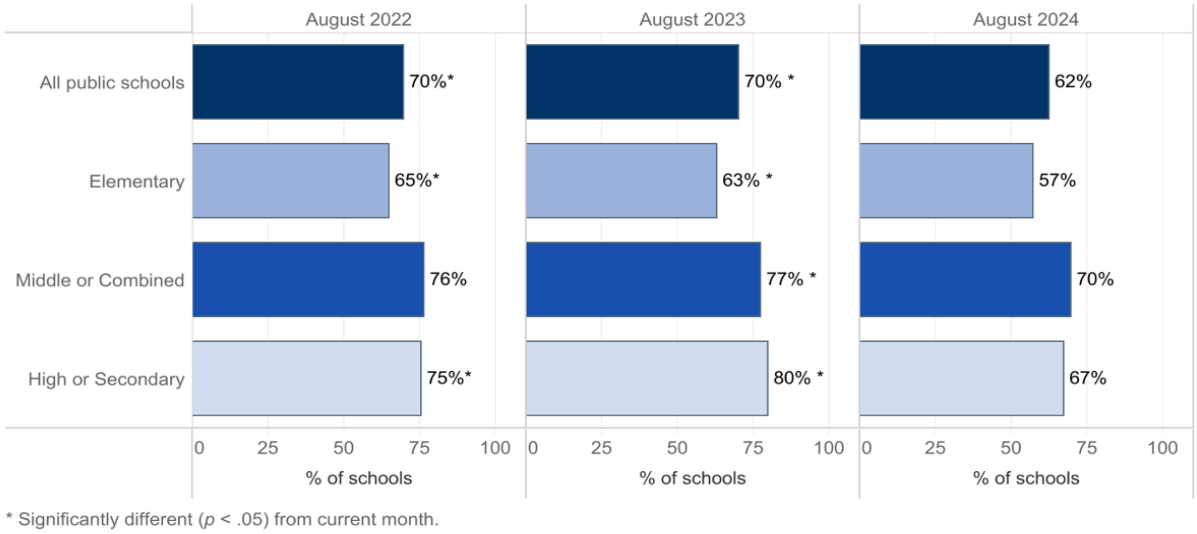


Figure 3: Percentage of public schools reporting 'too few candidates applying for open teaching positions' by school level (NCES, 2024)

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, PK-12 school districts struggled to fill open teaching positions. Issues such as low salaries and lack of school resources were points of contention for new and seasoned educators. These concerns, coupled with the pandemic, have exacerbated the ongoing teacher shortage (Lowe, 2021). Public institutions, including state and local policymakers, must fully understand the scope of teacher shortages and take the initiative to ensure that schools and districts are adequately staffed to provide the best possible education and assistance to their students (Kilbride et al., 2021). One strategy to alleviate staffing shortages is

to take a focused approach during hiring and through continuous program development and mentorship to resolve issues noted by teachers as reasons for leaving a job or profession.

Goldhaber et al. (2020) explored staffing problems by analyzing data from California school districts on teacher job vacancies across the urbanicity spectrum, emphasizing the magnitude to which rural school characteristics explain the disparities in staffing challenges. The results showed that rural districts have much more staffing issues than urban districts, suburban districts, and towns. The findings reveal that rural districts are often located near state borders, making them geographically isolated from teacher education programs, which is linked to staffing challenges.

When comparing urban, suburban, and rural school districts, there are disparities in recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers. Jacob (2007) examined urban districts' difficulties in finding qualified teachers for their schools. The study showed that teacher shortages are more acute in specific disciplines and grades and vary significantly between schools. For instance, a teaching vacancy in the Chicago public schools receives applications from an average of ten candidates. However, many applicants specify the schools in which they want to work, making it difficult for district administrators to find candidates for more impoverished schools. In rural America, poor teacher recruitment and retention, high retirement rates, and fewer college students majoring in education contribute to the mismatch between the number of vacant positions in demand and the number of skilled teachers available to fill postings (Latterman & Steffes, 2017). Goldhaber et al. (2015) found that disparities in teacher quality between high-poverty/high-minority schools and low-poverty/low-minority schools significantly influences student academic achievement.

In the United States, the 2019-2021 COVID-19 pandemic has created substantial staffing challenges across school districts. This includes numerous challenges to schools, such as the need to provide students with access to remote instruction, meeting health and safety concerns, and maintaining education quality. (Cain et al., 2022). According to a study conducted by Zamarro et al. (2021) comparing teacher commitment in the years 2020 and 2021, there were considerable differences in the level of commitment of teachers between the two years. In 2020, 74.2% of the educators involved in the study indicated that they were planning to commit to the profession until retirement. However, the percentage of educators planning to remain in the profession until retirement had decreased to 69% in 2021. Another major finding of the study was the percentage of teachers anticipating leaving the profession in the next five years increased from 24% to 30%. The results of this study confirm the claim made by Jakubowski and Sitko-Dominik (2021) that teaching is a high-stress profession, and that the COVID-19 pandemic seems to have aggravated this level of stress and burnout. Furthermore, research by Gutentag and Asterhan (2022) supports this by indicating that teachers experienced increased burnout, which is associated with lower commitment and higher turnover intentions, during the pandemic when compared to prior years.

These trends continued following the return to in-person learning following the pandemic and the three school years since. Surveys by the National Center of Education Statistics (NCES, 2023) found that in October 2022, only 56% of schools reported full staffing of instructional staff. According to these surveys, 26% of schools had more than one opening.

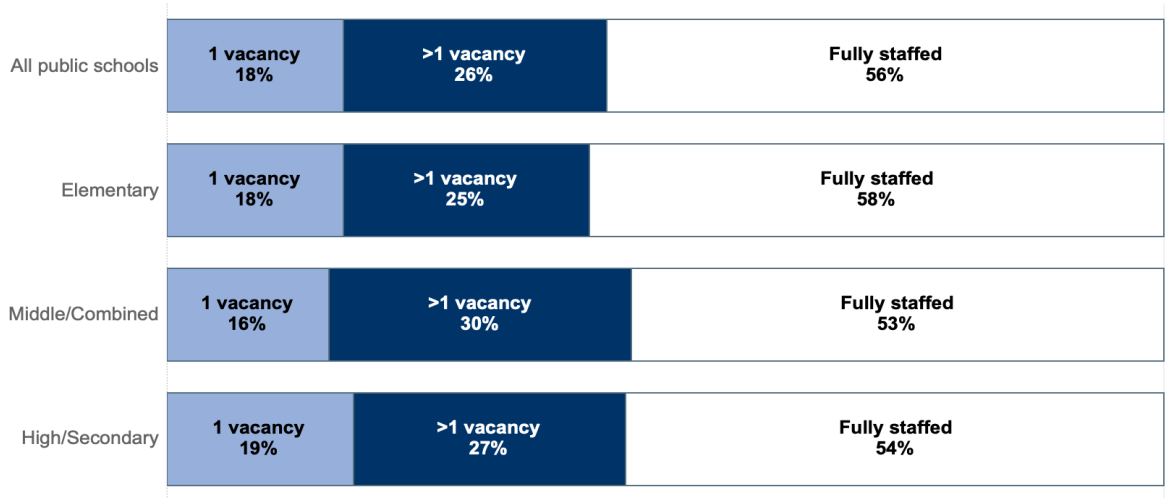


Figure 4: Percentage of Public Schools Reporting Vacancies in the 2022-23 school year by school level: October 2022 (NCES, 2023)

Teacher applicants may perceive the presence of strong advisory as an expression of care for student well-being by a school or district. Within certain advisory structure designs, the period spent providing relational care to students within an advisory class is also a period where teachers do not have to plan. In these ways, advisory structures may serve as marketing for educators with care-focused approaches to student outcomes.

Teacher Needs

Kraft and Lyon (2024) note, through every indicator of wellbeing, the teaching profession is experiencing record lows. By 2022, teacher satisfaction had reached a 50-year low, dropping by 26% since 2010 alone (p 6). Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, approximately 8% of teachers left their profession year-over-year (Pressley, 2021). Approximately one-third of school leaders indicated that the attrition rate of teachers was higher than normal, while the rest indicated that the rates were normal (Diliberti et al., 2021). This rate seemed to increase as the year progressed, as demonstrated by a national survey conducted by Diliberti and Kaufman (2020). The survey results indicated that towards the end of 2020, the percentage of teachers who reported a higher

likelihood of leaving the profession in the 2020-2021 academic year was about one-quarter, with the majority of these teachers citing burnout as the reason. Additionally, these teachers indicated that they had not considered leaving their profession before the pandemic. This suggests that there is a need to understand the underlying factors that contribute to burnout.

Teacher Pay.

Low relative pay is an additional challenge for recruiting and retaining teachers. In the 2017-18 school year, the average base salary for full-time teachers was $56,600 for public schools and $45,300 in private schools (NCES, 2020). The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics Career Outlook Tool (Torpey, 2020) labels jobs that can be entered with only a bachelor's degree, and for careers in business (project management/business operations specialists), the median annual wage is $73,570. For first-year teachers, the average salary was $44,200. Given that the NCES pay statistics include all full-time educators — who have an average of 13.9 years of experience and 48% hold master's degrees — it may be no wonder that other fields are more attractive when considering possible financial incentives.

Statistics regarding first-year teachers who stayed within the teaching profession or left found that starting salary had a significant effect on retention over five years (NCES, 2015). 89% of beginning teachers with a salary at or above $40,000 in 2007 remained in the profession in 2012. This compares to 80% of beginning teachers who remained in 2012 who had a starting salary below $40,000. Within the entire cohort of beginning teachers, a 10% rate of attrition was observed within the first year alone. Stagnant pay is an additional component of the reason that low pay is a reason for teacher attrition. The National Education Association (National Education Association (NEA, 2018) found that teachers' economic well-being has been eroded by inflation. However, the average teacher salary has increased by 14.1% over the past decade. When

adjusting for inflation, the average pay decreased by 1.7%. The NEA additionally reported that 20% of teachers leave the profession as a result of low pay.

Mentorship.

Teacher support and mentorship, and the lack thereof, are components of new teachers leaving the profession. In a longitudinal study of new teachers, each year teachers with an assigned mentor were more likely to remain in the profession than those who were not assigned a first-year mentor (NCES, 2015). After their first year, 92% of teachers with mentors remained, while only 84% of those without mentors remained. Each following year saw around 10% attrition of teachers with a first-year mentor and around 25% attrition of teachers without a first-year mentor. Therefore, the value of a first-year mentor must be recognized as having a significant role in teacher retention. When enacting a form of advisory, teacher mentorship will be a key component to ensure that advisory is not an additional stressor resulting in teacher burnout.

Teacher peer mentorship can extend beyond navigating district norms and expectations to include aspects of advisory. Advisory structures have the potential to stand outside the actual and perceived personal strengths of teachers expected to serve as advisors. Peer mentorship has the potential to expand the personal and professional strengths of the teachers for whom advisory is outside of the established skill set.

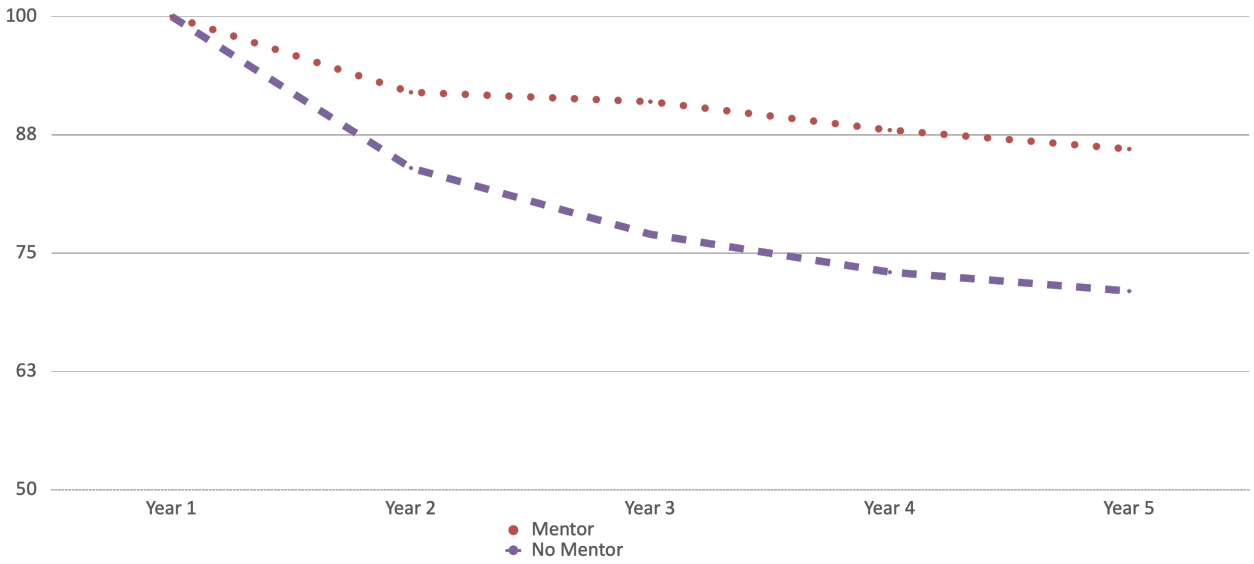


Figure 5: New Teacher Retention Rates (NCES, 2015)

Alternative Routes to Certification (ARC) programs have similarly shown lower retention for teachers after their first two years compared to teachers entering through traditional certification programs (NCES, 2015). These data can be cross-referenced between statistics for teachers who have the "other certification" trait and "Less than bachelor's degree" trait, each of which has a higher attrition rate. Both subsets may represent teachers who follow alternative routes to certification. Additionally, Black and Latinx teachers make up a very small subset of teachers, yet have the highest rates of attrition (Underwood, 2019). Black/African American mathematics teachers are more likely to leave the profession, as are other teachers in other underrepresented groups, as a result of racial microaggressions (Frank et al., 2021). Frank et al. contended that many mathematics teachers of color enter the profession with an eye on reform but are quickly "brought down to earth" upon entering the classroom. These teachers are noted as being previously talented students who return to the classroom to correct the problems perpetuated upon them. Teacher diversity in the areas of race and gender is tied to positive outcomes for teachers of all races and genders (Winters et al., 2013).

A survey conducted by Diliberti et al. (2021) indicated that nearly one out of five teachers who left the profession during the COVID-19 pandemic cited pay that was not worth the risks and stress experienced during the pandemic as their reason. This is consistent with the results of the study conducted by Räsänen et al. (2020), which suggests that teachers consider leaving the profession when work requirements are increased, while appreciation and salary levels remain low.

Teachers leave schools, districts, and the profession for several reasons. A common theme is the value-to-effort ratio required. When teachers are not adequately trained and involved in the process, it is reasonable to expect these additional stressors to coincide with changes in teacher longevity. Diliberti et al. (2021), found that approximately half of the teachers who left teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic were in schools that used instructional strategies that did not align with the teachers' beliefs. These teachers additionally cited a lack of training. These findings coincide with teacher disposition issues that arise when implementing advisory programs in Chapter 2.

Potential Importance of This Study

As outlined in the literature review (Chapter 2), there are a myriad of student and school benefits aligned with the use of advisory structures. These challenges, however, have not been adequately solved in the areas of teacher preparation and professional supports. In an initial study of one local advisory structure, I interviewed an advisory teacher who was also key to the adoption of the program. This advisor described the training as "building the boat while we are trying to sail it" (Bottorff, 2022). To draw the full benefits of advisory structures, it is imperative that we create proper opportunities for preparing our teachers to act in this role. There are multiple challenges, from a lack of resources to schema to dispositional alignment of teachers.

The goal of this study, therefore, will be to investigate the avenues of preparation and supports for teachers to act as advisors to secondary school students. As the area of resources is already a targeted market, this study will focus on aspects of dispositional alignment and the development of schema for teachers and administrators.

Although advisory is often touted as a fundamental aspect of education, there is a gap between research and practice. Anfara and Brown (2001, p 18) analyzed 180 books and articles and found fewer than 20 that discussed middle school advisory programs. Advisory is a well-respected strategy whose value is masked by the challenge of implementation.

Advisory structures are a tool that serves to equalize the playing field for millions of students. Students come to schools with challenges in their home lives, lack of food, a paucity of experience outside of their neighborhoods, and traumas. Through high-stakes instruction and the maintenance of federal and state expectations. In Michigan, 40.9% of our students are reading at grade level by the end of fourth grade (MiSchoolData, 2023). The NCES (2022) reading snapshot places Michigan's reading achievement behind 20 other states and jurisdictions. Are these shortcomings because teachers are not effective, schools are not effective, parents are not effective, communities are not supporting students, or a symptom of greater needs by our students that is not supported by our current structures?

Research Questions

This study investigates teacher preparation for advisory roles in secondary schools through the following research questions:

1) What forms of support do current advisory teachers feel are required to perform in their roles?

2) What supports do administrators within an advisory program view as the most valuable?
3) What is the current focus in training and development of teachers in current advisory programs?
4) In advisory programs, what aspects of training and development do teachers and advisors view as needed?
5) What form of advisory do teacher advisors consider necessary within their school and in what ways does this align with their current structure?

Through examining these questions across different school contexts, this study aims to develop recommendations for strengthening teacher preparation and support systems for advisory programs. The answers may provide guidance for schools implementing new advisory structures or seeking to improve existing ones. These questions guided the selection of methodology, data collection, and analysis procedures detailed in Chapter 3.

Summary

Building on these research questions, this chapter has established the critical need for examining teacher preparation in advisor roles. Students are struggling. Teachers are struggling. The roles teachers have been asked to perform in recent years has fluctuated wildly. Teachers must be technology experts, maintain instructional rigor, and be therapists to students and families. Along with the myriad of other ills affecting teacher retention, role expansion without adequate time and preparation may exacerbate these problems. As these challenges push teachers, some chose to leave the profession. With this perspective in mind, we can see that providing care to our teachers is to provide care to our students.

Advisory structures have the potential to target the human traits our steadfast focus on "achievement" has asked us to ignore. In an economy built for knowledge work, our focused growth must include the heart and soul, as much as the mind. Teacher training and development programs have done little to prepare teachers to act as advisors, to build on the affective needs of students, and to build communities within their classroom to truly get to know students on a personal level. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to explore pathways and strategies that may be used to better prepare working teachers to act as advisors.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter critically examines advisory structures in secondary schools, tracing their history and evaluating their impact on the current educational landscape. Initially prominent in the early 20th century, these structures have resurfaced as essential components in addressing the comprehensive needs of students, particularly following the disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic. The chapter further navigates various models of advisory programs, their intended outcomes, and the role of educators within these frameworks. It aims to provide a grounded understanding of how advisory systems can support student development, both academically and socio-emotionally, and what this implies for teacher preparation and professional development.

This chapter examines the landscape of advisory structures in secondary education, tracing their evolution from early 20th century origins to their renewed prominence in addressing post-pandemic student needs. The literature reveals advisory as a multifaceted phenomenon that encompasses various models and approaches, each aimed at fostering student development through sustained adult-student relationships. While substantial research demonstrates the potential benefits of advisory programs for student outcomes, a critical gap emerges in understanding how teachers are prepared for these important but challenging roles. This review progresses through four key areas: first, the historical development and varying definitions of advisory structures; second, the documented benefits and challenges of implementation across different educational contexts; third, the crucial role of teacher-student relationships and their

impact on both academic and social-emotional outcomes; and finally, the current state of teacher preparation and professional development for advisory roles. By synthesizing research across these domains, this review establishes the foundation for examining how teachers can be better prepared to serve as effective advisors in today's secondary schools.

Advisory History and Definitions

Advisory structures in secondary schools are complex phenomena with disparate goals, outcomes, and avenues for success and failure. Advisory can also be called homeroom, home base, teacher-counselor programs, mentoring, and teacher-based guidance (Mac Iver & Epstein, 1991). The vast timeframe over which advisories have existed and the broad nomenclature overlaps with aspects of school counseling and pastoral care, which can confuse research queries when investigating databases. Throughout this document, the preferred nomenclature will be “advisory” and “advisory structures.” Teachers in charge of an advisory class will be referred interchangeably as “advisors” and “teacher advisors.” School mental counselors and scheduling counselors are present in the research on this topic and will be referred to using the terms “school psychologists” and “counselors,” respectively.

Galassi et al. (1998) noted in their description of middle school advisories that these structures can be sorted among six types: caring, community, skills, invigoration, academic enhancement, and administrative homeroom. Each type of advisory brings with it a set of prior skills as well as an unequal amount of time needed to prepare. These types can have an affective needs focus (advocacy, community, skills, invigoration types), a cognitive focus (skills and academic types), or an administrative focus (administration type). Hattie, Briggs, and Purdie (1996) define the affective domain as “noncognitive features of learning such as motivation and self-concept” (p 100). There are also necessary advisor skills for each type. These advisor skills

range from interest and concern for students to group management, group facilitation, enthusiasm, clerical skills, and organizational skills. These traits are not universal among teachers and advisors, making implementation of advisory structures that prioritize one aspect of the typology established by Galassi et al. (1998) a challenge. Advisory is not one phenomenon but an approach towards a few common ends. It is worth noting that advisory types can overlap in their focus and implementation within a class period or school implementation structure (See Chapter 4).

In a summary of research, Anfara (2006) notes the most important aspect of advisory is not the structure, the particular time of day, or the ways in which students are grouped but the development of community, facilitating communication, and creating caring relationships. The academic and social benefits of advisory stem from this point. From a similar perspective, Bennett and Martin (2018) note that an exemplary advisory program should be a responsive program. An exemplary advisory program should address the "unique characteristics of students' cultural background. They should attend to, and be grounded in, the cultural influences of students' families, communities, and shared identities" (p 32). These are aligned with the core tenets of the *This We Believe* (AMLE, 2021; originally 1982) statement prioritizing relationships, safe and inclusive environments, where student academic and personal development is guided by an adult advocate.

Anfara (2006) also noted advisory programs may not function as they were designed and often devolve into an administrative homeroom — effectively removing the beneficial factors outlined above. To this end, Anfara (2006) advised that when planning advisory structures within a secondary school, designers must take a systematic approach that clearly defines the way advisory structures align with the school mission, staff responsibilities, and evaluation of the

Type	Need	Time	Goals & Focus	Advisor Skills	Sample Activities
Advocacy	Affective	Substantial Implementation Time	Teacher-Student Relationships	Personal Qualities: Interest and Concern for Students	Individual Student Conferences
Community	Affective	Substantial Implementation Time	Group Identity	Personal Qualities: Group Management	Group Discussions, Projects, and Intramurals
Skills	Affective and Cognitive	Substantial Preparation and Implementation Time	Developmental Guidance	Personal Qualities: Group Management and Group Facilitation	Decision making, Stress Management, Race Relations, Values Clarification
Invigoration	Affective	Minimal Preparation Time	Relaxing and Recharging	Personal Qualities: Enthusiasm	Intramurals and Clubs, Parties, Informal Fun Activities
Academic	Cognitive	Substantial Implementation Time	Academic Performance	Personal Qualities: Teaching/Instruction	Study skills, Silent Reading, Writing, Tutoring
Administrative	Administrative	Minimal Preparation and Implementation Time	General School Business and Housekeeping	Clerical and Organization	Announcements, Distributing School Materials, Collecting Money

Table 2: Galassi et al. (1998) advisory typology (p 19)

stakeholders' needs.

McEwin and Greene (2010) report the findings of a longitudinal study focused on trends in middle school education. These trends were compared with measures of school success to make recommendations. One such comparison found that 65% of highly successful middle schools had advisory programs. This led to the recommendation that schools could best make use of advisory by scheduling advisory sessions twice a week with a defined curriculum and effective professional development. Anfara (2006) mirrored this sentiment. It is worth noting in this literature that advisories were more represented in successful schools but were not necessarily labeled as causal.

Bennett and Martin (2018) describe a school in which many students report not feeling safe where the advisory program was used for academic remediation. When preparing an advisory program, data informed a worthwhile approach as the issues faced by students can then be adequately addressed. Their assessment at the end of the study was that a focused evaluation stage would have led to greater adoption and clearer success of the advisory program. If the purpose of advisory, as much of the research has suggested, is social, emotional, and interpersonal protecting the time, keeping it sacred, and separate from academic remediation instruction.

Benefits and Challenges of Advisory Structures

Based on the focus and the structure of an advisory program, multiple benefits and challenges may arise. These benefits and challenges can overlap, as staff skills, disposition, and allocation have tangible effects on the effectiveness of an advisory system. This section will begin by focusing on student social outcomes and group membership. It will then focus on the

benefits of Teacher Student Relationships (TSR). Finally, it attends to the challenges surrounding teachers' needs and disposition.

Student Social Outcomes and Identity

Four of the types of advisory established by Galassi et al. (1998) have an affective focus. These types are advocacy, community, invigoration, and skills. It should be noted that the "skills" type of advisory is both affective and cognitive in focus. Activities in these types of advisory include individual student conferences, group discussions and activities, clubs, parties, informal fun, relationship building, decision-making, skill development, stress management, and values clarification. During these types of advisories, students are likely to form greater connections with other students, to their advisor, and gain personal insight through a less "academic" focus.

The value of the relationships for students is outlined in the Developmental Designs framework. This framework outlines four adolescent needs through which adults must scaffold student experiences. These four needs are autonomy, competence, relationships, and fun (Crawford, 2012). Within this framework, autonomy refers to adolescents' desire to work without direction and gain independence from parents and adults as the child begins to gain a self-perception of themselves as an adult. Within this framework, "competence" is the belief in one's capabilities and is a form of confidence. Each of these needs should be provided gradually through structured experiences in order for adolescents to gain mastery (Bandura, 1994). Relationships within this framework reference both the links to adults and peers. Adult relationships are important for guiding adolescents through life experiences and the knowledge gained through experience. During an adolescent's school years, the social landscape widens dramatically. Where previously family and neighboring children would be the homogeneous peer

relationships through which students can define personal identity, the school years provide a wider variety of personalities and social experiences (Bandura, 1994, p 78). The final need within the Developmental Designs framework is "fun." Fun is the bridge between child and adult life — it is the "genetic reward for learning" (Glasser, 1998, p 41). Each of these needs overlaps others, similar to the overlap within the typology of advisory outlined by Galassi et al. (1998).

Students recognize the importance of advisory on their personal connections. Shulkind and Foote (2009) interviewed middle school students in an advisory program in Los Angeles. The students recognized the ways in which their advisors were able to draw them into active interaction during the school day. One student commented that having an advisor was a shared trait among all students in the school. This shared trait allows for less "othering" of students receiving assistance or intervention from an adult in the school, traditionally a social worker or psychologist. In this way, the challenges of entering adulthood are not problematized but are welcomed as what they truly are: a learning experience we all pass through or a rite of passage. The advisor is a guide through this stage in life, who may catch challenges before they become insurmountable. A portion of the social benefits of advisory come part and parcel with increased perceptions of the in-group. Social cliques in secondary schools are so pervasive that they become a movie trope — look no further than Mean Girls (Waters, 2004) with the Plastics, Burn Outs, Cool Asians, and Asexual Band Geeks. Perceptions of in-group belonging influence identity formation for students at the pivotal period of development in middle and high school.

Advisory structures with a social-emotional learning (SEL) perspective have the potential to positively influence student behavior and school safety. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) organization carried out a meta-analysis of 207 studies on social emotional learning. The meta-analysis found that schools with SEL programming led to

increased test scores, decreased problem behaviors, lower levels of emotional distress, and decreased risky behavior by students (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2008). SEL programs, which may be housed in advisory structures as per Galassi et al. (1998), guide improvement in these areas through teaching the skills of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making (see logic model in Figure 6). These improvements are salient, as they represent targeted intervention to the areas of need outlined by the United States Centers for Disease Control *Youth Risk Behavior Survey* (CDC, 2023).

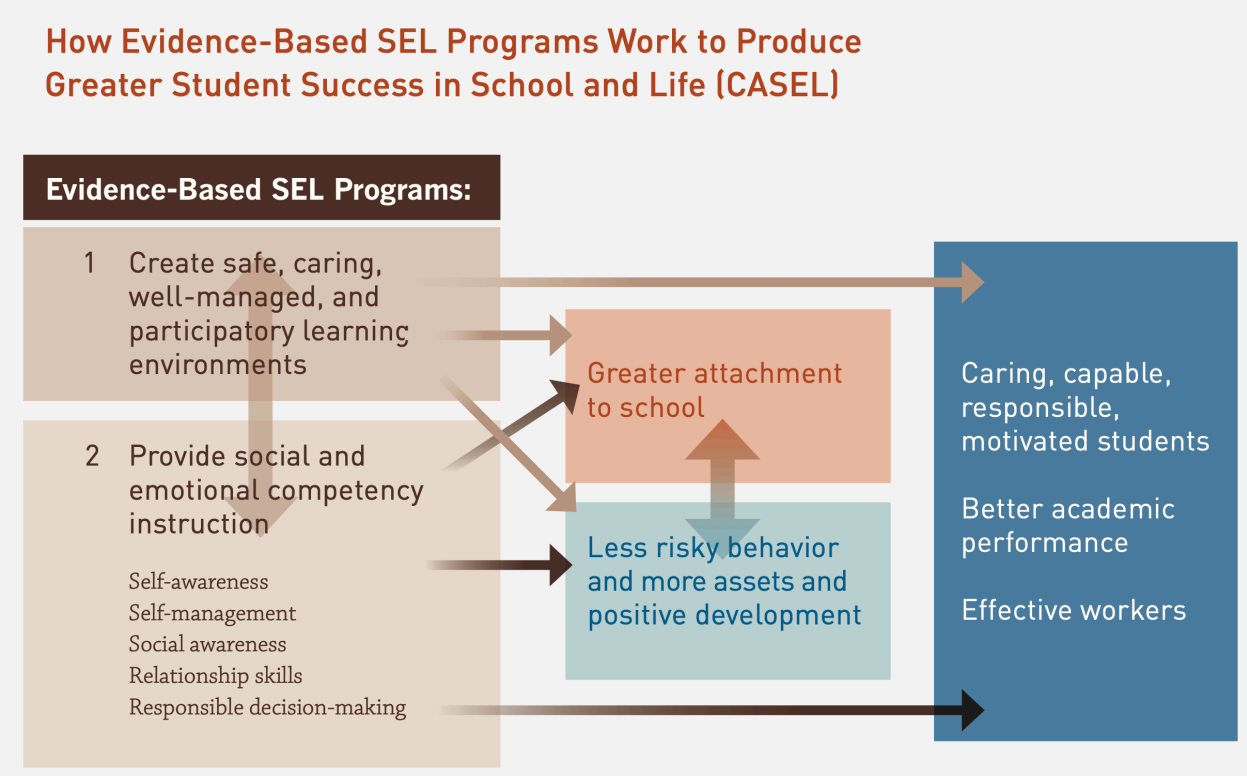


Figure 6:Logic Model: How SEL Works (CASEL, 2007)

The logic model in the figure above comes from the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (2008) meta-analysis. Within this model, evidence based SEL programs empower safe, caring, and well-managed learning environments while building the personal and

social skills previously outlined. These are features of program design beyond curriculum adoption. Within this model, the environment and skills work separately and in tandem to create greater school attachment and decrease risky behaviors. Both outcomes build upon the other. The next section will investigate school and adult attachment as a sign of positive school involvement and the relationship with improved outcomes.

Teacher Student Relationships (TSR)

In his seminal 1984 study on the American High School, Theodore Sizer (see 2004) laments that students can remain anonymous, lost within their crowded schedules, and never truly known by any teacher who may directly influence their development beyond rote understanding of a subject. The structures we have in place aggravate the feeling of anonymity in student life. Elementary and secondary specials area teachers are spread between three schools, each with little time to plan for their classes, much less to build relationships outside of their classes. High school teachers are scrambling to find opportunities to get students caught up with credit for graduation. From the start of contract hours to quitting time, teachers are swamped. Many initiatives, while focusing on student improvement through teacher practice, are missing one key factor: student interaction.

Developing teacher-student relationships (TSR) can be a challenge because of the structural design of our schools (Bernstein-Yamashiro & Noam, 2013). The schedules of students and teachers are an important structure within schools that can affect the building of relationships and strengthen their effects. Changes in the full-time-equivalency (FTE) allocation of teachers may be needed if TSR is to be a priority in schools. Teachers outside of the core academic subjects may be utilized outside of the subject area to provide academic and behavioral intervention. Jackson (2015) notes that “school dependent” students find comfort outside of core

academic subjects. As such, increased access to auxiliary teachers through intervention time and relationship building opportunities within an advisory structure can better target those students. A simple change in FTE allotments at each school has the potential to positively affect every area of school functioning, though this would represent significant monetary expenditure.

Psychological Foundations of Teacher Student Relationships.

One benefit of advisory for both teachers and students is the opportunity to develop or improve TSR. Quin (2017) provides a meta-analysis of longitudinal studies on TSR. They note that the psychological effects and social effects of TSR are consistent when compounding variables (family, school, external relationships) are controlled. Relationships between teachers and students can be predictive of future behavior in both life and academics. Hamre and Pianta (2001) found that behavior and teacher relationship evaluations in kindergarten predicted behavior and academic achievement in middle school. These findings were focused on the students who generally receive the most negative behavior evaluations: male students. This suggests that simple changes in relationship building have lasting effects and the potential to generate long-term returns on investment. These lasting effects can be strengthened when new systems are formatted with attention to Extended Attachment Theory (Roorda et al., 2011). This psychological frame recognizes that caregivers, like parents or teachers, provide students with a "home base" from which students can explore their learning environment. When anchored within a caring perspective focused on developing "closeness" these relationships assist students in taking positive risks and learning from experiences.

Roorda et al. (2011) developed a theoretical model based on Extended Attachment Theory. Extended attachment theory is an extension of mother-child relationships described by Ainsworth et al. (2015) and Bowlby (1969). In these mother-child relationships, positive

relationships between parents and siblings relate to feelings of security in the child. Long et al (2020) note these primary attachments are "primarily activated in times of need, danger, or distress, entailing a deviation from homeostasis" (p 282). Roorda et al.'s (2011) extended model provided a connection between affective TSR and emotional security, felt autonomy, and felt confidence. Klem and Connell (2004) noted that an increase in student perception of teacher engagement has a measurable effect on student engagement. This engagement leads to greater academic achievement. The inverse of these relationships may lead to negative effects on the child in school, such as decreased engagement and motivation.

Whether a TSR is positive is a valuable evaluation when considering relationships. Roorda and Bosman (2022) found four relationship profiles in their study of 899 seventh-grade students with a set of three teachers. These profiles were No Risk (high closeness, low conflict), two Single Risk profiles (low closeness or high conflict with one teacher), and a multiple risk profile (high conflict and low closeness with all three teachers). Students within the low-risk profile were more likely to have positive behavior and be more emotionally engaged in school. These profiles are not necessarily causal but represent the different relationships that students can have with different adults in their lives. As the majority of students in this study only had conflicting relationships with a single teacher, Roorda and Bosman suggested that targeted interventions regarding relationships between students and a single teacher would be adequate to move students between risk profiles. In an earlier study, Roorda et al. (2011) noted that the effect size for positive relationships was higher in secondary schools, while the effect size for negative relationships was higher in primary schools. Therefore, when planning an advisory program, it is necessary to consider the match between teachers and students. A well-aligned advisory teacher can then intervene between a student and their teacher with whom they are in conflict.

An extension of the value of TSR was raised by Kudlats and Brown (2021). Kudlats and Brown contend that Principal Student Relationships (PSR) are a valuable component in school relationship theories and school leadership. The many hats a principal wears often bring that person out of contact with students much of the day. A principal who is able to prioritize student relationships and interactions within their own workday will provide opportunities and guide their teachers to do so as well. This is descriptive of transformational leadership, wherein leaders "is a process that changes and transforms people. It concerns emotions, values, ethics, standards, and long-term goals. This includes assessing followers' motives, satisfying their needs, and treating them as complete human beings. Transformational leadership involves "an exceptional form of influence that moves followers to accomplish more than what is usually expected of them" (Northouse, 2019, p 263). Hattie (2009) noted a medium effect size (d=0.36) of principals on student achievement (p 83). This effect size is higher than that of the individual teacher, as the principal has an impact on all classrooms of a school and the ability to broadly change instruction and relational focus for staff and students (Marzano, 2003).

Most studies have focused on relating TSR and personalization of learning to connect their results to academic achievement, either through grade point averages or standardized tests. This focus may result from limitation of quantitative and mixed-methods research design of the studies. This may prove problematic as the effect size of TSR to academic outcomes is small-to-medium, but that a better effect size is the relationship between TSR and engagement and behavior. The next section will draw attention to the connections between advisory and academics, though it is my belief that academics are a secondary effect of improved TSR and school culture.

Academic Outcomes

Of the six types of advisory defined by Galassi et al. (1998), two are focused on the "cognitive" realm. These types are the skills focused type and the academic focused type. Within these types of advisory, students and advisors spend their time attending to academic/cognitive aspects of the student's educational day. An advisory focused on the academic and cognitive domains may be the result of a school or district prioritizing results in student grades, credit attainment, and standardized tests. Some districts seeking to implement an advisory justify the time and monetary investment using their academic achievement data. Advisory focused in the academic and cognitive domains can take the form of weekly schedule planning, study skills instruction, tutoring, group discussion, and stress management (Galassi et al., 1998, p 19). These activities focus on creating a direct result on academic achievement — schedule planning may impact assignment completion and study skills instruction may impact test scores, for example. These strategies are quick and effective but may not address deeper needs that result in poor grades and academic achievement.

A common question is whether advisory structures affect student academic performance. McClure et al. (2010) noted that increased positive feelings related to advisory by students matched with poorer academic performance. This is despite recognizing that increased feelings of personalization through advisory were predictive of higher academic achievement. This may be seen as students who were falling between the cracks academically and socially finding their place in an advisory program, possibly finding their academic footing for the first time through focused attention on their well-being.

Time commitment for advisory is often a sticking point in their implementation. Scheduling requires defining priorities about what will be included in the school day and what

will be eliminated. Johnson (2009) notes that the schools studied that had successful advisory time, advisories met between 40 and 60 minutes one or two times per week. Fitting this time into a schedule requires prioritizing it for this purpose. Finding such a large block of time free within a day would not be possible unless it was the first component of the schedule established. To prioritize advisory in this way, other offerings, such as advanced placement or honors courses, may be removed or paired down. Removal of courses for high-achieving students can result in negative reactions from teachers of those courses and the community if the subject is not broached thoughtfully and with care.

One important factor associated with academic achievement is school attendance. Balfanz et al. (2007) found, among other factors, attendance below 90% in sixth grade increases the likelihood that a student will not graduate high school. Of the students who are present 80% or fewer days of school, 75% will not graduate. In a study of a counselor-led advisory program focused on attendance, Moeder-Chandler (2018) observed an improvement in attendance. When the program was eliminated and attendance tracking by advisors was no longer a component, there was a similar decrease in attendance and graduation rates. Similarly, Moodley et al. (2020) found that an advisory-like program focused on attendance on Monday mornings had the greatest effect on student attendance, increasing attendance from 93.8% to 95.6% (already high percentages). A student who misses 10% of school days misses approximately one month of instruction. As a secondary effect, advisory programs aligned with attendance improvements may improve academic outcomes.

Bryk (2010) found a 95% average daily attendance rate for a school to be a reasonable ceiling when setting school-wide attendance expectations. This rate accommodates days missed because of student sickness, reasonable vacations, or bereavement. The State of Michigan

Department of Education requires a 75% district-wide attendance rate to receive funding (State of Michigan Department of Education, 2021). Schools consider students "chronically absent" after missing 10% of scheduled school days (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). The reasons a student may be absent from school include other obligations (illness, career, family instability, transportation), avoidance due to fear/embarrassment/boredom, and student or family not holding school at a high value (Moodley et al., 2020). Of these reasons for truancy, advisory structures can be used as targeted interventions for avoidance and value reasons. The already outlined benefits related to group membership and increased teacher-student-relationships can additionally affect student academic outcomes through increased attendance.

Academic Tracks

Creating academic tracks for students has been a hot button issue in the past. Adler (1998) suggested a stringent, universal twelve-year curriculum for all students. Noddings (2005, 2013) struck back at Adler's proposal with the recommendation of more flexible tracks. Noddings notes that an "ethic of care" requires a school to provide opportunities to build the skills needed in a student's future life. To do this, we cannot simply focus on the "Three R's" and a few pieces of great literature. To truly prepare a student for the world, students must have a broad range of opportunities that allow them to explore varied interests. The Advanced Placement mathematics student may find more fulfillment in carpentry than a lifetime of pursuing Fermat's Last Theorem. Flexible tracks allow students to follow their interests through career and technical education courses to test those interests. Oakes (2005) feels that the systems we use to track students, sorting them into like groups either through demographics or academic characteristics, is a process by which a culture programmatically instills inequality into the school system. The process by which we undertake sorting our students, either in advisory or

academic tracks, should not be done in such a way that it limits the potential of a student. Adequate Teacher Student Relationships, having an adult advocate who truly knows a student and their potential, is a necessary feature to build equality in flexible tracks; a feature that is implicit in an affective advisory program.

Students are living their lives for the first time and do not know the intricacies of course selection, college acceptance, and the job market. Advisors, mentors, and advocates who truly know a student at a personal level are a necessary component in the preparation of a child to live in the world. Some students may need to meet the first adult who has a genuine interest in their well-being. Some need a person who will make them question the path they have always thought they would follow. The majority of students need an adult whose "eyes light up when they walk in a room" (Clinton, 2020) and provide a structure of support. Academic improvements are secondary effects of a positive teacher student relationship and group membership.

Teacher Perspective and Dispositions

Program design of advisory structures within a school relies on teacher input. The purpose of a program and stakeholder involvement are pivotal in the success of these programs. Anfara et al. (2006, p 58) recommends, when preparing to implement an advisory structure, the following questions should have clear answers:

1) How does the advisory align with the school mission statement?
2) What does student advocacy mean?
3) What are the teacher advisor's responsibilities?
4) Who will supervise and manage the advisory program?
5) How will advisory groups be formed and scheduled?
6) How will the program be evaluated?

These questions, as with much of the literature on advisory, are focused on program design and efficiency.

Niska and Thompson (2007) provided a nine-module approach to program design specific to advisory designed to be followed by a teacher committee from initial conceptualization to actualization of an advisory structure. Involving teachers at the initial planning stages is meant to increase teacher "buy-in" and align the program with teacher-perceived needs and capabilities. A vital aspect to the success of any advisory structure is the involvement and capacity of the teachers who will be on the frontlines. Teachers have increasingly had more responsibility on their plates. From more stringent accountability measures to support students' basic needs. This has led to an increase in the number of teachers leaving the profession before retirement and a decrease in the number of students pursuing education as a future career. This section focuses on the aspects of teachers leaving and the ways in which dispositional development, administrative support, and professional development opportunities related to advisory may ameliorate these issues.

Improving teacher capacity is not strictly the concern of professional development hours but can be considered as developing through mentorship and preservice opportunities. Cohen et al. (2024) provided evidence to a coaching model to improve teacher capacity, across five conceptual reproduction studies. Their coaching program found the greatest improvement in teacher capacity through the use of short, targeted, and directive coaching for educators enrolled in formal education programs. The effects were not as great for participants not enrolled in teacher education programs. This research implies that a strictly professional development model, through classes or training meetings, might be improved by incorporating a coaching and mentorship approach. The authors also note the likelihood of burnout if professional learning is

to be developed strictly "on the job." These recommendations align with recommendations for Multi-Level Coaching (Wood et al., 2016).

Teacher Student Relationships (TSR) have earlier been connected with student outcomes. The positive outcomes of TSRs on teachers are worth noting. Harris (1985) found in a survey of teachers that more than 51% considered leaving the teaching profession. 75% of the teachers who stayed did so because of the satisfaction received from their relationships with students. Although these results were tied to advisory structures by Galassi et al. (1997), it is unclear whether these findings were based within an advisory structure. One challenge for a successful advisory program is implementation by the teachers of the school. While advisory and teacher-student-relationships (TSR) are often highly valued by teachers, the purposeful implementation of these relationships can be a challenge for some. Diehl (2021) notes a misbalance between a teacher's disposition and their deliberate focus or beliefs, further noting that it is possible for a teacher to have a high belief in the value of advisory or TSR, but to lack the disposition to act upon this belief. Boudreau (1990) called this a "misfire" between habit and situation. A dispositional misfire may also be an issue of "role expansion" whereby a teacher is asked to extend their role beyond the lecturer role to a parental or affective supporting role. How do we contend with the pushback on role expansion when we add extra advisory work for teachers? With the already packed schedules, planning, testing, and quality rating requirements, there is little time to get more done. Hopkins (2004) recognized:

> [it] is often the case that teachers are used to hiding behind their professional mask … Nevertheless, the teacher is almost always inevitably going to have views and strong feelings … Their authentic response, coupled with their genuine concern for both young people, is likely to be a key component in the outcome of the process (p 123).

It is important, while preparing an advisory program, to view the personal side of the teachers in the school and to provide an opportunity to remove their "professional mask" to develop caring relationships.

Phillippo (2013) offers a similar suggestion, recognizing a misbalance of "schema" and "resources" in the effectiveness of advisors. Schema are defined by Sewell and Sewell (2005) as "generalizable procedures applied in the enactment/reproduction of social life" (p 131). These are the blueprints and codes by which we make decisions in our lives. The formalized procedures and traditions of a school that guide decision-making are examples of schema. Resources are the tools that we bring to the job. Resources can be the manipulatives and consumables traditional to a classroom, a defined curriculum, or the personal resources, such as knowledge or skills from previous life experiences. Other components of a school that can be considered resources are class size, teacher turnover and retention, and the social networks within and around the school (Phillippo, 2013, p 64).

Phillippo's (2013) quadrants (Table 3) describe teachers' advisory approaches based on resources, and schema shows the possibility of increasing personal beliefs before adding resources. In this quadrant system, based on Sewell's (2005) work, teachers with a higher schema defining their role in advisory were rated as more effective. These teachers did not have greater teaching experience, but often came to the role of teaching as a secondary career. When resources outweighed schema, there was more dispositional misfire, less effective advising, and more teachers left the school or profession. The correlation of teachers remaining within the teaching profession when a higher schema was present may provide direction to administrators preparing an advisory program. To retain teachers when incorporating such a program, a focus on schema development can affect teacher retention and recruitment.

	Low Advisor Role Schema	**High Advisor Role Schema**
Low Advisor Role Resources	**Quadrant A** 13 Teachers Mean Resource Score: 10.38 (SD = 2.63) Mean Schema Score: 9 (SD = 1.23) Mean Age: 35.81 (SD = 11.18) Mean Years Teaching: 9.64 (SD = 2.79)	**Quadrant B** 7 Teachers Mean Resource Score: 13 (SD = 1.41) Mean Schema Score: 15 (SD = 1.73) Mean Age: 26.29 (SD = 1.38) Mean Years Teaching: 2.86 (SD = 0.69)
High Advisor Role Resources	**Quadrant C** 11 Teachers Mean Resource Score: 16.09 (SD = 1.22) Mean Schema Score: 8.9 (SD = 1.58) Mean Age: 35.81 (SD = 11.18) Mean Years Teaching: 9.64 (SD = 8.78)	**Quadrant D** 14 Teachers Mean Resource Score: 19.14 (SD = 2.83) Mean Schema Score: 16.07 (SD = 1.44) Mean Age: 39.64 (SD = 10.65) Mean Years Teaching: 6.71 (SD = 5.46)

Table 3: Phillippo (2013) Schema vs Resources quadrants (p 102)

Wang (2022) studied the emotional intelligence and work engagement of 365 Chinese public-school teachers in relation to student outcomes. Wang found that work engagement was a mediating factor between teachers' emotional intelligence and positive student outcomes. Klassen et al. (2013) defined work engagement as comprising three domains: cognitive-physical, emotional, and social. Through the development of the Engaged Teachers Scale (ETS), Klassen hypothesized a reciprocal connection between teacher work engagement and student engagement and student outcomes. These domains are not limited to in-school teacher behavior but can extend to teacher interaction and behavior within the community, a concept that aligns with the CASEL (n.d.) framework, Bronfenbrenner's (1994) *Ecological Model of Human Development*, and Epstein's *Six Types of Involvement* (Epstein et al., 2018). Wang (2022) contributes to

Klassen's models by adding emotional intelligence as a variable. These findings expand on the resources and schema variables established by Phillippo (2013). Given these findings, advisory structures that support teachers' work engagement have the potential to produce positive teacher, student, and community outcomes.

Administrator and trainer recognition of the imbalance between resources, schema, disposition, and confidence is an important aspect in preparing teachers to work as advisors. A proper system of preparation will need to take these characteristics into account. As teachers balance their instructional course load and affective relationships with students, a system of preparation cannot focus strictly on providing curriculum and resources but must include schema.

Teacher Training for Advisory

Purposeful attention to detail is required when designing advisor development programs. This is salient given the previous recognition of the challenges of skills, schema, and disposition. There is a paucity of research directly related to the development of advisory teachers. Plenty of research exists on the topic of teacher training, which may be drawn upon to design a program for professional development. Teacher preparation is a purposeful, understood, and designed process with a long history to draw upon. Counselor training and development research can be probed to further develop strategies for advisor development.

When planning for professional development that should lead to change, the KASAB framework may also be considered. KASAB stands for Knowledge, Attitude, Skills, Aspiration, Behavior (Easton, 2008). In using each of these areas, we remove the tendency to forget training after leaving. Typically, professional development focuses on knowledge and skills (lower-level learning per Bloom's Taxonomy) while neglecting areas of attitude and aspiration. The

"attitude" component also relates to teacher disposition. When training does not apply to the teacher's perceived disposition, we may see a dispositional misfire. Easton notes that most development by educators within the school happens during the actual day and not during professional development. Easton recommended adjusting professional development to include these components. For this reason, it may be worthwhile to structure professional development within a multi-level coaching approach.

One of the few studies structured directly around teacher training to work as an advisory teacher was conducted by Myrick et al. (1986). These researchers describe a structured system in which teachers-as-trainers would guide advisory teachers in a set of units in the skills necessary for advisory. These units included teacher-student relationships, creative listening, selective responding, setting limits, problem-solving, complimenting and confronting, using structured group activities, and organizing for advisory time. Their findings recognized the importance of staff development focused on advisor skills for the success of an advisory structure. Following the completion of the training, teachers were surveyed on the perceptions of readiness to run an advisory and to work with advisees. The data showed marked and statistically significant improvement in perceived preparation and self-confidence in teachers' ability to act in the role of advisory across all areas. This implies that a structured training and development program has the potential to affect teachers' effectiveness in an advisory program. The finding of improved self-confidence in Myrick et al. (1986) is notable as it recognizes a dispositional aspect of teaching: confidence.

A second study, focusing on professional development specific to advisory, was performed by Niska (2014). Niska examined the effectiveness of different modalities of instruction for teachers to act as advisors. The participants were divided into three groups: non-

trained, trained, and trained with coaching. The course designed by the author was used for the two training groups. All three participant groups showed improvement in their pre and post-test evaluations on knowledge of *Stages of Development* [1] and problem solving. However, the two trained groups had markedly better results. Following the instruction, the group that also received coaching expressed increased confidence in their roles, similar to Myrick's (1986) findings. The implication is that, while teachers can improve their practice through classroom experience, aspects of training, mentorship, and coaching are vital to growth in advisor skill, confidence, and disposition. Given the paucity of research focused on training teachers for advisory structures, we must turn our attention to training for specific topics that may overlap with advisory training.

In the area of teachers' professional development for Social Emotional Learning instruction, some recommendations exist. In a review of 16 articles on Social Emotional Learning (SEL) training pathways, Chen (2024) found that the dominant format based on frequency was lecture-based learning (n=10). This was in contrast with participatory learning (n=16). Participatory learning formats included workshops (n=4) and educational seminars (n=2). Each of the participatory learning approaches can be conceived as "active engagement" (p 32) opportunities, in contrast to the more common lecture-based approaches. Chen notes the positive outcomes are not aligned directly along the lines of lecture-based versus participatory learning but is aligned with the previous robustness of a school's SEL culture (p 33). Within advisory, this stands in some contrast to the previous findings by Phillippo (2013), where the teachers observed a misbalance between belief and resources. Within the current study, the "robustness" of a school's SEL culture must be part of the investigation.

[1] "Stages of Development" is the name of the program used for instruction.

Similar to the approach described by Niska (2014), Multi-Level Coaching is a process by which trainers work through instructional and coaching perspectives (Wood et al., 2016). Multi-Level Coaching shifts to a perspective in which the classroom is the locus of teacher growth, and it may be worthwhile to structure professional development for advisories. In this approach, teachers are coached along three different levels: Supervisory Coaching, Side-by-side coaching, and multi-level coaching. In Supervisory Coaching, teachers are observed and receive feedback at a later date. This is similar to the often-used strategy in standard evaluation processes. In Side-by-side coaching, teachers will receive feedback from a coach during instruction. The coach may take over the lesson to model and return control to the teacher. This is similar to student teaching processes and may invoke feelings of inadequacy in professional educators receiving this style of coaching. This is the preferred method by Wood et al., although it is resource intensive for the whole school environment. The final multi-level coaching begins with staff receiving high-quality professional development that is followed by supervisory coaching. If instructional fidelity is 80% or greater, teachers will enter a maintenance mode. If instructional fidelity falls below 80%, teachers will receive side-by-side coaching until reaching this threshold.

The quality of the training program and the focus of a training program on advisory is vital. One program, used in the study by Niska (2014), comes from *The Origins Program* and the *Developmental Designs Approach*. In this program, Crawford (2012) provides background, themes, lessons, and activities that teachers can follow with students from grades five to nine. While Crawford's lessons and activities may represent the "resources" present in Phillippo (2013), the Origins Program provides on-site training that put the practitioner "in the shoes" of the students who will be in their care. This approach has the benefit of providing a theoretical foundation for the concepts learned while expanding and reinforcing the concepts through direct

personal experience. Role-play can be a powerful training strategy in professional development. Grossman et al. (2007) found that teacher preparation programs spend much time talking about attending to behavior and their practicum will likely have few consistent opportunities to practice. When a trainee does not have practice outside the behavioral situation, they are less likely to react in the most effective way. Role play can additionally represent a form of "deliberate practice," a requirement of expert performance of a skill (Ericsson, 2008).

The concept of professional development and classroom learning supports to enhance teacher efficacy and comfort within the advisor role may be better considered through a different lens: support. Therefore, the question I am asking is not "what professional development do teachers need" but "what supports do teachers and administrators feel is needed to build capacity to effectively act in the role of advisor." To solely consider professional development without coaching, mentorship, and other less structured supports is to focus solely on Phillippo's "resource" quadrant at the expense of role schema.

Summary

The examination of advisory structures presented in this chapter highlights their potential to strongly influence student experience in secondary education. The literature points to a connection between well-implemented advisory programs and positive student outcomes, such as improved engagement and well-being. While existing research demonstrates the value of advisory programs for student outcomes, questions remain about how schools can best support teachers in these expanded roles. This study addresses these questions through a comparative case study approach, examining how teachers and administrators across different educational contexts perceive and experience preparation for advisory roles. Through careful examination of

multiple school settings, this research aims to develop actionable recommendations for strengthening teacher preparation and support systems for advisory programs.

Chapter 3: Methods

This chapter outlines the methodological framework and procedures used to investigate how teachers and administrators perceive their roles within secondary school advisory programs. The study specifically examines the professional development needs, structural supports, and preparation required for educators to effectively serve as advisors. Through a comparative case study approach spanning three distinct educational settings, this research seeks to understand how different contexts shape the implementation and experience of advisory programs.

This chapter begins by establishing the researcher's positionality and theoretical orientation to the study. It then details the research questions guiding the investigation before describing the comparative case study methodology. The chapter proceeds to outline the settings, participants, and data collection methods, including semi-structured interviews and document analysis. It concludes with a discussion of data analysis procedures and important ethical considerations.

Researcher Positionality

My approach to this research has been shaped by my diverse experiences as an educator across multiple contexts, grade levels, and roles. These experiences inform both my understanding of advisory structures and my interpretation of the data. It is therefore important to explicitly acknowledge how my background influences my perspective on this research.

My educational career spans both domestic and international contexts, including teaching positions at every grade level from elementary through secondary, as well as experience in teacher preparation programs. While my initial seven years were focused on secondary education both in the United States and internationally, the past eight years have been spent teaching at the elementary level in the United States. This trajectory has given me a unique perspective on the developmental continuum of student needs and how different grade levels approach student support.

My current position in elementary education particularly substantially informs my conceptualization of social-emotional approaches to advisory implementation—a point acknowledged by several study participants. Elementary education is more stereotypically aligned with a holistic approach to student development. This has informed my belief that advisory programs should prioritize relationship-building and social-emotional support alongside academic goals. This theoretical orientation towards advisory implementation found it initial catalyst in my experience teaching at the secondary level in an international context.

My initial engagement with the topic of advisory developed during my time teaching middle school at an international school. This international school is within the same country as one of the locations of this study but is not the same location. I initially applied and accepted a teaching position at this international school because of the presence of a program referred to in the marketing materials "pastoral care." Within the school, however, this was referred to as "advisory" by the students and teachers. The presence of this advisory structure represented, in my mind, a holistic dedication to students. When teaching, however, I felt that I was not an effective advisor. Through conversation with my advisory teacher colleagues, it became clear that this was an incorrect evaluation. While I was successful at creating and maintaining positive

mentoring and relationships with students, I felt an unease regarding what should be done formally within the advisory class period. This is a perspective that was shared by many of the participants in this study.

My relationship to the research sites requires careful consideration. As a current faculty member and district subject area teacher leader within Location 2, I hold both insider and outsider status. While this position provided valuable access to participants, it also required implementing strategies to maintain objectivity and protect participant confidentiality. Given this familiarity, I was careful during interviews with teacher participants to clarify the anonymity of their responses.

Research Questions

A significant amount of research has been conducted to expose the benefits and challenges of implementing advisories in secondary schools. These have been further laid out in the Literature Review section of this document. Given my reading and prior experience as an advisory teacher, a strong impression I have developed is that a vital and often ignored aspect within the literature is teacher preparation to act as an advisor. Therefore, my attention will move beyond what qualities of an advisory program are more common or useful for training and dispositional development.

The research questions within this study are, again, as follows:

1) What forms of support do current advisory teachers feel are required to perform in their roles?
2) What supports do administrators within an advisory program view as the most valuable?

3) What is the current focus in training and development of teachers in current advisory programs?
4) In advisory programs, what aspects of training and development do teachers and advisors view as needed?
5) What form of advisory do teacher advisors consider necessary within their school and in what ways does this align with their current structure?

The answers to these questions may provide recommendations for future implementation of advisory programs. To answer these questions, a qualitative approach was taken. Teachers and administrators were be located and, through interviews, individual perceptions on needed skill development were be assessed. The perceptions of these practitioners will then be coded to determine recommendations for future development programs. As there is an inherent pushback at the start of any new initiative, practitioners working within an established advisory structure will be the preferred participants in this study.

While student mental health and well-being serve as key motivators for advisory implementation, as discussed in Chapter 1, these research questions focus specifically on teacher preparation as a critical mediating factor in advisory effectiveness. The ability of advisory programs to address student needs depends heavily on teachers' preparation and capacity to serve in advisory roles.

Research Design

A comparative case study approach was selected as the specific qualitative methodology for several reasons. Firstly, this approach allows for the examination of advisory programs across multiple contexts while maintaining sensitivity to the unique characteristics of each setting. The three selected locations—representing different school types, socioeconomic contexts, and

advisory implementations—provide rich opportunities for comparison that can illuminate common themes and variations in how advisory programs function and how educators experience them. This comparison helps generate more robust and nuanced understandings of what educators need to successfully implement and sustain advisory programs.

Qualitative research design was chosen for this study to gain a deeper understanding of how teachers and administrators perceive and experience advisory programs in various educational settings. The complexity of advisory structures, combined with the varied approaches to implementation and experience, called for an approach that could capture the subtleties of the lived experiences of educators working within these systems. Unlike quantitative approaches, which might reduce these experiences to measurable variables, qualitative inquiry allows for the exploration of the "how" and "why" behind educator perceptions, preparations, and needs within advisory programs.

The decision to employ qualitative methods was further supported by the exploratory nature of the research questions, which seek to understand the forms of support teachers need, the perspectives of administrators, and the alignment between current advisory structures and perceived needs. These questions required detailed and context-rich data best gathered through in-depth interviews and document analysis. Qualitative research is particularly appropriate when seeking to understand the multiple emergent truths that take place in the natural world (Marshall et al., 2022).

The flexibility of the comparative case study approach also allows for the incorporation of multiple data collection methods, including semi-structured interviews and document analysis, providing a comprehensive view of how advisory programs function across different contexts. This methodological triangulation further strengthens the validity of the findings and helps

develop a more complete understanding of the phenomenon under study. This study adopted a comparative case study of advisory programs across multiple schools. Pathmarajah (2019) delineates a comparative case-study research design as one that encourages researchers to investigate a wide perspective that situates the case within multiple contexts. Multiple sites were be selected within this case study to avoid "direct replication" (Yin, 2017, p 61).

Data Collection

The data collected primarily consisted of semi-structured interviews, with supporting documents analyzed when available. These documents include advisory program proposals, training documents, administrative directives, curriculum documents, survey responses, and other relevant materials from participating sites. These documents are enumerated in

Appendix A. The semi-structured interview protocol (see Appendix D) was designed to elicit rich descriptions of educators' experiences with and perceptions of advisory programs. Questions explored themes of preparation, support needs, program implementation, and perceived effectiveness, while allowing flexibility to pursue emergent topics relevant to each case location's unique context.

A semi-structured interview protocol was purposefully selected to elicit participants' perspectives at a deeper level than surveys or structured interviews. The selected research sites fall into different portions of the *Six Types of Advisory* established by Galassi et al. (1998). For this reason, semi-structured interviews allow for adaptation to the individual context of the research site's advisory typology. This flexibility proved particularly valuable given the diverse

advisory implementations across case locations, allowing the research to capture both common themes and context-specific nuances. The semi-structured format also enabled participants to raise unexpected but relevant insights that might have been missed with a more rigid protocol.

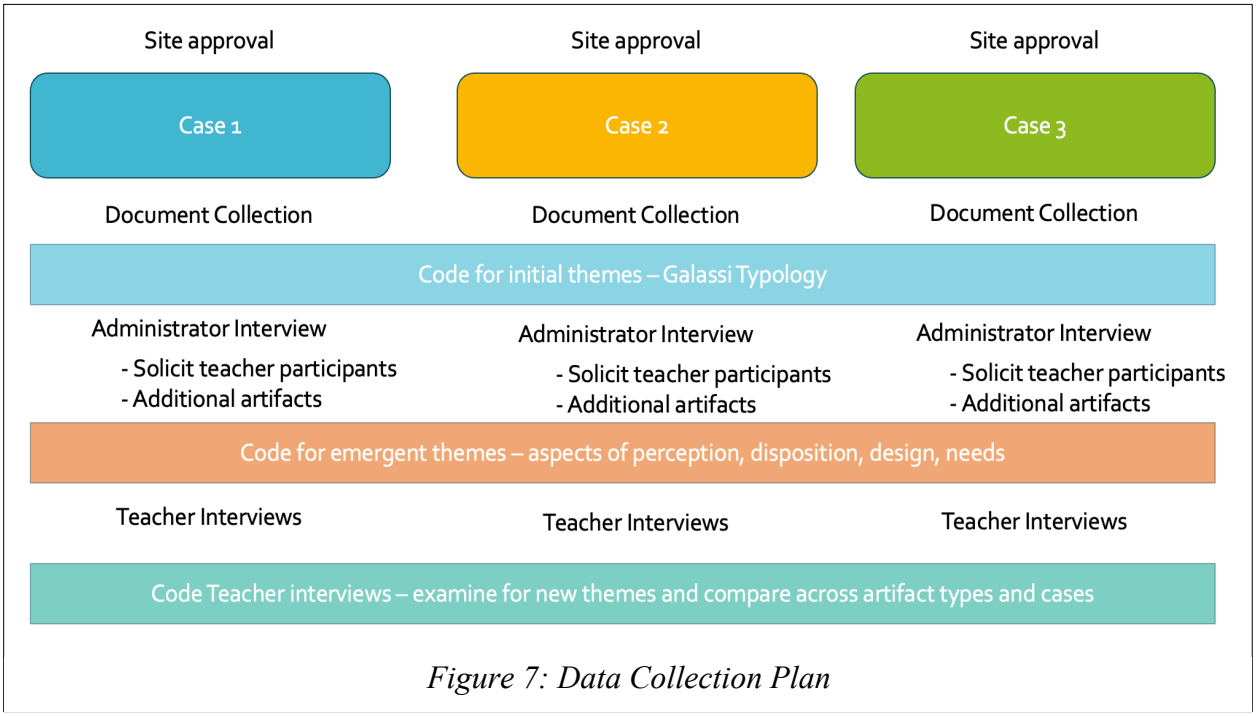


Figure 7: Data Collection Plan

Figure 7 illustrates the multi-phase data collection process implemented across the three case locations. While similar information was gathered at each site, the sequence and timing of data collection varied based on participant availability. Initial document collection provided foundational understanding of each program's structure and stated objectives. These documents informed the semi-structured interviews, allowing for more targeted and relevant discussions with participants. Through this systematic yet flexible approach, the research captured both the formal structures of each advisory program and the lived experiences of educators implementing them. Cross-case comparisons were enabled by maintaining consistent core interview protocols while allowing for site-specific inquiry based on document analysis findings and emerging themes.

Meeting Recording and Transcription

All interviews were completed through digital meeting software. When possible, Zoom was used to host interviews between the lead researcher and participants. Built-in cloud recording features were used after receiving permission from participants. In one situation, Google Meet and a phone call were used as fallback communication.

The audio of interviews was recorded and transcribed using the Otter.ai program. Otter.ai is an online service designed to record, transcribe, and generate initial meeting notes following the interviews. The program is compatible with various meeting software, such as Zoom and Google Meet, and can also transcribe pre-recorded audio and video.

Back-up recordings were created in the event of recording corruption. Backups were recording in triplicate through a field audio recorder placed in the room with the researcher, the built in Zoom meeting recording software, and the Otter.ai transcript file. Recording corruption did occur twice during the participant interviews. Both incidents occurred following power outages from nearby storms. In these cases, the best quality back-up recording was selected to be processed for transcription.

Data Analysis

The analysis of interview data followed a systematic qualitative approach utilizing thematic analysis guided by an established typology. All interviews were carefully transcribed verbatim to ensure data accuracy and preserve the authentic voices of participants. The analytical process began with a thorough review of the transcribed interviews, during which significant statements and quotes were extracted. These extracted quotes were categorized according to A Priori codes proved by Galassi et al's (1998) *Six Types of Advisory* (Table 2).

Following the initial categorization, an iterative process of theme identification was conducted across the sorted data. This process involved careful examination of patterns and relationships within and across categories to identify emergent themes that captured the essential experiences and perspectives of the participating teachers and administrators. To maintain analytical rigor, all identified themes were supported by direct participant quotes, ensuring that findings remained grounded in the empirical data. Themes are then organized into a coherent narrative, supported by illustrative quotes from the transcripts, to provide rich descriptions of participants' experiences and perspectives. A cross-case analysis was be used following the coding of individual cases (Yin, 2017, p 196).

Settings and Participants

Three locations comprised the focus of this comparative analysis. Each location was initially found through the personal and professional connections of the researcher. One location study was found through a graduate student colleague, the administrator of one location was my former supervisor, and one location is my current employer. Table 4 outlines the demographic and advisory structure descriptions of each location.

Convenience alone did not determine the location selection. Each location represents a unique situation. Locations range from international private education (Location 1), to a Top 10 state level public school district with an upper middle-class community (Location 2), to a smaller public school district representing students with lower socioeconomic status (Location 3). The commonality between these three locations is the presence of an active advisory program. Initial communication with administrators in each location revealed the presences some flexibility in each advisory program. Within this narrative, "flexibility" of an advisory program will mean an advisory program that aligns to two or more of the types provided by Galassi et al. (1998).

The locations are housed in two countries. The case locations within the United States are within 50 miles of each other within a mid-western U.S. State. Including the international case location, each case location's teachers are primarily American educated teachers. As such, these teachers come to their role as educators from a similar cultural perspective. Some teachers may have taken the plunge to leave their home country, some are teaching in the same school in which they were raised, and others still are newcomers to their area from another state. These teachers share commonalities in their dedication to preparing students academically and socially. The students' personal situations may differ but the commonality of a compound focus or flexible advisory and the teachers' preparation to act in this role is consistent. The differences between the locations and the similarity of needs reported by teachers provides for greater inherent generalization of the responses. The difference of situation but similarity of response denotes a truth in the generalizable need for attention to advisory program preparation.

	Schools Participating in Advisory	**Students Participating in Advisory**	**Advisory Frequency**	**Length of Advisory Period**	**Year Advisory Program Initiated**	**Advisory Alignment (per Galassi)**
Location 1	1 Middle School 1 High School	122	Once Per Week	30 Minutes	2015	Skills, Community, Invigoration
Location 2	3 Middle Schools 3 High Schools	6,134	**Middle School**: Every day **High School**: Twice per week	45 minutes	2022	Academic, Skills
Location 3	1 High School	1,545	Every day	45 minutes	2021	Skills, Academic, Community

Table 4: Case Location Advisory Program Descriptions

Location 1

Location 1 was initially found through conversation with a previous professional colleague. The administrator for Location 1 is the former principal at a school in which the principal researcher of this study served as an advisor. During the IRB process of this study, communication began between the researcher and the administrator to request information on the details of the advisory program within their shared previous employer. At that time, details arose to redirect focus towards the administrator's current school.

Location 1 School Description.

The first case within this study is housed in a private international school in Southeast Asia. The location represented a purposeful exemplar of advisory structures outside of the public-school setting but within an American school structure. Though it represents an international school and a private school, the school is accredited through the Western Area Schools and Colleges (WASC) Accrediting Commission and follows the American academic standards and maintains similar grade structuring. Following these structures allows students to transition to universities within the United States of America following graduation. According to the school's marketing materials and teacher handbook, the student population is comprised of 17 nationalities. Students are accepted from preschool (age 3) to twelfth grade in alignment with the American public school grade level system. Class sizes are small, in comparison with Location 2 and Location 3, with an average class size of 15 students. The student-to-teacher ratio is seven to one. Academic achievement is high. On Advanced Placement exams, 97% of participating students scored a rating of three or higher. There are additionally 16 Advanced Placement courses offered in the course catalog. The graduation rate is 99.8%.

The student population within Location 1 is comprised of roughly 50% students with American citizenship 33% with a citizenship from the host nation. By race, the student population is 65% Asian. This distribution of students is important as the local government limits access to foreign education to foreign citizens. Domestic citizens within foreign passports or who have lived outside of the local country for three years may attend foreign schools. While these demographics provide important context, the cultural implications of this international setting proved significant for advisory implementation, as detailed in Chapter 4.

Although roughly 1/3 of students are children are children of US Military personnel, the school is categorized as a "not affiliated United States Department of Defense Educational Activity" school [2]. This designation means the school may fill the place of Defense Department (DoDEA) schools for military personnel when an official DoDEA school is not within reasonably nearby geography. The school's relationship was established as the founder of the school was a retired United States Air Force member who had previously been stationed in the region and established his family with a local citizen (Personal communication, August 14, 2024). This history established a consistent relationship between the local military base and the school which guides the school's cultural and financial future.

Yearly tuition fees for a student in the high school is $27,100 (USD converted from local currency in June 2024). Enrollment and supply fees are an additional $3,000 per academic year. Tuition and fees for children of United States Military Personnel are subsidized by the United States Government as part of the non-DoDEA designation. Roughly 20% of students within Location 1 receive financial assistance in this way. This relationship solidifies the school's financial future – given the small student population and restrictions on domestic student

[2] This designation will be further referred to as "non-DoDEA"

attendance. The tuition amount is roughly 105% the national median income for the country in which it is located. This high cost of tuition will draw increased representation of students from an upper socio-economic class. As such, the social and academic needs of such students may be different than the students within the other two locations in this study. This will exemplify the similarity or differences of structural foci within the phenomenon of advisory across the comparative analysis of the three locations.

Location 1 Advisory Description.

The advisory program at Location 1 takes place once a week for one half hour. According to the school's marketing materials, the middle school advisory program has the explicit goal "that as they enter high school, students will have a strong academic foundation while also being kind, well-rounded individuals with integrity" (Retrieved June 2024). When describing the importance of advisory within his school, the lead administrator (informant L1A1) stated "if you didn't do [advisory], where would you transmit your cultural values? You know, because, like we have so many different cultures that come together at our school" (personal communication, August 14, 2024). The administrator expressed the challenge of the multiple cultures within Hofstede's Cultural Dimension Theory (Hofstede, 2001) specifically, the domain of "individualism vs collectivism (IDV)." United States Military Culture was called forth by the administrator as a "3rd culture" for the students of military personnel at the school who are not living within the national culture that aligns with their citizenship.

Location 1 provides students with a yearly perceptual survey regarding advisory. The results of the previous year survey were made available prior to interviewing members of staff. The survey contained a 4-point Likert Scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree," "Disagree," "Agree," and "Strongly Agree." These surveys additionally contained open ended questions for

students to provide recommendations regarding the future of the advisory program. The survey results, using Galassi et al. (1998) typology at a prior codes and sentiment analysis, revealed grade level trends in student perceptions in the value of their advisory across types. The results of the provided student surveys are split on this schedule change. When aligning to the "administrative type" (Galassi et al, 1998), some students stated "this could have been an email." (Survey results, received June 2024). When advisory structures are of the invigoration type, student responses used language that values the time spent in advisory and requests more. Within this compound focus advisory, strong preferences by the students are appearing within the survey results that may not align with the focus outlined by the administration. The perception of the administrator is that advisory is poorly received, particularly within the older grade levels. The case may instead be that there is a misalignment in the enacted and the desired advisory types.

The key administrator confided the advisory meetings had originally been held twice per week but had been deemed excessive (email communication, April 2024). The current schedule has been reduced to once per week for thirty minutes. This practice is partially constrained by the daily schedule. The schedule of Location 1 is consistent from Grade 6 to Grade 12. Therefore, any changes to the schedule of advisory must be present across all grade levels. This serves as an impediment to adjust advisory structures to align with needs of students in different age and grade groups.

Location 2

Location 2 is my current employer, though I do not work within the grade levels represented in this research. Prior to my first interviews with the district administrator in charge of secondary, it was necessary to establish a disconnect between my roles as a researcher and my roles as an employee. I established that all survey data would be suitable anonymized and all

personnel would be referred to through pseudonyms. As a personal ethical research choice, I made the decision to more formally structure the questions that I would pose to administrators in order to obfuscate the identities of any staff interviewees – though I have no reason to believe there would be retaliation for negative comments from staff in regard to the program.

Through my work as a district level content area leader, I had heard rumblings of advisory time at the start of the advisory program pilot in 2022-2023. This prior knowledge led me to reach out to the district Chief Academic Officer for information, who then provided the connection to the district administrator in charge of secondary who oversees advisory. I was not given much detail prior to this study other than "[advisory] is something we do." Indeed, when I completed my student teaching in 2010 within one of the district high schools, time had already been set aside for "drop everything and read" time – the time that would be transitioned to an advisory period in 2022.

Location 2 School Description.

The location is a large school district in a mid-west state in the United States. The school district, by size, is top 10 within the state where is housed. The district consists of one early childhood center (ages 2-5 years), 12 elementary schools (grades young 5s-4th), three upper elementary schools (grades 5-6), three middle schools (grades 7-8), and three high schools (grades 9-12), one career and technical center, and one specialized education center serving students with disabilities until age 26. The district provides educational services to 13,268 students across all locations.

The graduation rate for Location 2, received through mandated state reporting data, is 91.67%. This is higher than the local state rate of 81.77%. The graduating class of 2023 was 902 students with 30 students (3.05%) dropping out before graduation. Fewer than 10 of non-

graduating students received a General Education Diploma (GED). Of graduating seniors, 69.3% are enrolled in university within six months of graduation. Of current students in the 2022-2023 school year, 4.46% are dual enrolled in post-secondary courses at local universities. The student to teacher ratio is 23:1. District-wide, 77.33% of Advanced Placement exams received a score of three or higher. This is higher than the state rate of 65.3%. Using anonymized information, it is not possible to determine the number of individual students who received the scores as was reported for Location 1. The average number of tests taken by students in Advanced Placement courses was 1.77 exams per student.

Nine schools within the district qualify for and provide Title 1 services for students. These qualifications are determined through the percentage of students who qualify for "Free and Reduced Lunch" services. Qualification for "Free and Reduced Lunch" is determined by family income and the number of school age dependents. The percentage of students qualifying for this will not be reported in this document due to a state level program that provided free lunch and breakfast to all school aged students enrolled in public schools beginning in the 2023-2024 school year. For this reason, registration rates for this program may not be reflective of true numbers of students who would receive these services.

Location 2 Advisory Description.

Advisory across the schools at Location 2 have different names, represented by each school's mascot. Advisory is only present in both the middle schools and high schools for grades 7-12. Advisory frequency and format differ between middle and high school levels. At all levels, advisory meeting time is set within the middle of the school day to not have an adverse effect on attendance. The advisory program was initiated in the 2022-2023 school year with support of the local teacher's union. Prior to this time, a program of "Scheduled Silent Reading" (SSR) took

place during what has become the advisory period. Administrators randomly assign students to advisors each school year and students do not maintain advisors year-over-year. This is a purposeful choice taken by district administration to allow for students and teachers to have a broader experience of personalities.

At the high school level, advisory classes meet twice per week for 45 minutes. Advisory meeting days are Tuesday and Thursdays. These days were selected, according to the district administrator in charge of secondary, because Mondays and Fridays have greater rates of student and staff absence. When staff members are absent, advisory periods are covered by their substitute teacher, administration, or support staff. Staff absence during advisory was described as a "not a challenge" (Personal Communication, June 20, 2024). At the middle school level, advisory classes meet each school day for 45 minutes.

During advisory time, students may stay with their advisor or receive passes to other classrooms to receive individual academic attention. Student movement is handled differently throughout the schools within Location 2. One high school uses a program called "Smart Pass" (SmartPass.app). Another maintains a paper and pencil pass system with administrators and support staff performing hall and bathroom checks to confirm.

The primary focus of the advisory program is academic attention. During advisory time, students are provided time to complete schoolwork and the opportunity for teacher assistance on this schoolwork. The district administrator in charge of advisory did note however, that this focus is not strict. "For example, if a student needs to put their head down [for advisory], that may be what that student needs for that day and the advisory can let that happen." he said "However, if that happens every day, there is a greater conversation to be had." (Personal Communication, June 20, 2024). This comment represents district and administrator support of a

flexible focus to the advisory structure. The expressed administrative focus of the advisory program is partially in recognition of the challenge of teacher capacity to act in an advisor role when teacher training is focused on subject area expertise. Through practice, enhanced Teacher Student Relationships have grown as a result of advisory time.

Additionally, school counselors prepare social-emotional learning lessons each month for advisory teachers to enact. College and U.S. Armed Forces representatives may additionally schedule site visits during advisory time at the behest of the school counselors.

Location 3

The final location, Location 3, was selected through a connection with a graduate student colleague. During a shared class, my colleague learned of my interest in advisory structures and informed me of a program that was in the process of incorporation in the district where they were an administrator. This colleague was not the administrator in the buildings where advisory was taking place but was able to provide an email introduction to the building level administrator who did oversee the program.

Location 3 is located within the same metropolitan area as Location 2. However, the district differs significantly in size (number of schools and students), student demographics, graduation rates, and educational attainment rates from the other locations within this study.

Location 3 School Description.

The location is a medium sized school district in a mid-west state in the United States. The district consists of one early childhood center (ages 2-5 years), 8 elementary schools (grades kindergarten-4th), three middle schools (grades 5-8), and one high schools (grades 9-12). The district provides educational services to 5,558 students across all locations. Within the current study, the single high school was included as a case location.

The graduation rate for Location 3, received through mandated state reporting data, is 69.97%. This is lower than the local state rate of 81.77%. Of graduating seniors, 69.3% are enrolled in university within six months of graduation. Of current students in the 2022-2023 school year, 4.46% are dual enrolled in post-secondary courses at local universities. The student to teacher ratio is 23:1, the same as Location 2 but higher than Location 1.

The high school in Location 3 provides 11Advanced Placement courses. Of students participating in Advanced Placement courses roughly 5% received a score of three or higher. This is below than the state rate of 65.3%. The high school within this case location is reported by the state Department of Education with the label "Targeted Support and Improvement." This label is given to schools where a demographic student sub-group is reported as underperforming. The advisory program is used as an opportunity to provide the interventions (e.g. resilience training and PBIS) required by schools that receive this label.

Location 3 Advisory Description.

The initial design of the advisory structure within Location 3 was the project of the previous Superintendent. Initial Board of Education approval focused on multiple student outcomes: a high percentage of freshman receiving failing grades, lagging attendance rates, high levels of suspension and behavioral responses, lower than desired graduation rates, and lacking access to resources for students outside of school as a result of low social economic status (Location 3 Board of Education Document, see Appendix A). The need to support change in these negative traits led to administrative, Board of Education, and teacher union to collaboratively support the formation of a compound focus advisory program.

I initially met with the building administrator in charge of advisory in a previous study in 2022. During this meeting, the administrator relayed that "we are building this ship as we are

sailing it" (Personal communication, March 14, 2022). Despite the initial hardship of program design, the advisory program has continued into the 2024-2025 school year with some changes. The largest change was to the meeting time of the advisory classes. In the first two years of the program, advisory was held in the period before and after lunch on a rotating basis. This was specifically selected, as with Location 2, to mitigate the challenges of students arriving late because advisory class might have lower perceived value. Unlike the other locations, student receive one-half credit towards graduation for the participation in advisory; with pass/fail grading.

Students meet with their assigned advisors each day school is in session for the first class period of the day. Each day has a defined focus, established through a schedule provided at the start of the year by administration. Mondays are "No Move" days where students are expected to set weekly goals with the advisors on academic and social matters. An example provided by the administrator is an advisor collaborating with a freshman advisee on how to ask another teacher for an extension. Wednesdays are set aside for an established Social-Emotional Curriculum. Friday is "Fun-Friday" and aligns to Galassi et al's (1998) invigoration and community building types. Tuesday and Thursdays are academic support days in which students may travel to other teacher's classrooms to receive assistance and tutoring, retake tests, or nurture a subject level interest. Tuesdays and Thursdays are additionally set aside for University and Armed Forces Recruiter visits. These days may shift as the school schedule requires, such as in November to accommodate State and National elections. A change from previous years' implementation is the restriction of student movement. In the current year, students are only permitted to change advisory classrooms for "clubs, meetings, etc." and "Students can get academic support through email, Google Meet, phone call to classroom, etc." (Location 3 Expectations Document 24-25).

The advisory structure within Location 3 is unique in the defining "compound focus" approach (See Chapter 4, p 72). Where the other locations initially state an academic, skills, or invigoration purpose this advisory was designed initially to align with each of Galassi et al.'s (1998) types.

Informants

Across each study location, twelve participants were interviewed as informants for this study. At least one administrator was interviewed per location. The number of administrators interviewed was representative of the size of the case location. This is evident in the disparity of two administrators interviewed for Location 2 while Location 2 and Location 3 provided one administrator each.

For each location, between two and three teachers were available for semi-structured interviews. Administrators initially recommended teacher informants through snowball sampling. At the end of each interview, the researcher requested feedback on who else within the participant's school or district may have valuable input in the phenomena of advisory. As initial teacher informants were provided through administrator recommendation, the snowball sampling within the ranks of teacher informants provided increased anonymity within the informants.

Throughout the remainder of this document, participants will be referred by their label within Table 5. The labels are established algorithmically where the participant case location represents the first two characters of the label (e.g., L1 represents all participants within Location 1). The following two characters represent the role of the participants and the order in which each was interviewed within the location (e.g., Administrator interviewed second is A2, teacher interviewed first is T1).

Label	Location	Role	Grade Level	Teaching Subject Area	Years in Education	Years in Admin Role
L1A1	Location 1	Administrator	6-12	English	23	8
L1T1	Location 1	Teacher	6-8	ELL	20	-
L1T2	Location 1	Teacher	6-12	Mathematics	13	-
L1T3	Location 1	Teacher	6-7	English and History	8	-
L2A1	Location 2	Administrator	6-12	Business	21	13
L2A2	Location 2	Administrator	7-8	Chemistry	22	9
L2T1	Location 2	Teacher	9-12	Social Studies	28	-
L2T2	Location 2	Teacher	7-8	English	9	-
L2T3	Location 2	Teacher	9-12	English	28	-
L3A1	Location 3	Administrator	9-12	English	28	5
L3T1	Location 3	Teacher	9-12	Business	4	-
L3T2	Location 3	Teacher	9-12	Chemistry	3	-

Table 5: Table of Informants

Delimitations

The following research delimitations represent purposeful boundaries established to maintain focus on teacher preparation for advisory roles. These boundaries help define the scope of the study while acknowledging the broader context of advisory research. This research is

conducted within specific boundaries, which are important to recognize to provide context for the study.

- There is already plenty of literature describing the benefits, challenges, and structures of advisory. The focus of this study, therefore, is on developing actionable recommendations for teacher preparation to lead advisory, as this has been a consistent sticking point in the advisories described in the literature.
- I enter this study with the belief that the affective benefits of advisory should be the priority focus and that academic benefits are a secondary effect of improved relationships and the greater development of school and classroom cultures.
- This study concentrates on the perceptions of teachers to act in advisory roles. It does not delve into other factors that may influence the effectiveness of advisory programs.

While these delimitations represent intentional boundaries of the research design, it is also important to acknowledge the inherent limitations that emerge during this study's implementation.

Limitations

While this study aims to provide valuable insights into teacher preparation for advisory roles in secondary schools, it is essential to acknowledge its limitations. These constraints shape both the scope of the findings and their potential applicability to other educational contexts. These limitations are:

- I do not have input on the type of advisory that a school will have enacted before the start of this study. As such, I am only able to observe the systems already in place — whether academic or affective needs are the focus.

- Sampling may not represent the diversity of advisory programs across the country. This may limit the generalizability of the findings to a narrower geographical context.
- This study captures a snapshot of teacher preparation to act as an affective advisor in specific programs. There are myriad of valid advisory approaches. This limits the ability to establish causal relationships with outcomes.

Despite these limitations, the study's findings offer valuable insights into teacher perceptions of preparation to act as advisors. The next section outlines the ethical considerations that guided this research process.

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to the ethical standards to protect participants and ensure research integrity. All research activities were conducted following approval from the University of Michigan Investigative Review Board (IRB #HUM00254818).

Protection of participants was a priority throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to initiation of interviews with clear documentation of the study's purpose, procedures, and voluntary nature of participations. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw at anytime without consequences.

Several specific measures were implemented to maintain participant confidentiality. Participants were anonymized using pseudonym labels during the analysis. Participants' responses were not shared with research site administrators to protect against retaliation and encourage open and honest responses. Quotes were carefully screened to remove potentially identifying details.

To maintain anonymity, participants were provided the opportunity to clarify wording of their participant description. For example, if a teachers' subject area specialty would reveal their

identity, each participated in selecting an accurate but more anonymized subject. Participants were also informed of how their contact information was obtained and given the opportunity not to participate or exit participation at any time. While multiple potential participants did not respond to requests to participate, those who did and chose not to participate were asked to provide potential participants. Through this snowball sampling, participant identities were further obfuscated from the administrator participants.

These ethical considerations guided the data collection process and shaped the analysis and reporting of findings. The goal was to produce valuable insights about advisory perceptions and preparation while maintaining the highest standards of participant protections and research integrity.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the methodological framework used to investigate teacher and administrator perceptions of preparation needs for advisory roles in secondary schools. Through a comparative case study approach spanning three distinct educational settings, careful attention to participant selection, rigorous data collection procedures, and systematic analysis methods, this research aims to provide meaningful insights into how schools can better prepare and support teachers in advisory roles. The ethical considerations and limitations acknowledged here help frame the context for the findings presented in the next chapter. The selected methodology aligns with the study's goals of understanding the lived experiences of educators working within advisory structures while maintaining high standards of research integrity and participant protection.

Chapter 4: Findings and Understandings

Through comparative analysis of three distinct secondary school advisory programs, several key understandings emerged regarding the implementation, challenges, and successes of these structures. The study case locations—ranging from an international private school to a large public school district to a medium-sized public school—each approached advisory with unique goals but faced similar challenges in implementation and teacher preparation. Analysis of interviews with twelve informants, including both teachers and administrators, revealed six major understandings: the prevalence of compound focus in advisory programs, the impact of cultural context on skills-focused curriculum, the critical role of personal capacity in advisory success, teachers' desire for semi-structured guidance, the insufficiency of belief alone in driving program success, and the presence of structural roadblocks that often prevent advisory programs from achieving their intended purposes. These findings emerged through coding of interview transcripts, review of program documents, and cross-case analysis, providing insights that span different school contexts and advisory models. While each location maintained its own distinct approach to advisory, common threads in both challenges and opportunities suggest broader implications for advisory program design and implementation.

Understanding: Compound Focus

Intentional design of an advisory program may begin with a singular focus or purpose – such as an academic focus or skills development focus. However, analysis across the three case locations revealed that advisory programs naturally evolve to serve multiple purposes, regardless of their initial design parameters. These may occur through expansion of the program through administration or individual teacher strengths. This "compound focus" emerged as both a practical necessity and a strength of the observed advisory structures. While Galassi et al. (1998) established six distinct types of advisory programs (advocacy, community, skills, invigoration, academic, and administrative), the reality observed in this study suggests these types rarely exist in isolation. Rather, effective advisory programs tend to incorporate multiple types simultaneously, creating what we term 'compound focus' advisory structures.

This finding manifests differently across the case locations. Location 1, while explicitly designed around skills development incorporated community building and administrative functions. Location 2, despite a stated academic focus, developed aspects of skills-based advisory through teacher initiative. Location 3 perhaps best exemplifies this compound nature, having intentionally designed their program to incorporate multiple focus areas from its inception. The tendency of these single focus advisory structures to adopt a compound purpose advisory is founded upon advisor belief in the value of student needs-driven intervention.

Across the research locations, administrative and teacher informants reported varying purposes for advisory programs in the case location. Through semi-structured interviews, compounding purposes for the advisory programs were revealed. However, it became evident that each advisory, through design or spontaneous response, aligned with multiple types within the typology created by Galassi et al. (1998). These compound types are provided in Table 6.

These types were selected based on coding of the interviews — separate from the stated purposes.

Location	**Advisory Type (Galassi)**	**Bottorff Alignment**
Location 1	Skills, Community Invigoration, Administrative homeroom	How, Who, What, Who
Location 2	Academic, Skills	Who, How
Location 3	Skills, Academic, Invigoration, Community	How, How, What, Who

Table 6: Location Advisory Type Codes from Interviews aligned with Bottorff Framework

The advisory typology alignments for each case location, as seen in Table 4, were re-aligned based upon the observed tendencies of the advisory. This re-alignment can be seen in Figure 8. Within this flow chart, the skills focused advisory represents the first branch. This is in recognition of the common alignment to a skills focus across each of the studied cases. The following branches split between affective and non-affective types. The observed advisories each represented a compound focus, each following a branch either toward the non-affective advisories (Location 2), the affective advisories (Location 1), or a combination of the two (Location 3). This alignment, along with the Bottorff Typology (Figure 9) provide opportunities for future advisory program designers a point to begin when aligning a new advisory program.

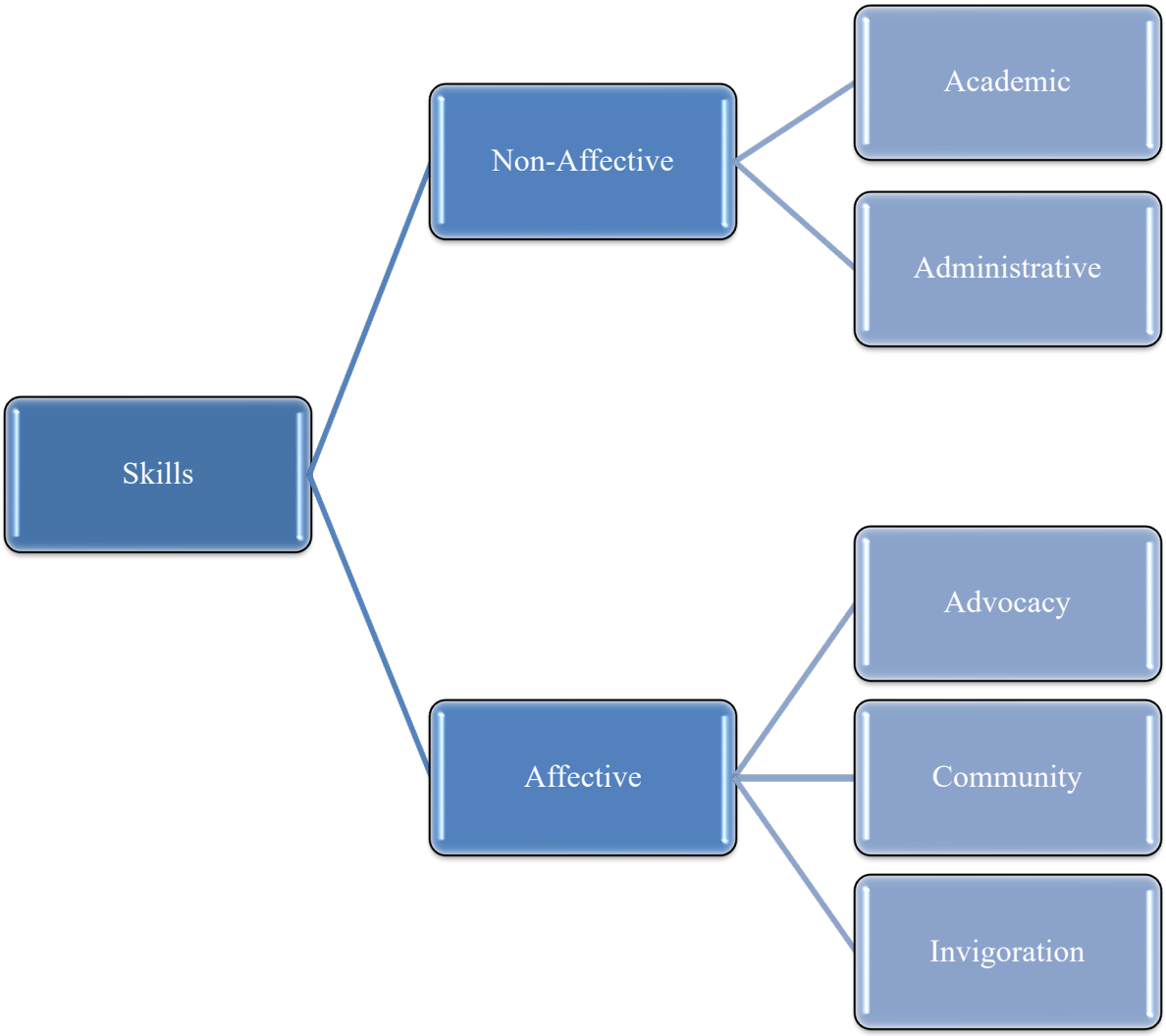


Figure 8: Flow Chart of Observed Typology Alignment

The prevalence of compound focus across all three locations suggests a need to reconceptualize how we categorize and understand advisory structures. Based on the findings of this study, I propose a reimagining of Galassi's typology that reflects the interconnected nature of advisory purposes (see Table 7). This new framework organizes advisory types into three fundamental questions: Who (addressing identity and community), How (addressing skills and academics), and What (addressing advocacy, social cohesion, and fun). The framework provided by Galassi and his colleagues was descriptive of observed advisories, the proposed framework

proposes potential advisory organization wherein each of the advisory types is paired with a secondary type. In this way, advisory programs may be formulated to approach the multitude of student, staff, and community needs. Each new type is aligned with an interrogative phrase exemplifying the potential outcomes of the combined advisory types. With the exception of the "What" type, each new type pairs an affective aligned advisory (per Galassi et al, 1998) with a cognitive/administrative aligned advisory type.

New Type	**Advisory Type per Galassi et al (1998)**	**Needs Alignment**	**Purpose**
Who	Community	Affective	*Message*: "Who are we?"
	Administrative	Administrative	*Message*: "Whose job is this?"
How	Skills (Executive function/metacognition)	Affective	*Message:* "How do I think?" "How do I interact with the world?"
	Academics (intervention and support)	Cognitive	*Message:* "How can I improve my grades?"
What	Advocacy	Affective	*Message*: "Yes, we can!"
	Invigoration (Social Cohesion/Fun)	Affective	*Message:* "What can we do together?"

Table 7: Advisory Typology Re-imagined

This reimagining of the advisory typology, based upon the typology established by Galassi et al. (1998) is visualized in Figure 9. This reconceptualization is presented to show the relationship between advisory types (e.g. Advocacy and Invigoration) while providing avenues by which designers of advisory structures may bridge between types of advisory. A natural bridge exists between the "What" and "Who" settings through the advocacy advisory type and the community advisory type. A similar connection exists between "How" and "Who" settings through the administrative advisory type and the skills advisory type as both incorporate planning actions. Finally, a bridge between types "What" and "How" through the academics and invigoration advisory types. These are two contrasting types that are important, in the words of Crawford (2012) "It isn't enough to offer only academic course work, no matter its quality. For adolescents to succeed, we have to carefully orchestrate their social as well as their intellectual climate" (p 10). Advisory designers may choose to begin their compound structure through a single setting within the Bottorff framework of advisory typologies before expanding to a neighboring following initial program incorporation. Doing so connects closely related types within the original Galassi et al (1998) Typology to build a compound advisory from the start. It is recommended, should two nodes be bridged between, that program designers select a single direction to travel ("Who: Community" to "How: Skills"). Attempting to incorporate multiple nodes may be excessive, as was determined by Administrator L3A1 "If I could have had to do it over, I probably would have maybe paused for a year and done a lot of the embedding of the tools for success" (Personal Communication, September 24, 2024). This statement represents a recognition in the complicated nature of advisory structures. This administrator's location initially formed a compound purpose advisory but did not put in place necessary training and supports for the program.

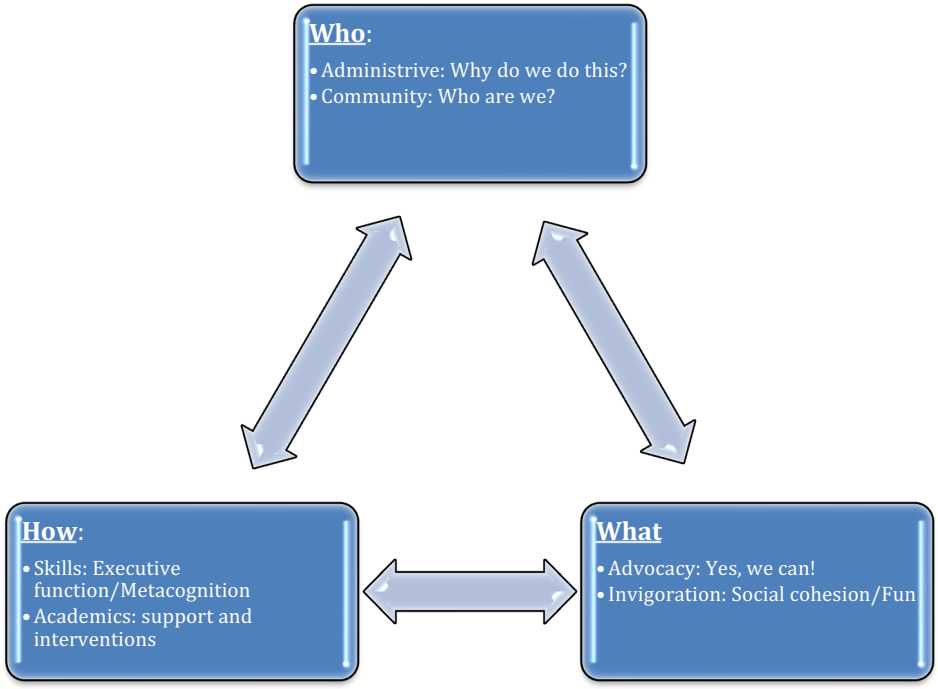


Figure 9: Bottorff's Framework of Advisory Typologies

This reconceptualization reflects the natural tendency of advisory programs to serve multiple purposes simultaneously. For example, when Location 2's administrator noted that "if a student needs to put their head down [during advisory], that may be what that student needs for that day" they were acknowledging how a primarily "How: Academic" advisory setting naturally expanded to serve student well-being needs through bridges to the "What: Invigoration" settings. Similarly, Location 1's focus on executive function skills ("How: Skills" setting) naturally led to social cohesion activities ("What: Invigoration").

Executive Function and Metacognition.

Galassi et al (1998) established the theme of "Skills Focused" advisory within their typology. The aspects of advisory within this study that may align with Galassi et al.'s (1998) skills focus domain were referenced in turn as focused on executive functioning (Location 1 and

Location 2) and metacognition (Location 3). Due to the similarity of meaning, the term executive function will be used to encompass both terms throughout the remainder of this document.

The Location 2 administrator, informant L2A2, referred to executive functioning through indirect phrasing. While discussing the changes to the advisory schedule over time, the challenge of middle school students' capacity to return to a classroom for help on a following day was specifically mentioned through the statement:

> With a middle school kid, they can't remember what they had for breakfast, like, by the time they get to third hour, at least they know their name, right? … I mean, for middle schoolers, just that executive functioning, right? They just, they're not there yet, but they do know 'I was in first hour today, and I didn't do so hot on this quiz' … but if they had a test fifth hour to come back the next day for third hour, there's a good chance it's not going to happen. (Personal Communication, August 23, 2024)

The administrator highlights that middle school students struggle with executive functioning skills like memory, organization, and follow-through. These lacking skills guided the structure and schedule of the advisory program to provide more support and guidance for students during the school day. This recognition led to a schedule change where advisory took place near the end of the school day to allow students to receive help on the same day challenges arose.

Administrator informant L3A1 preferred the term-metacognition. In stating the role of metacognition in the Location 3 advisory, the administrator commented:

> it's that thinking about your thinking, and if that's part of your process, then I know you can do well. And if you don't ever attend to it, you're never going to do well. And so that's what it's hoping with … [students] show up on a Monday, set some goals, and then you talk about your goals the next Monday, and to build that resiliency, to build

> that grit, and to build that level of success (Personal Communication, September 24, 2024).

A particular executive function skill desired was "grit." Grit is a "non-cognitive trait defined as perseverance and passion for long term goals" (Duckworth et al., 2007, p 1087). The administrator sees this exemplified through third semester grades as an indication of students' ability to push through academic challenges. He notes students may have short term success but a long-term grit, as focused upon in this advisory structure, is shown through long-term trends in student grades. The grade trends for the academic year during which this study was performed are not available. However, such trends may be valuable for researchers exploring the connection between a "How: Skills" focused advisory and student academics in the future.

Specific skills taught within an advisory or supported through advisory are incorporated through multiple Social Emotional Learning (SEL) curricula. Every location within this case study incorporated a different SEL curricula within their advisory program. These curricula were "prepackaged" and purchased directly from publishers by the schools. The administrator informant L1A1 recalled the exorbitant pricing of the purchased curricula but stated the cost was justified *if* the curricula helped the teacher advisors guide executive functioning skill development with their students. The administrator indicated a perception that the curriculum did, in fact, meet this goal. This investment in SEL curriculum reflects a broader understanding that even when advisory begins with a single focus, additional components naturally emerge to meet student needs. Teacher informants from Location 1 indicated positive sentiments towards the presence of a curriculum with some reservation based on age-appropriate material and time available for its use.

However, the ability to maintain multiple focus areas within advisory was not universal across locations. Structural limitations, particularly in Location 2, demonstrated how institutional constraints could restrict the natural evolution of compound focus advisory. The incorporation of skills focused advisory was limited within the high school portion of Location 2. A Letter of Understanding between the teacher's union and the Board of Education for Location 2 limited to no more than one social-emotion lesson in any given month. Social-emotion lessons are additionally prohibited in the week prior to a "district common assessment" (see Appendix A). The Union President for Location 2 (L2T1) noted "I also know that high school teachers, if they lose any more time from their classes, are going to revolt, because they feel like they can't get through their content already" (Personal communication, September 12, 2024). These limitations, meant to protect teachers' workload requirements, directly force advisory into an academic and administrative focus. These limits fit within the expressed academic purpose of the advisory program within Location 2 but does not allow for expansion as needed.

These varying approaches to compound focus advisory across locations suggest that while multiple purposes naturally emerge, the ability to effectively support these multiple focuses depends heavily on institutional support, available resources, and structural flexibility. This finding has important implications for advisory program design, which will be explored further in the discussion chapter.

Understanding: Cultural Impacts of a Skills Focused Curriculum

The implementation and efficacy of skills-focused curricula within advisory structures proved to be deeply intertwined with the cultural contexts of each location. While all three locations incorporated some form of skills instruction, the cultural needs of their respective communities significantly influenced both the selection of specific skills to target and the methods of delivery.

The culture that the students bring with them to school directly impacts the selection and efficacy of the selected curriculum. Location 1 is located with a culture where high academic achievement by students is viewed as an indicator of social value for the family. Teacher Informant L1T3 stated:

> The kids and the parents already pushed themselves to this really high standard. And what our kids need is that social aspect. They need to understand how to solve problems with their friends, how their brain is working. They need to understand those things, because this culture is very safe, and because of that, they're also very protected by their parents. They can't make mistakes and learn from those mistakes and *a lot of things are done for them*, whereas what I noticed in the US is it's not always the case … But they need those lessons on social emotional more than academics, because outside sources are already pushing them to reach their high potential with academics, but the parents don't always know to how to how to teach them those social emotional skills (Personal Communication, October 17, 2024).

This teacher informant continued with the insistence that, additionally, parents must be taught within a "How: Skills" focused advisory in this cultural context. This informed the selection of the purpose of the advisory structure. Where the other case locations selected "How: Academics"

as the primary focus, Location 1 selected a “How: Skills” focus based on perceived cultural shortcoming when viewing education through a holistic focus.

The contrast between locations highlighted how socioeconomic and cultural factors shaped the definition of “How: Skills” within advisory structures. Location 1's emphasis on social-emotional learning addressed a perceived gap in students' development within a high-achieving, academically focused culture. This stands in marked contrast to Location 3, where skills instruction centered more on practical life skills, future planning, and self-regulation, responding to different community needs.

Similar cultural implications were present within Location 2 and Location 3. Location 1 is positioned in this study as a private school, with high academic achievement, and similarly high socio-economic status of the families within their population. Location 3, in contrast, is positioned within this study as a location with a population with low socio-economic status. Teacher informants and the administrator informant within Location 3 noted the socio-economic status as a primary basis of the student needs that their skills focused portions of advisory were targeting. Teacher informant L3T1 noted “a lot of our kids either work or don’t have the support at home to make sure that they’re doing what they need to do” (Personal Communication, October). The administrator for Location 3 (L3A1) supports this with the statement “the point that I see too much is, I don’t know how many of our students have that academic success model in their head” (Personal Communication, September 24, 2024). These comments note the perception by the school faculty regarding a lack of academic success models present in students’ lived experience and that may be seen in students’ home life. This led to the selection of a skills-based purpose focused not on inter-student social skills but skills aligned towards self-regulation, goal setting, and responsible decision making. Administrator informant L3A1 related

these to the term “metacognition” and will be explored more deeply in the Chapter 5 heading on Executive Function.

These distinctions highlight a crucial finding: effective skills-based advisory must be culturally responsive rather than universally prescribed. Administrator Informant L3A1's emphasis on metacognition reflects a thoughtful adaptation of skills-based curriculum to meet specific community needs. This finding aligns with Bennett and Martin's (2018) assertion that exemplary advisory programs must be responsive to students' cultural backgrounds and community influences.

Teacher informants across locations emphasized the importance of understanding specific student populations when implementing skills-focused curriculum. As teacher informant L1T3 noted regarding parent education, there exists a need to extend skills instruction beyond students to include family engagement varied significantly based on cultural context. This suggests that skills-based advisory cannot be implemented with a one-size-fits-all approach but must instead be aligned to address the specific cultural and socioeconomic contexts of the school community. The exemplary advisory, in consideration of local cultural foundations, serves as a connection to the home and community.

Understanding: Personal Capacity

The cultural context of each location not only influenced the selection and implementation of skills-focused curriculum but also highlighted another crucial factor in advisory success: the personal capacity of teachers to effectively deliver this curriculum and form meaningful relationships with students. While schools can select curriculum to match their cultural context, the ability of individual teachers to connect with students and implement advisory effectively emerged as a distinct and crucial variable in program success. Teacher

informants across locations consistently emphasized how their personal abilities, experiences, and dispositions shaped their advisory practice, regardless of the cultural setting or curricular framework in place.

A recurring theme among the interviews was the personal and professional capacity of the staff to act within the advisor role. Multiple factors contributed to the recognition of imbalances between teacher capacity and the efficacy of an advisory structure. Teachers' personal capacity manifested in multiple dimensions: relational skills, professional identity, hiring practices, and adaptive abilities.

Relational Skills

Teacher informants frequently referenced innate or developed abilities to form connections with students. As Teacher Informant L3T2 expressed, "I do think, like, a lot of my students, maybe they don't get the support that they should. [They don't have] a cheerleader at home to encourage them to do their best they can. So, I try to do that for them in school, if I can" (Personal Communication, October 16, 2024). This natural inclination towards mentorship and support characterized many successful advisors.

Teacher personal capacity was explicitly mentioned by the administrator for Location 1. Teacher capacity to form relationships was aligned with student perceptions of advisory within Location 1 student survey results. However, student survey results revealed a disparity in beliefs on the efficacy of advisory within the various Galassi Typologies. Particularly, 9th grade and 12th grade students had a more positive perspective regarding skills focused and community building advisories. This contrasted with a strong negative response for these by 10th grade students. When this disparity was brought to the attention of administrator informant L1A1, he responded:

> She was really good at team building, and that was a carryover from her predecessor, who was just amazing at connecting with kids and so funny. You never know who's going to connect with kids. If I had a room full of people, I wouldn't have picked her out as the one who was gonna, 'yeah, kids are gonna love her advisory' (Personal Communication, August 14, 2024).

The administrator recognizes that the personal skills of the advisor are directly related to the efficacy of the advisory within certain regards. This same administrator, when expounding the importance of advisory, stated "I was probably the absolute worst advisor" based on his own personal skill level in the affective area — a fact he related to the difference between his grade level instructional experience and the level of the students for which he served as advisor.

Professional Identity

Professional identity was a separate theme related to the ability for a teacher to act as an advisor outside of content area expertise. Administrator informant L2A2 stated "I have content area teachers or an English teacher or a math teacher or a science teacher. [Secondary teachers] do not go to school to just be a teacher but a *content area* teacher" (Personal Communication, August 23, 2024). This comment relates to a larger challenge within teacher preparation wherein secondary area teachers are trained first to be subject area experts instead of teachers of the whole child. This training focus does not allow for teacher candidate skill development in the areas of appropriate relationship building with students and student developmental needs in social and relational learning. Teacher personal and professional capacity is not the sole factor related to subject area expertise.

Similar beliefs were shared by the administrator in Location 3 (L3A1). Personal capacity and individual ability of a teacher to form strong and lasting relationships with students was

recognized as a valuable trait of a teacher advisor in this location. One specific example was a teacher advisor who requested to have the same students in their Location 3 advisory for three years in a row. Administrator informant L3A1 recognized the personal social skills of the teacher and approved the teachers request to stay with the same students in line with the administrator's belief in the power of Teacher Student Relationships (TSR) to have a lasting effect on student social and academic outcomes. This action is one of the few examples within these case studies where alterations were made to the advisory at the request of teachers that is in line with an indirectly academic outcome.

Hiring Practices

The question of personal skills of teachers to act as advisors led to the addition of a question within the semi-structured interviews. This question was "Does the personal capacity of a teacher to form relationships with students in their advisory affect your hiring practices?" The response to this question was consistently affirmative. Location 1 Administrator stated

> I ask very specific questions about that experience in working with either advisory or a lot of people call it pastoral care. … And then you know if a candidate is extremely 'curriculum focused,' I am pretty hesitant to continue with them because we put that premium on that relationship piece with the kids — whether it is in advisory or in the classroom (Personal communication, August 14, 2024).

Advisory is an important enough portion within the school calendar at Location 1 that is influences hiring practices. This statement indicates the foundational importance of advisory within these case locations through adjustment to hiring practices.

When asked whether the hiring practices had changed as a result of their advisory program, administrator informant L3A1 referenced the challenges of the teacher shortage. The

administrator stated, “we are a little short on choices” (Personal Communication, September 24, 2024). The teacher shortage has had a greater influence on the hiring practices of Location 3 than has advisory. However, the traits that are looked for in teacher candidates have shifted to include personal and relationship skills necessary for advisory work. This was evident in the administrator’s statement “…we’ve had a couple interviews where, when they say relationships are the key thing, and they talk-the-talk and walk-the-walk, then that that’s going to check some boxes for hiring…” (Personal communication, September 24, 2024). Similar to Location 1, the advisory within Location 3 represents a collective value that influences hiring, though the school is in a less fortunate hiring situation within the teacher shortage.

The same response was not directly seen with Location 2 or Location 3. Each of these locations were more recently initiated and may not have had the opportunity to affect hiring practices for teachers. The structure of these advisory structures may also be a reason for the lack of a perceived effect on hiring practices. The advisory in Location 2 was strictly aligned to academic remediation with limited opportunity of TSR formation and skills focused activities. However, this cannot be attributed solely to time from implementation but also the availability of teachers in the current teacher shortage.

Adaptive Abilities

The ability of teachers to adjust their advisory approach based on daily student needs emerged as a critical aspect of personal capacity. Administrator L3A1 captured this essential flexibility in their observation: “I mean, all those little things are, are, you know, it's the difference between making it work and making it not work. I mean, you could sit there and sit at your desk and fight the whole thing, like, why aren't you doing your work right? And then back and forth with that, or [you can] get off your butt, sit next to a kid, talk to them about their day,

and then set them up for success. So, you solve the little problems before it becomes a big problem" (Personal Communication, September 24, 2024). This statement recognizes the non-reactive role of advisory and advisors when eliciting change in students. Interventions may take effect following academic failures but the adaptability of a strong TSR to anticipate student struggles is pivotal.

This adaptive capability was particularly evident in Location 3, where teacher informants described regularly adjusting scheduled advisory activities to meet immediate student needs. For example, when the formal schedule called for social-emotional learning activities, teachers would sometimes pivot to academic support if students were struggling with upcoming assignments or tests. This kind of adaptability required both confidence in decision-making and an acute awareness of student needs. This adaptability was based on student need instead of a teacher's comfort in academics or discomfort for social-emotional work.

In Location 1, where cultural differences created additional complexities, teachers reported the need to adapt their approaches based on varying cultural norms and expectations. As Teacher Informant L1T3 noted in their observations about different cultural approaches to student independence, effective advisors adjusted their support strategies based on students' cultural backgrounds and family expectations. Within Location 1 and Location 3, the personal capacity of the teacher to act as an advisor was recognized through stated beliefs in the value of Teacher Student Relationships. Though this adjustment in hiring practices was not recognized in Location 2, the personal beliefs and relationships skills of teachers was commented upon by the Location 2 administrator informant L2A1. It remains possible, outside the scope of this study, that hiring practices within all locations may be affected. The size of the schools within this study may additionally influence administrator perceptions as hiring practices may be established

and maintained by Central Office administrators, outside the direct influence of building-level administrators.

Notably, each administrator interviewed commented on their personal lack of capacity to act as an advisory and the ways in which their perceptions have changed since taking an administrative role. The Location 1 administrator stated he was "the worst" advisor ever. The administrator for Location 3 commented "I could talk about English all day … but if I'm not talking about that, what am I supposed to do?" Their candid acknowledgments of struggling with advisory as teachers informed their current approaches to supporting teacher advisors and hiring practices through a personal point of comparison.

The union president for Location 2 (L2T1) mentioned the challenge of meeting students' social and academic needs. The informant stated:

> I also just think that the nature of the beast is, if you're doing it right, you have kids who are coming in and getting help, and that's who you're focused on during your you know, [advisory] time, the kids who are just sitting there, as long as they're not causing problems. I hate to say it, but they're getting ignored, like there's just, there's only so much a person can do. And the whole point of of [advisory] time is kind of that one-on-one chance to really talk to the kids who need the most help (Personal communication, September 12, 2024).

As the informant had recently become president of the local teacher's union, a recognition of advisory challenges in L2T1's previous role as subject area teacher was a driving force in the focus on advisory within these locations. Where each administrator struggled was in trusting their teachers to use personal and social strengths while providing clear directions in how to

maintain an effective advisory program. Later in this document it will be noted that, to teacher informants “belief is not enough.”

These nested finding suggests that successful advisory programs must address both the selection of teachers with strong personal capacity for advisory roles and the development of support systems for teachers who may need to build these capacities. A challenge lies in balancing these personal characteristics with other professional requirements while working within the constraints of current teacher shortages and institutional resources. While structural factors such as pay and formal mentorship programs (discussed in Chapter 1) play important roles in teacher retention and satisfaction, this study's findings suggest that personal capacity for advisory roles represents an additional crucial factor that intersects with these structural considerations.

Understanding: Desire for a Semi-Structured Curriculum

While personal capacity emerged as a crucial factor in advisory success, teacher informants consistently emphasized that individual capabilities alone were not sufficient for effective advisory implementation. Even teachers who demonstrated strong personal capacity for advisory roles expressed a need for institutional support and guidance. This tension between personal ability and structural support manifested most clearly in teachers' expressed desire for a semi-structured curriculum — one that would provide clear guidance while maintaining flexibility for individual teaching styles and student needs. The tension between structure and flexibility emerged as a significant theme across all three locations, with teachers consistently expressing the need for clear curricular guidance that still allowed for personal adaptation. This finding revealed the complex balance between providing sufficient structure to support teachers while maintaining the flexibility necessary to meet diverse student needs. The desire for semi-

structured guidance manifested differently in various locations, resulting in different levels of curricular structure. These differing levels of structure are expanded upon the following subsections and shown in Figure 10.

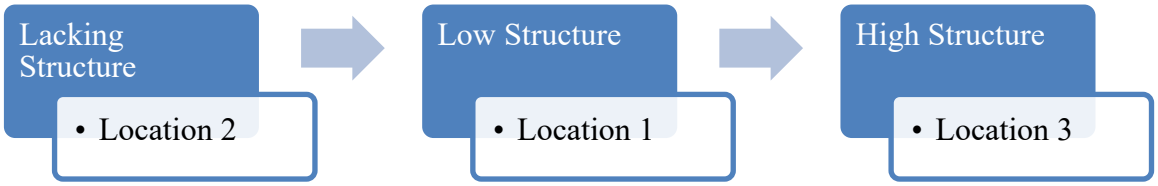


Figure 10: Levels of Structure by Case Location

High Structure: Location 3

Though each Location within this study has attempted a schedule of advisory activities, administration within Location 3 provides teacher advisors with a daily schedule of activities. This schedule is determined by grade level advisory for the entire school year. Both informants from Location 3 commented that the calendar was helpful — specifically for "others" — but was not realistic and required flexibility. Location 3 teacher informants noted they were unaware of any colleague who was able to follow the schedule with exacting fidelity. Teacher informants observed that various factors, both within and outside an advisor's control, influenced the adherence to the schedule. Stated factors included: student absences and tardies, class size and the requirement for individual check-in with students, academic remediation superseding scheduled social emotional curriculum lessons, and personal capacity of the advisor. Administrator informant L3A1, stated the calendar was an effort to provide supports to teachers for whom advisory was not a personal strength. A clear expectation, therefore, may be provided by the administrator leading advisory that a detailed calendar of activities may have an expected amount of flexibility, and which factors may be used to veer from the scheduled events.

Location 3's approach revealed an important insight: even within a highly structured system, successful implementation required built-in flexibility. As one teacher informant noted,

the calendar served as a helpful framework rather than a rigid mandate. The administrator's recognition that the detailed calendar was meant to support teachers for whom advisory was not a personal strength suggests that structured guidance can serve as scaffolding for developing advisor capacity.

Low Structure: Location 1

Teacher informants from Location 1 were not provided a defined structure to their advisory, as was seen in Location 3. Teacher informants from Location 1, therefore, had opposite perception from the teachers in Location 3 and requested increased structure. Teacher informants for Location 1 noted an attempt to balance a high structure curriculum with a low structure that currently exists. The administrator for Location 1 (L1A1) purchased and provides all advisors with a common curriculum called "Second Steps" (secondstep.org). Teacher advisors within Location 1 required to complete two lessons per quarter from the provided curriculum and mark the completed lessons in a shared spreadsheet. Throughout the interviews within Location 1, this approach was appreciated by the faculty. However, the advisory time within Location 1 was not adequately protected. This led to surface level coverage of the provided lessons. Student surveys, provided by the administrator at the start of this study (see Appendix A on p 143), referred to surface level coverage of the lessons as lacking value in the eyes of students.

One informant for Location 1 noted, while the provided lessons were helpful, the haphazard approach was standing in the way of the positive effects that may result from advisory. This was exemplified by the statement by informant L1T2 "The absence of a standardized curriculum has left the program without a clear structure or direction, negatively influencing support for the current program from students and teachers" (Personal Communication, October 15, 2024). In order to glean the positive effects, the advisory structure

within this location is designed to achieve, teacher informants believe a purposeful approach is necessary. This balance between the high structure of Location 3 and the low structure of Location 1 is expected, by teacher informants, to have a positive change in the perception of advisory among students and faculty. An implied value in this perceptual change is an improved reception by students to the skills focused lessons provided. The experience at Location 1 demonstrates how an insufficient structure can undermine even well-intentioned advisory programs.

Limited Structure: Locations 2

Curriculum need for Location 2 cannot be adequately described as there was no visible attempt made to provide a curriculum to the teachers within the designed advisory structure. Location 2 was designed solely with an academic focus. The closest item to the curriculum followed by the other locations within this study was a program performed as behavioral intervention by school social workers called T.R.A.I.LS. (trailstowellness.org). This curriculum aligns to the tiered systems of support required by local state law in each center of education (MI State School Aid Act, 1979/2024). Advisory design and collective bargaining did not allow for the incorporation of skills focused curriculum within the advisory structure. This was a point of contention between the teacher informants for Location 2 that will be expanded upon in following heading.

A key finding emerged through analysis of these varying approaches: the ideal level of structure appears to be neither completely rigid nor entirely free form, but rather a balanced framework that: provides clear expectations and guidance, allows for teacher autonomy and creativity, accommodates student needs and circumstances, maintains program consistency while enabling flexibility, and supports teachers at different levels of advisory experience.

The interviews suggest that finding this balance is crucial for advisory success, particularly in supporting teachers who may be less confident in their advisory roles while not constraining those who bring strong personal capacity to the position. This analysis suggests that the most effective advisory structures provide what might be called “flexible scaffolding” — enough structure to support teachers and ensure program consistency, while maintaining sufficient flexibility to adapt to individual teacher strengths and student needs. While traditional professional development approaches, as outlined in Chapter 2, offer important foundations for advisory preparation, this study's findings suggest that teachers benefit most from a combination of formal training and flexible, contextual supports.

Understanding: Belief is Not Enough

A recurring theme in advisory literature is the importance of teacher buy-in and voice in advisory's value for program success (Anfara, 2006; Niska & Thompson, 2007). Administrators may focus on generating enthusiasm and commitment to advisory among staff as a key implementation strategy. However, a finding from this study suggests that while educator belief in advisory is necessary, it is far from sufficient for program success. This understanding emerged across all three case locations, where despite universal expressions of belief in advisory's value, informants consistently identified additional crucial factors required for effective implementation. A compelling finding across all case locations was that while educators consistently expressed belief in the value and importance of advisory programs, belief alone was insufficient to ensure program success.

Universal Expression of Value

At the conclusion of each interview, informants were asked the question “Has [advisory] been a good use of time and resources?” Each participant answered this question in the

affirmative, indicating a widespread belief in advisory's fundamental value. However, this universal belief was quickly qualified by most informants with nuanced observations about implementation challenges. Teacher informant L3T1 provided greater clarity with the answer of "yes and no." They expanded "yes for the kids that use it, no for the kids that are not into it … that's with all my classes, I can't *make* you do the work" (Personal Communication, October 14, 2024). The need for student buy-in to advisory and academic work in general for an effective program was a persistent theme for many informants within this study. Aspects of culture (see heading "Understanding: Compound Focus*"*) and student capacity to function within an academic setting that may be at odds with the external world was a persistent theme within the informant interviews.

The Role of Continuous Improvement

Location 2 informants stated high belief in the value of advisory structures but were at odds with consistency of design across multiple school locations. Location 2 is the largest of all the study case locations with six schools enacting advisory structures. Size can lead to inconsistent application between local implementation sites. Teacher Informant L2T3 noted a time where administrators from the Location 2 middle schools did site visits to the middle school location where advisory was perceived as most effective. L2T3 notes "when [Location 2 Middle School 2] sent a team over to [Location 2 Middle School 1] to look at how they're doing it, because it was running so wonderfully. And they got there, they're like, 'Well, this is not that different than what we're doing really'" (Personal Communication, October 11, 2024). This statement is recognition that, while there is a strong belief in the value of advisory across the schools, additional factors influence the efficacy of advisory. The administrator at the middle school that was perceived as running advisory "so wonderfully" was informant L2A2.

Administrator Informant L2A2 relates their success to a strategy of constant change through data informed practice. The administrator stated “This building is super fluid. We change every single year just to make things better. So, it took us, I mean, it took us a good five years to feel really great about it” (Personal Communication, August 23, 2024). This approach of fluidity and adjustments based upon perceived areas of growth was a defining feature of the portions of the observed advisory structures that were most successful. Administrator informant L3A1 expressed a similar sentiment through hindsight. They noted “If I could have had to do it over, I probably would have maybe paused for a year and done a lot of the embedding of the tools for success, so that the teachers knew this” (Personal Communication, September 24, 2024). Advisory design challenges that impede program growth and efficacy are expanded upon in the following section.

Understanding: Designed Roadblocks Preventing Positive Purpose

Despite strong belief in advisory's potential and efforts to implement fluid, responsive programs, each case location encountered significant structural barriers that impeded program effectiveness. These barriers often stemmed from intentional design choices or institutional policies. Analysis of the interview data revealed four primary categories of designed roadblocks: insufficient time allocation, lack of schedule protection, inadequate professional preparation, and restrictive contractual language.

Insufficient Time Allocation

Limited time for advisory was a fundamental challenge perceived by teacher informants within Location 1. Of all locations within this study, Location 1 provided the least amount of time for advisory at 30 minutes once per week. This differs from Location 2 where middle school students had advisory for 45 minute each day and high school students had advisory for

45 minutes twice per week and Location 3 where high school students had advisory for 45 minutes each day. Teacher informant L1T1 refers to this amount of time as “insufficient” (Personal Communication, October 12, 2024). Teacher informant L1T2 notes that a proposal is being prepared to expand upon the time for advisory to twice per week. This change is expected to be received more positively by middle school teachers and students than high school teachers and students. Academic factors, such as the perception that increased advisory will remove opportunity for students to take Advanced Placement courses, is a primary basis for Location 1 to limit advisory. Within Location 1, the daily schedule is uniform between the middle and high school in Location 1 as subject area teachers may teach in both levels within Location 1. This need to retain a shared schedule limits the ability of administration to change the advisory schedule for middle school while keeping scheduling the same for high school students. This is a trait not shared with Location 2 and Location 3.

Lack of Schedule Protection

When advisory time was described as lacking or insufficient, participants were asked how increasing time may be beneficial. Teacher informant L1T3 noted “it needs to start out by being a protected time. I think that needs to be the first step. Otherwise, adding another block of time is just going to be another time for announcements and other random things” (Personal Communication, October 17, 2024). The amount of time a school spends on advisory is additionally affected by how protected the time is for advisory. The insufficient time noted by Informant L1T1 was compounded with a lack of protection for that time. Teacher Informant L1T3 commented that the limited time was often used for administrative homeroom purposes such as announcements. They state:

> To be completely honest with you, every other advisory pretty much gets taken up really quickly. So even if we have something planned, like, people will come in and they're like, 'Hey, can we present this activity that we're doing?' Or student council will present we have a Halloween door decorating contest that takes like 10 minutes of it, and then fifth grade was doing a bake sale that takes 10 minutes to explain (Personal Communication, October 17, 2024).

When time for advisory is not protected, skills focused lessons can only be covered at a surface level and relationship building is limited.

Inadequate Professional Preparation

The participant interviews revealed a consistent pattern of insufficient preparation for advisory roles across locations. Professional development and preparation to serve in an advisory role was recommended by participants L1T2, L3T2, and L2T2. Each of these informants notes their personal proclivities for advisory but note that the initial process could have been shortened. The informant stating the most egregious need for preparation was Informant L3T2. This teacher started teaching at their school in January 2021. This teacher noted there was no preparation "In fact, when I was hired, and they're like 'alright, this is [advisory].' And I'm like, 'what is that? What am I supposed to do?' And I still kind of feel like that a lot of days" (Personal Communication, October 16, 2024). This teacher was recommended by their administrator for an interview due to a strong focus by the teacher informant to do advisory well and develop relationships. However, when clear definitions are not provided it is more likely that advisory will not be used as effectively. Despite recommendation as an exemplary advisory by their administrator, L3T2 expressed feelings of unsureness in their efficacy, still.

Professional development for advisory cannot always fit into the schedule of trainings required at the start of the academic year. In response to this, Location 2 administrator informant L2A2 provides a purpose statement for each classroom that is meant to be hung in every classroom. This purpose statement (Figure 11) is hung with the same seriousness (and indeed location) as the fire emergency directions. The purpose and expectation statement serves as a baseline but the culture of the advisory structure at this location is tied heavily into the school's Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) practice. These practices, along with a stated purpose of advisory, provided structures upon which advisory can be supported.

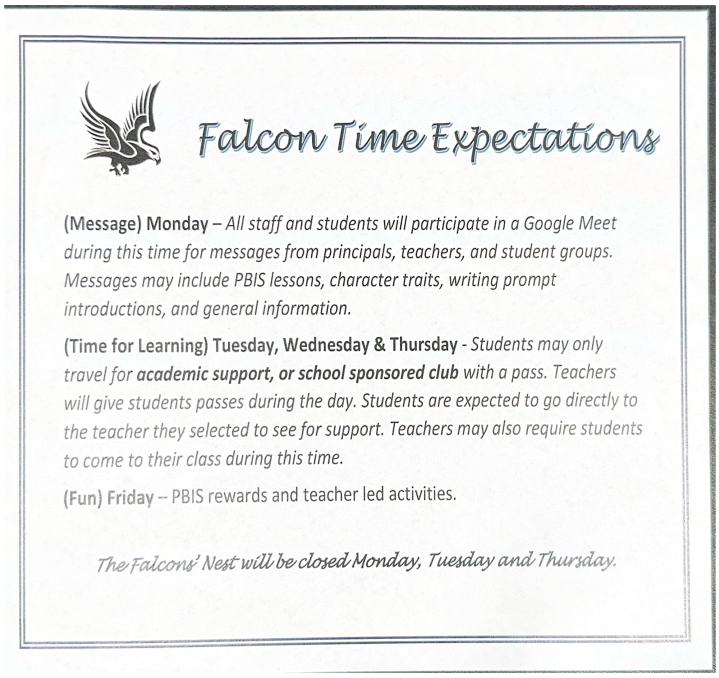


Figure 11: Expectation Poster for Location 2 Middle School

Restrictive Contract Language and Compounding Factors

Location 2 faces two structural influences in the high school advisory program that are not present within the middle school advisory. These challenges relegate the limited time for advisory to an academic focus. These two influences are: contract language and the grading policy.

The formation of the high school advisory program at Location 2 was initiated in collaboration with the collective bargaining unit through a Letter of Understanding. Specific language in the Letter of Understanding – dated May 31, 2023 – established limitations to teacher role expansion within advisory time. The wording of this document was:

> The parties agree that [Advisory] will not constitute an additional prep in the traditional sense other than the necessity of recording attendance, including the following stipulations: No new lesson preparation will be expected of staff and no grading responsibilities will be expected of staff (Location 2 Letter of Understanding, See Appendix A)

In protecting against role expansion by teachers within advisory, the collective bargaining unit limited the structure, design, and potential influence that advisory may have on student outcomes through secondary secure relationships. This document limits advisory primarily as an academic intervention with very small potential for secondary benefits.

The second structural influence impacting the Location 2 advisory was a new grading policy was established in the 2024-2025 school year. The policy requires retakes for assessments with a grade below 50%. The opportunity to retake these assessments, by default, happens during advisory classes in order to not interrupt initial instruction of new concepts. Math was deemed by participants to have stronger negative effects of these test policies than other subjects in an academic focused advisory. Little opportunity to do more than tutoring and retakes. Informants who teach in the subject area of English commented that the structure of their classes provides more work time. Informants felt that mathematics teachers are hit the hardest by these polices. This policy compounds the first structural limitation present within the collective bargaining unit Letter of Understanding.

Implications for Advisory Design

These findings suggest that schools must consider how institutional policies and structures might inadvertently create barriers to advisory structures successful implementation. Future advisory program designs should: ensure adequate and protected time allocation, provide comprehensive professional preparation, carefully consider the impact of contractual language. Additionally, program designers should make concerted efforts to balance competing institutional priorities and establish procedures for identifying and addressing structural barriers that may impede the success of advisory structures. Understanding these designed roadblocks is crucial for schools implementing or revising advisory programs, as it highlights the need to examine how institutional decisions might unknowingly undermine program goals.

Conclusion

The findings from this study reveal the interplay between advisory program design, teacher capacity, and institutional structures across diverse educational settings. Through analysis of three distinct case locations, patterns emerged regarding both the challenges and opportunities in advisory implementation. What became evident was that no single advisory approach serves as a universal solution — rather, successful advisory programs must be tailored to their specific contexts while maintaining certain core elements. The *Bottorff Framework of Advisory Typologies* (Figure 9) provides an initial design consideration to select the compound focus of advisory structures.

Teacher capacity emerged as a crucial factor, with personal skills and professional preparation playing significant roles in advisory effectiveness. Particularly notable was how teachers with strong relational skills could successfully navigate advisory responsibilities even with limited formal preparation. However, this finding also highlighted a gap in secondary

school teacher preparation programs, which typically emphasize content expertise over the relational and developmental skills crucial for effective advisory.

The need for semi-structured guidance appeared consistently across all locations, though the level of structure varied by context. Location 3's highly structured approach provided clear direction but sometimes felt restrictive, while Location 1's more flexible approach offered freedom but left some teachers feeling adrift. This suggests the need for what might be called "flexible scaffolding" — enough guidance to provide direction while maintaining room for teacher autonomy and responsiveness to student needs.

Interviews additional revealed that mere belief in advisory's value, while necessary, is insufficient for program success. Successful advisory implementation requires careful attention to structural supports, professional development, and the removal of institutional barriers. The designed roadblocks identified across locations — from insufficient time allocation to restrictive contractual language — demonstrate how institutional decisions can inadvertently undermine advisory effectiveness. These barriers appeared differently across contexts but consistently impacted program implementation.

Taken together, these findings suggest that effective advisory implementation requires a more comprehensive approach than is typically employed. Success depends not just on teacher belief or program design, but on the careful alignment of structural supports, professional preparation, and institutional policies. As we move into the discussion of recommendations, these findings provide insight into how schools might better structure and support their advisory programs.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This study set out to investigate how teachers and administrators perceive preparation needs for advisory roles in secondary schools. Specifically, the research explored what forms of support current advisory teachers require, how administrators view valuable supports, the current focus of training and development, and what aspects of preparation teachers consider key in effective advisory programs. Through examination of three distinct educational settings — an international private school, a large public school district, and a medium-sized public district — patterns emerged that both align with and extend existing advisory literature.

Several key themes emerged that directly address the research questions about support and preparation needs: the value of compound-purpose advisory, the critical role of teacher capacity and disposition, the need for balanced structure and flexibility, the insufficiency of belief alone in ensuring program success, the impact of institutional barriers on program effectiveness, and the importance of protected time and clear purpose

These themes emerged through analysis of educator interviews, site documents, and program structures, providing insights that both confirm and expand upon existing advisory literature. Where Galassi et al. (1998) established six distinct advisory types, this study reveals how these types inevitably overlap and interweave in practice. While Phillippo (2013) highlighted the balance of teacher schema and resources, this research demonstrates how these factors manifest differently across various institutional contexts.

Particularly notable is how these findings address gaps identified in existing advisory literature. Where previous research has focused primarily on program structure (Anfara, 2006; Niska & Thompson, 2007) and student outcomes (McClure et al., 2010; Moeder-Chandler, 2018), these findings emphasize the often-overlooked aspects of teacher preparation, institutional support, and implementation challenges. This research revealed that, even in schools with strong belief in advisory's value, structural and preparation challenges could significantly impact program effectiveness.

Suggestions

The following suggestions represent key findings from this research, supported by evidence from across case locations and connected to relevant literature. Each suggestion addresses fundamental aspects of advisory program design and maintenance, with particular attention to the preparation and support needs identified in the research questions. These recommendations emerge from the lived experiences of educators while connecting to broader educational theory and practice. The suggestions are:

1) Advisory time must be protected time.
2) Semi-structured guidance should be provided to advisors.
3) An age-appropriate curriculum, designed for advisory, should be provided to advisors.
4) Protect opportunity for skill and relationship formation through “compound purpose” advisory.
5) On days focused on “invigoration,” time must remain structured.

The recommendations, aligned with appropriate literature are expanded upon in the following headings.

Suggestion 1: Advisory Time Must Be Protected

Within this study, no advisories prioritized Galassi et al.'s (1998) administrative homeroom type. This type is characterized by announcements, general school business, and housekeeping. Within this study the time assigned to advisory would often shift to this this less "resource intensive" type. As noted by teacher informant L1T3: "To be completely honest with you, every other advisory pretty much gets taken up really quickly. So even if we have something planned, like, people will come in and they're like, 'Hey, can we present this activity that we're doing?' ... and that takes up 10 minutes of [advisory]" (Personal Communication, October 17, 2024). As no advisory structure was aligned to this type, administrative intrusions represented deviations from the expressed purpose of the studied advisory structures.

Advisory must maintain a protected time within the scheduled day in order to maintain perceived value and adherence to advisory practices. While the three locations within this study maintained vastly different allotments of time for advisory, the need to protect the time assigned to advisory (see Table 4) from outside influence was an emergent theme explicitly stated by multiple informants. Though protection was not achieved, Teacher informant L1T noted attempts were made through personal act of refusal to allow interruptions. The informant stated:

> We've tried to keep a protective hand on when it's advisory, you don't dip out to do these other school things, keep advisory as advisory, and we will give of our reading and writing class time to do something that's going to be a general announcement or a general something or other. 'You have to do the health lesson? Great. Come in during reading class, not advisory.' And that has been helpful in ways (Personal Communication, October 12, 2024).

This statement represents the teacher informant's individual faith in their ability to refuse interruption in order to protect a time with greater perceived value. This value is tied to the needs of the students. The differing needs, as determined by local culture, is expanded upon in the heading "Understanding: Cultural Impacts of a Skills Focused Curriculum." The local culture and student needs, as well as teacher's perceptions of personal autonomy and voice, may appear in future research as a protective factor to advisory schedules. Protection of advisory time is of particular importance in programs where the academic schedule does not provide adequate time for advisory structures to take hold.

Schedule Compression.

McEwin and Greene (2010) recommended an ideal advisory time of twice per week for 45 to 60 minutes. This aligns with the advisory schedule within Location 2 of this study. Location 1's limited 30-minute weekly advisory period proved insufficient for meaningful relationship building or skill development. As teacher informant L1T1 noted, this amount of time was "insufficient" for achieving program goals. Location 3 had a more intensive schedule where advisory took place every day of the academic week. Within Location 3, informants did not refer to the schedule as overwhelming or excessive. However, Location 2, where advisory schedules were more condensed, informants referred to this time as excessive. While this was tied to the time it may be more likely attributed to the implementation. Within this implementation, use of the advisory time was lacking in proper structure and the purpose

Within Location 2, one middle school found balance by assigning administrative homeroom to the first day of the academic week and invigoration activities to the last day of the academic week (see Figure 11). Teacher informants within this location attributed this protection to improved student focus during the academic focused days. This serves as a protective factor

for the remaining academic and invigoration advisories throughout the academic week. A similar approach was taken within Location 3 through the use of a yearly schedule of lessons and activities.

The need for routines and protected time allows for greater fidelity in advisory and classroom instruction. Diehl and McFarland (2012), through analysis of 800,000 interactions within 601 high school classrooms, find routine and ritual represent classroom stability. Routines are a "working agreement about 'what is going on here'" (Goffman, 1974/1981 in Diehl & MacFarland, 2012) and represent a sociological agreement to the purpose of an activity and a dedication to its outcomes. Ritual refers instead to the interaction of shared and agreed upon value identities (Goffman, 1967 in Diehl & MacFarland, 2012). Each of this works in concert to develop stability. Stability, to Diehl and McFarland, is a description of a "recursive or patterned way that repeats through time" (p 328). Stability, founded upon routine and ritual, was found to align with increased job satisfaction in teachers. This is of particular value to advisory as the misalignment of schema and resources tends towards negative perceptions of efficacy (Phillippo, 2013). Building routine and ritual – a component of schedule protection – may mitigate negative perceptions of personal efficacy in advisory.

Routine, ritual, and schedule protection are generally outside of teacher control as the daily schedule is set by administrators at the school or district level. Attention to consistency and protection of advisory schedule has the potential to enhance teacher perceptions of work satisfaction and perceptions of efficacy in advisory work. The following section examines the resource needs of teacher advisors through the provision of semi-structured guidance and support.

Suggestion 2: Semi-Structured Guidance Should be Provided to Advisors

A common theme across case locations was the need for structured guidance while allowing teacher flexibility and autonomy. This aligns with Anfara's (2006) recommendation that advisory designers must take a systematic approach that clearly defines staff responsibilities while attending to all stakeholders' needs. Teacher informant L1T3 noted “absence of a standardized curriculum has left the program without a clear structure or direction, negatively influencing support for the current program from students and teachers” (Personal Communication, October 15, 2024). However, Location 3's highly structured day-by-day schedule was seen as challenging to implement when flexibility was not clearly communicated. Location 2 faced issues of inconsistent implementation across buildings without clear guidance.

A balance between high structured and a laissez faire approach to advisory oversight was an emergent theme across each location. Location 3 was perceived to have a high level of structure by the teacher informants. Administrator informant for Location 3, L3A1, noted the highly structured approach was created to glean the positive outcomes the advisory program was meant to elicit. The administrator stated “I keep fighting for [advisory], and our school board is ready to cancel it. So that's where I kind of need [to focus]. I gotta put my money where my mouth is this year, and work on it” (Personal Communication, September 24, 20204). Location 3 teacher informants, however, recognized the highly structured approach as a support for advisory while recognizing teachers were welcome to stray slightly from the established plan.

Location 2 was the case location where the least oversight, direction, and structure was provided by administration. Teacher informant and union leader for Location 2 (L2T1) commented:

> I think one of the reasons why some teachers have been very hesitant to really buy in is because the district has struggled to really give us what the purpose is. Is the purpose to have less failures? Is the purpose that kids get more emotional support? Like, why are we doing this? And, a lot of the more data-oriented people really would like success criteria, which the district has never given to us (Personal Communication, September 12, 2024).

The informant's comments suggest that teachers struggle to fully engage with and support a program whose goals and measures of success remain ambiguous, highlighting how lack of administrative clarity and oversight can undermine even well-intentioned educational initiatives.

Across each location, when considering the level of structure provided by administration for advisory, a theme from the administrators was an understanding that perfect execution of advisory was not expected so long as the time was used to give students *what they need*. To this end, the central office administrator for Location 2 (L2A1) noted "If a kid comes in [to advisory] and puts his head down to sleep, that may be what he needs that day. If it happens every day, then we need to have a conversation" (Personal communication, June 20, 2024). This comment aligns with the greater purpose of advisory, to support student learning. To this administrator, that may involve taking a nap. However, teachers often expressed a desire for this flexibility to be expressed directly – to be given permission to blur the lines.

The ideal guidance for advisory appears to be semi-structured — providing clear expectations and direction while allowing teachers to adapt based on student needs and their own strengths. This approach aligns with Phillippo's (2013) schema-resource framework, where teachers need both clear generalizable procedures or "schema" (Sewell & Sewell, 2005) and flexibility to apply their personal resources effectively.

Some actionable strategies emerged within the study case locations that advisory program designers could use with immediate effect. Administrator L2A2 provided clear purpose statements and expectations displayed in classrooms and shared with staff. Location 3 and one school in Location 2 provided basic weekly frameworks (e.g. Monday check-ins, academic focus days mid-week, community building on Fridays) that create consistency while allowing flexibility within those blocks, following McEwin and Greene's (2010) recommendation for defined curriculum with effective professional development. Location 1 program designers provided banks of optional activities and lessons teachers can draw from rather than required daily scripts. Participants were effusive on the need to protect time designations that clearly separate advisory from administrative tasks and announcements, addressing Anfara's (2006) warning about advisory devolving into administrative homeroom

Semi-Structured Supports and Teacher Capacity.

Advisors may lack confidence or skills in certain areas of advisory, reflecting Diehl's (2021) observation of mismatches between teacher disposition and growth opportunities. Diehl describes three approaches to behavioral growth: traditionalists, transposers, and cultivators. Traditionalists deliberately attempt to keep their normal disposition. Transposers apply some aspect of their current disposition to the new situation. Cultivators sow the seeds of the new disposition despite not currently possessing the skills. Semi-structured guidance provides scaffolding while still allowing advisors to leverage their personal strengths – to match the transposer and cultivator role. As informant L2T2 noted, “If you've got teachers that [aren't] willing to follow through...it's hard to avoid” (Personal Communication, October 3, 2024).

For newer teachers especially, having clear structures to work within helps build confidence. Informant L3T2 described starting mid-year: “When I was hired and they're like

'alright, this is [advisory].' And I'm like, 'what is that? What am I supposed to do?' And I still kind of feel like that a lot of days" (Personal Communication, October 16, 2024). This experience reflects the gap identified by Myrick et al. (1986) regarding the importance of peer mentor support in advisory preparation.

Advisors of skills focused advisories may themselves lack the personal skills present in the lessons. A semi-structured guidance provides an opportunity for these advisors to maintain quality advisory implementation. As Millennials and GenZ enter the teaching workforce, they bring with them the social and developmental shortcomings that are inherent in what Haidt (2024) called the "phone-based childhood." Haidt notes that, from the 1990s onward, children were raised in more risk averse approaches that may lead to decreased rates of "antifragility." "Antifragility" is a term coined by statistician Nassim Taleb to describe systems which are improved through appropriate stressors (Taleb, 2012 in Haidt, 2024). Antifragility stands in apart from resilience, as resilience is a "capacity to withstand exceptional stresses and demands without developing stress related problems" (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013, p 15; Howard, 2008; Carr, 2003). These are separate phenomenon in that "resilient" organisms are not harmed by stressors while "antifragile" organisms are strengthened by stressors. Positive stress, or eustress, is a situation which feels stressful but in a way that is manageable to the person experiencing the stress. Teachers raised in this period may have missed out on opportunities to develop antifragility through eustress. This limits their capacity to provide these experiences to the students in their care. Semi-structured guidance may provide personal learning for teacher advisors to provide students the opportunities the teacher may not have been afforded.

While providing semi-structured guidance helps create a framework for advisors to work within, the content and activities used during advisory time must also be considered. The

curriculum and materials teachers use should be intentionally designed for advisory purposes and appropriate for the developmental stage of the students. Beyond just providing structure, having high-quality, relevant curriculum materials is essential for advisory to achieve its intended outcomes.

Peer Mentoring as Professional Development.

While many teacher informants within this study requested formal training regarding advisory structures and clear expectations, the importance of peer mentoring cannot be overstated. Location 1 administrator informant L1A1 noted the professional growth extending between teacher advisors through peer support. In a conversation on student perceptions of teacher relationships, L1A1 noted of a particular advisor "she was really good at team building, and that was a carryover from her predecessor, who was just amazing at connecting with kids and so funny" (Personal Communication, August 14, 2024). This tendency to share personal and professional strengths between advisors was of particular value to the international school as the average length of contract roughly three years.

Chen (2024) found dominant forms of professional development for social emotional learning preparation was lecture-based learning (n=10). Lecture based instruction did not result in robust outcomes. Participatory learning opportunities (n=16) produced robust S.E.L. outcomes due to the presence of "active engagement." While this form of training was requested by some participants in the current study, greater engagement and skill growth may be seen through expanded methods of professional development, such as mentoring programs.

Geeraerts et al. (2015) describe a model of mentoring called "Peer Group Mentoring" (PGM) used within the Finish national school system. This model expands upon teacher mentoring models through "socio-constructivism, dialog, and knowledge sharing whereas the

traditional mentoring is based on the metaphor of transmitting knowledge from a more experienced college to an early career employee" (p 5). Within this model, groups of five to ten teachers work collaboratively in planning, organizing, and implementing a unique program of professional development. The authors' survey of teacher perceptions of this program (n= 116) found that 87% of study respondent reported the PGM process improved their ability to cope at the jobs. The strongest correlation within survey results found strengthening of professional identity and self-confidence through developing skills and knowledge. This approach aligns with the needs stated by informant L1T3 when stating "The first year, I don't, I did not do a good job. … I was definitely flying by the seat of my pants" (Personal Communication, October 17, 2024). This informant, through a peer mentorship relationship with teacher informant L1T1, developed positive perceptions of personal capacity within advisory. At this point, informant L1T1 and L1T3 are a guiding force behind program adjustments within the Location 1 advisory program. The format of Peer Group Mentoring may align well with a highly structured advisory structure or an advisory structure with an established history of success.

Location 2, in alignment with state regulation (Michigan Revised School Code Act, 1976 & 1993), provides peer mentoring to teachers in the first three years of employment within the teaching profession and two years for experienced teachers when hired to a new location. This, however, does not extend to the role of advisor for experienced teachers within the district. Some mentorship opportunities may be provided through the *Professional Learning Community* (PLC) procedures implemented by the district. However, the priority of these PLCs is academic and instructional efficacy.

Wood et al (2016) recommend a Multi-Level Coaching procedure through which advisor capacity may expand. This expands upon the role of mentorship through coaching within the

classroom instructional or advisory periods. Within this model, one teacher acting as coach, provides observation and enhancement of lessons *in situ.* Coaching is expanded upon, as with mentorship, in follow-up conversations outside of the classroom. Additionally, this model differs from the PGM approach as the relationship is 1-to-1 in a Multi-Level Coaching model instead of five to ten teachers.

Mentorship and coaching provide an opportunity to expand advisory personal and professional capacity for the advisor role. Informal mentor roles were discovered during the course of the current study and more defined mentorship alignment for advisory – through a Peer Group Mentoring model – has the potential to develop improved and sustained advisory capacity within organizations employing advisory structures. Professional development, however, cannot stand without instructional procedures and curricular alignment. The next section will discuss the need for an age-appropriate curriculum, designed for advisory.

Suggestion 3: An Age-Appropriate Curriculum, Designed for Advisory, Should be Provided to Advisors

Throughout this study, the curricula used by case locations were primarily Social Emotional Learning (SEL) curricula *adapted* to an advisory format. These programs are well designed but may not be appropriate for all age and developmental ranges for student groups. Through the literature review process, sample curricula designed for advisory were discovered. These example programs are the *Advisory Power Program* (Niska & Thompson, 2007), *Developmental Designs* (Crawford, 2012), and the *Delaware Met Advisory Curriculum* (Delaware Department of Education, 2015). However, these programs are not designed to be used universally across all grade levels. The Developmental Designs curriculum (Crawford, 2012), for example, is aligned for Grade 5 to Grade 9. Attempting to use such a program for

Grade 11 students would likely have limited results or breed contempt for the program in students and teacher advisors.

An advisory curriculum may be assembled locally by teacher advisors with collaboration with administration and curriculum coordinators. As noted in the teacher interviews, each advisory location has a unique perspective based upon the needs of the students, the advisors, and the surrounding culture. For Location 1, a culture which did not prioritize student independence prior to adulthood informed the selection of skills focused advisory lessons. Location 2 advisory was primarily academically focused as it was perceived that students' social needs were met outside of the school day, but time and attention were needed for academic remediation. The advisory curriculum for Location 3 was a combined approach of the two preceding locations with both an academic and skills focused curriculum to account for a lack of support in the students' home life, as perceived by the educators interviewed.

Where a quality curriculum is not available, the impetus for planning and curriculum design falls upon the teacher advisors. Ingersoll (2003, in Phillippo, 2013) refers to this additional planning and design as "pro-bono" and "role-expansion" wherein teachers effectively donate their time (p 8). In locations, such as Location 2, where collective bargaining and assessment obligations prevent teachers from planning advisory activities, advisory will tend towards types that require little to no planning, such as administrative homeroom. These types have decreased student outcomes related to their stated priorities of the studied programs. These programs will lack quality instructional practices — such as routines or student led discussion — and may devolve into resentment from teacher advisors and students.

Regarding curriculum and program design of advisory, McGuiness (1982) recommends 10 Considerations when evaluating the curriculum of an advisory [3]. The 10 Considerations are:

1) Is the curriculum design, implemented and monitored to ensure that the full range of potential for all pupils is met?
2) Is every pupil in the school known? Are they individualized on the basis of sound, up-to-date, factual information?
3) Is the record system of the school assembled on the basis of evidence, not opinion?
4) Are staff attitudes towards pastoral care positive?
5) Is counseling expertise available for those in the school who need and want it?
6) Does decision-making skill appear as a skill objective in curriculum planning?
7) Is there a clear definition of areas of responsibility in the school, a clear statement of roles?
8) Does the school have a timetabled tutorial/pastoral period?
9) Does the school have clear communication lines with appropriate outside agencies?
10) What percentage of the parent body is involved in the school's work?

Of these 10 Considerations, number one, number two, number four, number eight were answered in the affirmative by informants. Of the three case locations, only Location 3 could accurately affirm the use of a curriculum that was designed, implemented, and monitored to ensure the full range of potential of all students per Consideration Number One.

Consideration Number Eight was answered negatively by teacher informants for Location 2 and Location 3 of this study. Informant L2T1 noted a paucity of interaction by counselors during the advisory period, saying:

[3] McGuiness uses the term "pastoral care" to refer to advisory.

> perhaps counselors could pitch in by looking up and seeing 'Okay, I've got this many kids that are failing. Let's look up and see what they're doing during charger time? Oh, they're not ever leaving their [advisory] room. Maybe we should intervene, have a conversation with this kid and push them to start going and getting the interventions that they need'" (Personal Communication, September 12, 2024).

This was reinforced by informant L2T2 through the statement "I think we should be a little bit … more willing to ask those teachers that don't have regular [advisory] time to help. I think people are, are very much like, 'oh, you know, that's their prep hour,' but it's not their prep hour'" (Personal Communication, October 3, 2024). Though many of the case locations in this study are meeting most of the considerations established by McGuiness (1982), the role organization and expectation component of the curriculum was deemed lacking across the informant interviews.

AMLE (Burkhardt & Kane, 2012) warns against a tendency to limit advisory to a scripted curriculum. These authors note a tendency of advisory programs to over adhere to a curricular approach, rather than a "relationship to be nourished" (p 149). The advisors within the current study requested a semi-structured curriculum. This initially disagrees with the guidance of the AMLE. A nuanced perspective, however, recognizes the vacuum created within advisory structures when curriculum is entirely absent – as in Location 2 of the current study. While scripted curriculum may be at odds with the recommendations for advisory, the presence of a semi-structured curriculum may serve as scaffolded supports to teacher advisors. With a recommendation against curriculum, schools may remove these supports in a misguided attempt to help students. The teachers in the current study recognized both themselves and their colleagues leaning upon personal strengths to make up for an absence of curriculum. This resulted in negative feelings regarding individual program implementation. A nuanced, semi-

structured curriculum approach, therefor, is necessary to support teachers – in turn supporting students.

Executive Function for Skills focused Advisories.

Executive Function is a term closely related to meta-cognition — the ability to think about thinking. Ardila (2019) notes that the term executive functioning may include the skills of attention control, organized goal-directed behavior, problem solving, and mental flexibility. Jurado and Rosselli (2007) note that executive functioning may also include aspects of morality and self-awareness. Within this study, Location 1 and Location 3 included skills focused advisory (Galassi et al.,1998). Skills focused advisories were tied to social emotional learning curricula and what Administrator informant L1A1 referred to as "Executive Function" (Personal Communication, August 15, 2024). Executive Function is a term that has received recent attention from psychological research outside of education in an effort to create a consistent definition. Packwood et al. (2011), through a meta-analysis of studies related to dysexecutive functioning syndromes, determined executive function refers to aspects of planning, working memory, inhibition, set shifting, and fluency. [4]

Lavery (2008) determined the most effective metacognitive strategies tied to student academic achievement. Through this analysis, Lavery determined the greatest effect size came from strategies that were targeted at the "forethought" phase of learning (Lavery 2008, in Hattie, 2009). Planning, present in Location 1 and Location 2, was deemed to have an effect size of

[4] The term "set shifting" is a psychological term referring to the ability to shift attention between tasks.

d=.49.[5] Self-monitoring received an effect size of d=0.45. Time management or set shifting received an effect size of d=0.44. Inhibition or self-consequences had the highest effect size of those represented in these case locations of d=0.70. Advisories incorporating executive functioning skills focused instruction through advisory would do well to consider the effect size alignment to local priorities.

A well-designed and applicable curriculum is a vital need for advisors to provide quality of instruction and maintain fidelity of skill instruction. Though the informants within this study requested such curricula, the opportunity for relationship formation within a flexible and compound advisory must not be forgotten to provide such curriculum. The following section describes the importance of protecting opportunity for skill building and relationship building within such advisory structures. In doing so, it refers to Suggestion 1 and Suggestion 2, which recommend semi-structured supports and protection of advisory periods from outside intrusion.

Suggestion 4: Protect Opportunity for Skill and Relationship Formation Through "Compound Purpose" Advisory

Suggestion 1 of this study recommends protecting advisory time from interruptions within the school schedule while Suggestion 2 recommended providing semi-structured supports to teacher advisors. This section expands upon those suggestions to suggest protection of relationship building opportunities within advisory. These opportunities may focus on Teacher Student Relationships (TSR) and Principal Student Relationships (PSR), as previously discussed in Chapter 2. However, this section continues to include student peer relationships. Relationship

[5] Exact vocabulary between Lavery (2008) and Packwood et al(2011) are not perfectly aligned but are presented here with attempted alignment between similar meanings as Packwood et al's research was an attempt at "parsimony" of definition.

building opportunities within advisory may take part during social-emotional and skill building types of advisory. These types do not necessarily preclude relationship formation. The *Bottorff Framework* (see Figure 9) includes bridges between Galassi et al (1998) types to include these relationship building opportunities.

A longitudinal study by De Wit et al. (2010) of 2,616 high school students found that declining perceptions of both teacher and peer support were strongly associated with declining attendance. Notably, the study revealed that peer relationships had a stronger protective effect than teacher relationships during this period, suggesting that as students' progress through high school, opportunities for meaningful peer interaction become increasingly vital for maintaining engagement. This finding underscores the importance of intentionally preserving spaces and times for relationship building between students as well as TSR and the role this preservation has on student attendance. As noted in the introduction, truancy and lacking attendance can be aligned with negative indicators of student mental health. In this way, advisory may be both an intervention for truancy and student mental health indicators.

Student academic achievement and classroom engagement can be positively affected through opportunities for relationship formation. Jennings (2003), using data provided through the *California Healthy Kids Survey* (CHKS). Through analysis of the representative data provided by the CHKS, Jennings provides evidence aligning Meaningful Participation in School (MPS) and Grade Point Average (GPA) with quality peer and adult relationships in school. Furrer and Skinner (2013) expand upon these findings along gender lines. Notably, a higher rate of relatedness is reported between female students with peers than male students. However, within these findings, boys reported relationships with teachers was a greater indicator of MPS than for female students. These findings may guide advisory program designers to select

activities and create advisory classrooms in which gender needs are considered. However, non-binary and transgender aligning individuals were not present within the reporting and may inform future decision making in this area.

For advisory structures to achieve the outcomes for which each is designed, opportunities outside of purely academic pursuit must be considered. Clinton (2020) encourages holistic and relational focused education and a warning to avoid the "tyranny of cognitive seduction" (p 132) wherein we focus on reading and writing at the expense of social-skill and learning to function with others. Time allowing for relationship building is expanded upon in following section examining advisory times reserved for invigoration activities.

Suggestion 5: On Days Focused on "Invigoration," Time Must Remain Structured

Within the current study, no advisory program aligned solely to a single type of advisory provided by Galassi et al (1998). This was key to the creation of the expanded typology within the *Bottorff Framework of Advisory Types* (Figure 9). Often, the advisories within this study would expand a focus on skills and academics to incorporate community and invigoration as determined by the teacher advisory or as planned within the weekly advisory schedule. The "invigoration" type of advisory, within Galassi et al (1998) is delineated by a focus on "relaxing and recharging" (see Table 3). Activities in an invigoration type advisory include intramural sports and parties. Within Location 2 and Location 3 of this study, portions of the advisory structures aligning with this type were called *Fun Friday*.

During such "invigoration" days, the pull of social media, games, and streaming through apps like YouTube and TikTok were often at odds with a focus on community building. Teacher informants within this study noted a personal desire to keep students from spending this "invigoration" time on lost in electronic devices. Teacher informant L2T3 noted:

> You know, I'm old fashioned … I don't think they should be allowed on their phone … because the kids have enough time on their cell phones. They certainly don't need an hour to watch YouTube videos. That's just me. And, so, we have some administration who feel the kids need a cell phone break, *whereas I feel kids need a break from their cell phones* (Personal Communication, October 11, 2024).

Teacher informant L2T2 noted a balanced and pragmatic approach to device use. This informant, who is of a younger generation than previously noted informant L2T3, recognized value in allowing personal music devices to aid in focusing during work time but limiting during invigoration times. This informant supported music as a work aid through a class always set of headphones available to students. However, this informant noted, as with informant L2T3, the need to aid students in self-control regarding electronic devices. They noted "I use ClassWise, and I don't walk around the room because they're all too good at hiding what they're doing on the computer" (Personal Communication, October 3, 2024). ClassWise is a computer monitoring program provided by the informant's employer. The program allows faculty to view students' screens from a central location to monitor work engagement as well as blocking potentially harmful content.

Haidt (2014) notes a causal relationship between social media use and social deficiencies in adolescents. To this end, the TSR found through advisory may, in future studies consider social media and limit digital engagement during school hours as an intervention to the negative student social, behavioral, and academic outcomes. Along with TSR, advisory which includes invigoration activities provide opportunities to enhance student-to-student relationship support.

Implications for Future Research

The current study represents one of the few qualitative and comparative case study designs within the literature on advisory structures. Mixed methods and quantitative examinations of advisories are plentiful. There is a paucity of longitudinal studies aligned to teacher perceptions within advisory. While there are longitudinal studies of advisory examining student outcomes, such as attendance (Moeder-Chandler, 2018), teacher perceptions are not present. Future studies may take this long-range perspective to analyze compounding factors related to change and growth within an advisory structure.

One outcome of this study is a new framework targeted at the alignment of compound focused advisories. Future studies may approach teacher perceptions and student outcomes by targeting advisory types within this framework. As this framework is a re-alignment of an existing typology established by Galassi et al (1998), it may be the case that this framework will prove valuable in the design of future research.

Participants in this study referred to the inhibitory role of digital devices on student work completion and social skills development. Future studies may align with the skills focused, community focused, and invigoration focused with strategies aligned with digital and social media abstention or minimization. Potential connections with psychological research focused on addiction management and socio-cultural trends in communication may prove to be salient connections to this future research. The role advisory and school relations play in these trends may prove actionable to future advisory program design.

The administrator information for Location 1 within this study (L1A1) referred to advisory as a time during which a shared culture is developed. Within each of the case locations of the current study, local and school culture emerged as guiding factors in the alignment and

design of the advisory programs. Future studies may focus upon the culture bearing role of advisory. Future researchers may wish to begin this by selecting locations in which a community and invigoration focus is a component of the advisory design. These components may arise within the "Who: Community," "What: Advocacy," or "What: Invigoration" types within the Bottorff Framework (see Figure 9).

Conclusion

This study expands upon the previous literature on advisory by focusing primarily on the voices of educations enacting advisories designed by others. This study is unique in the use of the comparative case study design across culturally and economically diverse case locations. The three case locations selected for this study represent a wide variety of schools - a small private school, a medium sized public school, and a top 10 by size public school district. The case locations represent populations with high socio-economic status to populations experiencing poverty conditions. Throughout the interviews across these case locations what was apparent was the use of advisory to target the needs of the students first. Structural challenges related to time and preparation were reported by teacher informants but the belief in the value of targeted time and opportunities to build positive teacher student relationships with students were prevalent.

Teaching is an art. Teaching is the work of craftsman. In art and craftsmanship, rules cannot be taught by rote and haphazardly applied to work. In the lofty goal of school improvement, we have created subject area experts who we hope will learn the *art* of teaching on the job. Teaching is much more than preparing lectures, lesson plans, and slide shows; it is the ability to communicate to a room of people and to speak in a way that guides them to an understanding. Teaching is the skill to lead a horse to water and to then convince it to drink.

This requires a deep knowledge of a person. As we prepare our teachers to act as advisers to students, the artist's disposition must be part of our approach.

Movies focused on education and the noble teachers who guided students to achievement by first learning who they were as people, not just students, are a staple. In *Freedom Writers* (2007) a white, middle-class teacher experiences culture shock and build connections with students at a majority black, inner-city school. In *Dead Poets Society* (1989), Robin Williams' character motivates the students to be more than what society has prepared them for high paying "professional" occupations by appealing to artistic soul. *Coach Carter* (2005) holds his high school basketball players to high standards, not allowing them to foster a single aspect of their identity: the athlete. *Mr. Holland's Opus* (1995) shows the personal growth of a young music teacher into a pillar of the community who has reached students who return to honor him at his retirement. These movies rose to collective consciousness because they hit the nerve of all former students: the feeling of being truly seen by a teacher. Despite this, our graduation standards are so stringent that there is rarely time in the day, outside of the few elective classes, to stop and take the time to get to know our students outside of the words they put on paper or the holes they put in our walls. Advisory structures are prepared to target the affective needs of students that are exemplified by the teachers we make about.

The perspective put forward within this study about the value of advisory is the philosophy that schools exist as a community pilar to provide children with *what they need*. In the past, this might have been reading, writing, and arithmetic. For our students afflicted with food insecurity, it may be a place to nourish their bodies. For many of our students, more than "academics," schools are a place to nourish their souls; we must prepare our teachers for this role.

The hard truth of advisory structures is that implementing them in a valuable way will require the elimination of some advanced opportunity. Advisories will *necessarily* take some time out of the day that could be used for AP classes or other strictly academic focused time. That leads into the question of the care we must provide to all students. It may be easy to revel at the successes of our students who would have succeeded on their own and attribute their accomplishments to our mastery of teaching. Our quality as educators must be judged by the successes of the school dependent children- those who benefit most from interventions, and those who would be lost without it.

Inherent in the conversation around advisory and student achievement are beliefs to what the end goal of schooling should be. The accountability era of American public education pushed our schools to higher and higher standards along the core subjects — but at what expense? It is important to ask if all our students need to take trigonometry, how many of the great classics should be required reading, and does this relentless approach to higher achievement actually prepare our students for the world in which they will live and work?

Though some pundits would like us to believe that our education system is in shambles, this is not the case. These statements have led to the acceptance of voucher systems and alternative schooling such as charters; exacerbating the problems they insist will be fixed. According to the NCES *School Pulse Panel* (NCES, 2023), students are graduating with more credits. The aspect of our system that is in shambles is the mental and social health of our students, teachers, and communities. The community, skills building, invigoration, and social-emotional attention capacities of well-implemented advisory programs can help alleviate these societal ills. The challenge is in the implementation.

Education is not a competition. Countries regularly credited for their academic superiority (e.g. China, South Korea, Japan) focused their culture on this at a time when doing so would increase their economic standing. Those countries are now seeing similar and worsening mental health trends as I outlined in Chapter 1. The United States of America is already a global economic superpower. Our insistence on competing with other countries, with different needs, for similar academic achievement is inherently misaligned with the needs of our children and our local culture. Advisory is one such strategy that can realign our focus to the needs of our children and of our schools.

References

Ainsworth, M. D. S., Blehar, M. C., Waters, E., & Wall, S. N. (2015). *Patterns of attachment: A psychological study of the strange situation*. Psychology Press.

Adler, M. J. (1998). *Paideia proposal*. Simon and Schuster.

Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE) (2021). *This we believe.* *https://www.amle.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/AMLE_SMS_Summary_Color.pdf*

American School Counselor Association. (n.d.). *Councilor roles and ratios.* American School Counselor Association. Retrieved October 11, 2023, from *https://schoolcounselor.org/About-School-Counseling/School-Counselor-Roles-Ratios*

Anfara, V. A. (2006). Advisor-advisee programs: Important but problematic. *Middle school journal*, *38*(1), 54–60. *https://doi.org/10.1080/00940771.2006.11461566*

Anfara, V. A., & Brown, K. M. (2001). Advisor-advisee programs: Community building in a state of affective disorder? In V. A. Anfara (Ed.), *The Handbook of Research in Middle Level Education* (pp. 3–34). Information Age.

Ardila, A. (2019). Executive functions brain functional system. In A. Ardila, S. Fatima, & M. Rosselli (Eds.), *Dysexecutive Syndromes* (pp. 29–41). Springer International Publishing. *https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-25077-5_2*

Balfanz, R., & Byrnes, V. (2012). *The importance of being there: A report on absenteeism in the nation's public schools*. Johns Hopkins University Center for Social Organization in Schools.

Balfanz, R., Herzog, L., & Mac Iver, D. J. (2007). Preventing student disengagement and keeping students on the graduation path in urban middle-grades schools: Early identification and effective interventions. *Educational Psychologist*, *42*(4), 223–235. *https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520701621079*

Bandura, A. (1994). Self-efficacy. In V. S. Ramachaudran (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of human behavior* (Vol. 4, pp. 71–81). Academic Press. *http://happyheartfamilies.citymax.com/f/Self_Efficacy.pdf*

Bennett, C. A., & Martin, K. (2018). Reclaiming advisory: Advocacy in action. *Middle School Journal*, *49*(1), 32–37. *https://doi.org/10.1080/00940771.2018.1399330*

Bernstein-Yamashiro, B., & Noam, G. G. (2013). Teacher-student relationships: A growing field of study. *New Directions for Youth Development*, *2013*(137), 15–26. *https://doi.org/10.1002/yd.20045*

Bottorff, P. E. (2022). *Flexible advisory to raise all ships: Flexible advisory design within one high school*. Unpublished manuscript.

Bourdieu, P. (1990). *The logic of practice.* Stanford University Press

Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and loss*. Basic Books.

Briggs, T. H. (1920). *The junior high school*. Houghton Mifflin.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1994). Ecological models of human development. *International Encyclopedia of Education*, *3*(2), 37–43.

Bryk, A. S. (2010). Organizing schools for improvement. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *91*(7), 23–30. *https://doi.org/10.1177/003172171009100705*

Burkhardt, R.M. & Kane, J.T. (2012). Adult advocate. In *This We Believe in Action* (pp 148-158). Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE)

Cain, C., Natay, Q., Patton, K., & Price, N. (2022, February 18). How are staffing shortages affecting schools during the pandemic? *Brookings*. *https://www.brookings.edu/articles/how-are-staffing-shortages-affecting-schools-during-the-pandemic/*

Carr, D. (2003). A 'good death' for whom? Quality of spouse's death and psychological distress among older widowed persons. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 44(2),* 215. *https://doi.org/10.2307/1519809*

CDC. (2023). *Youth risk behavior survey data summary & trends report: 2011-2021*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/pdf/YRBS_Data-Summary-Trends_Report2023_508.pdf*

Chen, M. (2024). The impact of social-emotional learning interventions in teacher education. *Lecture Notes in Education Psychology and Public Media*, *36*. *https://doi.org/10.54254/2753-7048/36/20240409*

Clinton, J. M. (2020). *Love builds brains*. Tall Pine Press.

Cohen, J., Wong, V. C., Krishnamachari, A., & Erickson, S. (2024). Experimental evidence on the robustness of coaching supports in teacher education. *Educational Researcher*, *53*(1), 19–35. *https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X231198827*

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. (2008). *Social and emotional learning (SEL) and student benefits: Implications for the safe school/healthy students core elements*. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED505369.pdf

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). (n.d.). *CASEL'S SEL Framework*. CASEL. Retrieved March 28, 2024, from https://casel.org/casel-sel-framework-11-2020/

Crawford, L. (2012). *The advisory book: Building a community of learners grades 5-9 (2nd ed.).* The Origins Program.

Cushman, K. (1990). Are advisory groups essential? What they do, how they work. *Horace*, *7*(1), 8.

Dee, T. S. (2023, August 10). Higher chronic absenteeism threatens academic recovery from the covid-19 pandemic. *PNAS* https://doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/bfg3p

Delaware Department of Education. (2015). *Delaware met advisory curriculum*. Delaware Department of Education. https://www.doe.k12.de.us/cms/lib/DE01922744/Centricity/Domain/151/DEMetAdvisoryCurriculumPartOne.pdf

De Wit, D. J., Karioja, K., & Rye, B. J. (2010). Student perceptions of diminished teacher and classmate support following the transition to high school: Are they related to declining attendance? *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, *21*(4), 451–472. https://doi.org/10.1080/09243453.2010.532010

Diehl, D. K. (2021). Beyond the disposition and deliberation dichotomy: the interrelation of teacher habit and intention in the adoption of student advisories. *Sociological Inquiry*, *91*(1), 140–161. https://doi.org/10.1111/soin.12294

Diehl, D., & McFarland, D. A. (2012). Classroom ordering and the situational imperatives of routine and ritual. *Sociology of Education*, *85*(4), 326–349. *https://doi.org/10.1177/0038040712452093*

Diliberti, M., & Kaufman, J. H. (2020). Will this school year be another casualty of the pandemic? Key findings from the American Educator Panels Fall 2020 COVID-19 surveys. *RAND*.

Diliberti, M., & Schwartz, H. L. (2023). Educator Turnover Has Markedly Increased, but Districts Have Taken Actions to Boost Teacher Ranks: Selected Findings from the Sixth American School District Panel Survey. *RAND*. *https://doi.org/10.7249/RRA956-14*

Diliberti, M., Schwartz, H. L., & Grant, D. M. (2021). Stress topped the reasons why public school teachers quit, even before COVID-19. *RAND Corporation*.

Duckworth, A. L., Peterson, C., Matthews, M. D., & Kelly, D. R. (2007). Grit: Perseverance and passion for long-term goals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 92*(6), 1087–1101. *https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.92.6.1087*

Easton, L. B. (2008). From professional development to professional learning. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *89*(10), 755–756, 758–759, 761.

Epstein, J. L., Sanders, M. G., Sheldon, S. B., Simon, B. S., Salinas, K. C., Jansorn, N. R., Van Voorhis, F. L., Martin, C. S., Thomas, B. G., & Greenfeld, M. D. (2018). *School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action*. Corwin Press.

Ericsson, K. A. (2008). Deliberate practice and acquisition of expert performance: A general overview. *Academic Emergency Medicine*, *15*(11), 988–994. *https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1553-2712.2008.00227.x*

Fletcher, D., & Sarkar, M. (2013). Psychological resilience: A review and critique of definitions, concepts, and theory. *European Psychologist*, *18*(1), 12–23. *https://doi.org/10.1027/1016-9040/a000124*

Frank, T. J., Powell, M. G., View, J. L., Lee, C., Bradley, J. A., & Williams, A. (2021). Exploring racialized factors to understand why black mathematics teachers consider leaving the profession. *Educational Researcher*, *50*(6), 381–391. *https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X21994498*

Furrer, C., & Skinner, E. (2003). Sense of relatedness as a factor in children's academic engagement and performance. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 95*(1), 148–162. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.95.1.148

Galassi, J. P., Gulledge, S. A., & Cox, N. D. (1997). Middle school advisories: retrospect and prospect. *Review of educational research*, *67*(3), 301–338. *https://doi.org/10.2307/1170567*

Galassi, J. P., Gulledge, S. A., & Cox, N. D. (1998). *Advisory: Definitions, descriptions, decisions, directions*. National Middle School Association.

Geeraerts, K., Tynjälä, P., Heikkinen, H. L. T., Markkanen, I., Pennanen, M., & Gijbels, D. (2015). Peer-group mentoring as a tool for teacher development. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 38*(3), 358–377. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2014.983068

Glasser, W. (1998*). Choice theory: A new psychology of personal freedom*. Random House.

Goffman, E. (1967). *Interaction ritual: Essays on face-to-face behavior*. Pantheon.

Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience*. Harper and Row.

Goffman, E. (1981). *Forms of talk.* University of Pennsylvania Press.

Goldhaber, D., Lavery, L., & Theobald, R. (2015). Uneven playing field? Assessing the teacher quality gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students. *Educational Researcher*, *44*(5), 293–307. *https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X15592622*

Goldhaber, D., Strunk, K. O., Brown, N., Naito, N., & Wolff, M. (2020). Teacher staffing challenges in California: Examining the uniqueness of rural school districts. *AERA Open*, *6*(3), 233285842095183. *https://doi.org/10.1177/2332858420951833*

Grant, K. L., Simmons, M. B., & Davey, C. G. (2018). Three nontraditional approaches to improving the capacity, accessibility, and quality of mental health services: An overview. *Psychiatric Services*, *69*(5), 508–516. *https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ps.201700292*

Grossman, P., Compton, C., Shahan, E., Ronfeldt, M., Igra, D., & Shaing, J. (2007). Preparing practitioners to respond to resistance: a cross-professional view. *Teachers and Teaching*, *13*(2), 109–123. *https://doi.org/10.1080/13540600601152371*

Gutentag, T., & Asterhan, C. S. C. (2022). Burned-out: Middle school teachers after one year of online remote teaching during COVID-19. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *13*, 802520. *https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.802520*

Haidt, J. (2024). *The anxious generation: How the great rewiring of childhood is causing an epidemic of mental illness*. Penguin Press.

Hamre, B. K., & Pianta, R. C. (2001). Early teacher–child relationships and the trajectory of children's school outcomes through eighth grade. *Child Development*, *72*(2), 625–638. *https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8624.00301*

Harris, L. (1985). Metropolitan life poll of the American teacher. *Metropolitan Life Foundation*.

Hattie, J. (2009). *Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement.* Routledge.

Hattie, J., Biggs, J., & Purdie, N. (1996). Effects of learning skills interventions on student learning: A meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research*, *66*(2), 99–136. *https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543066002099*

Hofstede, G. H. (2001). *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions, and organizations across nations (2nd)*. Sage Publications.

Hopkins, B. (2004). *Just schools: A whole school approach to restorative justice*. Jessica Kingsley.

Howard, F. (2008). Managing stress or enhancing wellbeing? Positive psychology's contributions to clinical supervision. *Australian Psychologist*, *43*(2), 105–113. *https://doi.org/10.1080/00050060801978647*

Ingersol, R. (2008). *Who controls teachers' work: Power and accountability in America's schools.* Harvard University Press.

Jackson, Y. (2015). *Pedagogy of confidence: Inspiring high intellectual performance in urban schools.* Hawker Brownlow Education.

Jacob, B. A. (2007). The challenges of staffing urban schools with effective teachers. *The Future of Children*, *17*(1), 129–153.

Jakubowski, T. D., & Sitko-Dominik, M. M. (2021). Teachers' mental health during the first two waves of the COVID-19 pandemic in Poland. *PLOS ONE*, *16*(9). *https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0257252*

Jennings, G. (2003). An exploration of meaningful participation and caring relationships as contexts for school engagement. *The California School Psychologist, 8*(1), 43–51. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF03340895

Johnson, B. (2009). Linchpins or lost time: Creating effective advisories. *Horace*, *25*. *https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ868298*

Jurado, M. B., & Rosselli, M. (2007). The elusive nature of executive functions: A review of our current understanding. *Neuropsychology Review*, *17*, 213–233.

Kilbride, T., Strunk, K. O., Rogers, S., Anderson, J., & Turner, M. (2021). *Michigan teacher shortage study: Initial Report. https://epicedpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Teacher-Workforce-Rptv2_Jan2022.pdf*.

Kilbride, T., Strunk, K. O., Rogers, S., & Wasif, U. (2023). *Tracking progress through Michigan's teacher pipeline*. EPIC.

Klassen, R. M., Yerdelen, S., & Durksen, T. L. (2013). Measuring teacher engagement: Development of the Engaged Teachers Scale (ETS). *Frontline Learning Research*, *1*(2), 33–52. *https://doi.org/10.14786/flr.v1i2.44*

Klem, A. M., & Connell, J. P. (2004). Relationships matter: Linking teacher support to student engagement and achievement. *Journal of School Health*, *74*(7), 262–273. *https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1746-1561.2004.tb08283.x*

Kraft, M. A, & Lyon, M.A.. (2024). The rise and fall of the teaching profession: Prestige, interest, preparation, and satisfaction over the last half century. *EdWorkingPaper: 22-679. https://doi.org/10.26300/7B1A-VK92*

Kudlats, J., & Brown, K. M. (2021). Knowing kids makes a huge difference, Part I: Exploring the principal. *Journal of School Leadership*, *31*(5), 428–450. *https://doi.org/10.1177/1052684620923080*

Latterman, K., & Steffes, S. (2017). *Tackling teacher and principal shortages in rural areas*. National Conference of State Legislatures.

Lavery, L. (2008). *Self-regulated learning for academic success: An evaluation of instructional techniques.* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Auckland]. *https://researchspace.auckland.ac.nz/handle/2292/5914*

Long, M., Verbeke, W., Ein-Dor, T., & Vrtička, P. (2020). A functional neuro-anatomical model of human attachment (NAMA): Insights from first- and second-person social neuroscience. *Cortex, 126*, 281–321. *https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cortex.2020.01.010*

Lowe, K. (2021, September 8). Michigan teacher shortage fueled by pandemic, lack of resources and policy input. *Up North Live*. *https://upnorthlive.com/news/local/michigan-teacher-shortage-fueled-by-pandemic-lack-of-resources-and-policy-input*

Mac Iver, D. J., & Epstein, J. L. (1991). Responsive practices in the middle grades: Teacher teams, advisory groups, remedial instruction, and school transition programs. *American Journal of Education*, *99*(4), 587–622. *https://doi.org/10.1086/443999*

Marshall, C., Rossman, G. B., & Blanco, G. L. (2022). *Designing qualitative research* (Seventh edition, international student edition). SAGE.

Marzano, R. J. (2003). *What works in schools: Translating research into action*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

McClure, L. V., Yonezawa, S., & Jones, M. (2010). Can school structures improve teacher-student relationships? The relationship between advisory programs, personalization and students' academic achievement. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, *18*, 17. *https://doi.org/10.14507/epaa.v18n17.2010*

McEwin, C. K., & Greene, M. W. (2010). Results and recommendations from the 2009 national surveys of randomly selected and highly successful middle level schools. *Middle School Journal*, *42*(1), 49–63.

McGuiness, J. B. (1982). *Planned pastoral care: A guide for teachers*. McGraw-Hill.

Michigan Revised School Code Act, 451 M.C.L. §380.1280a (1976 & 1993). *http://legislature.mi.gov/doc.aspx?mcl-380-1280a*

Michigan State School Aid Act of 1979, 94 § 31(a) (2024). *https://www.legislature.mi.gov/Laws/MCL?objectName=mcl-388-1631a*

MiSchoolData. (2023, November 26). *Education dashboard: Student Outcomes*. *https://www.mischooldata.org/dashboard/*

Modan, N. (2023, February 15). CDC calls on schools to help address historic high teen trauma. *K-12 Dive*. *https://www.k12dive.com/news/CDC-mental-health-teen-girls-survey/642821/*

Moeder-Chandler, M. (2018). School Counselor led school wide advisory program effectiveness. *SAGE Open*, *8*(3). *https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244018792607*

Moodley, R., Chiclana, F., Carter, J., & Caraffini, F. (2020). Using data mining in educational administration: A case study on improving school attendance. *Applied Sciences*, *10*(9). *https://doi.org/10.3390/app10093116*

Myrick, R. D., Highland, M., & Highland, B. (1986). Preparing teachers to be advisors. *Middle School Journal*. *https://doi.org/10.1080/00940771.1986.11495754*

National Education Association (NEA). (2018). *Myths and facts about educator pay.* *https://www.nea.org/resource-library/teacher-compensation-fact-vs-fiction*

NCES. (2015). Public school teacher attrition and mobility in the first five years: Results from the first through fifth waves of the 2007-2008. *Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study*. *https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2015/2015337.pdf*

NCES. (2020). *Characteristics of public-school teachers*. *https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_clr.asp*

NCES. (2022). *The nation's report card: 2022 reading state snapshot report Michigan grade four public schools*.

NCES. (2023). *School pulse panel: May 2022 results*. *https://ies.ed.gov/schoolsurvey/spp/*

NCES. (2024). *School pulse panel: September 2024 results*. *https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/spp/results.asp*

Niska, J. M. (2014). A study of the impact of professional development on middle level advisors. *RMLE Online*, *37*(5), 1–14. *https://doi.org/10.1080/19404476.2014.11462108*

Niska, J. M., & Thompson, S. C. (2007). *Launching a successful advisory program: Professional development kit*. National Middle School Association.

Noddings, N. (2005). *The challenge to care in schools: An alternative approach to education (2nd edition)*. Teachers College Press.

Noddings, N. (2013). The false promise of the paideia: A critical review of the paideia proposal. In D. J. Flinders & S. J. Thornton (Eds.), *The curriculum studies reader* (4th ed., pp. 187–194).

Northouse, P. G. (2019). *Leadership: Theory and practice* (8th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Oakes, J. (2005). *Keeping track: How schools structure inequality* (2nd ed.). Yale University Press.

Packwood, S., Hodgetts, H. M., & Tremblay, S. (2011). A multiperspective approach to the conceptualization of executive functions. *Journal of Clinical and Experimental Neuropsychology*, *33*(4), 456–470. *https://doi.org/10.1080/13803395.2010.533157*

Pathmarajah, M. (2019). Comparative case study methodology and teacher education. In M. Pathmarajah, *Oxford research Encyclopedia of Education*. Oxford University Press.

Phillippo, K. (2013). *Advisory in urban high schools: A study of expanded teacher roles*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Pressley, T. (2021). Factors contributing to teacher burnout during COVID-19. *Educational Researcher*, *50*(5), 325–327.

Quin, D. (2017). Longitudinal and contextual associations between teacher–student relationships and student engagement: A systematic review. *Review of Educational Research*, *87*(2), 345–387. *https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654316669434*

Räsänen, K., Pietarinen, J., Pyhältö, K., Soini, T., & Väisänen, P. (2020). Why leave the teaching profession? A longitudinal approach to the prevalence and persistence of teacher turnover intentions. *Social Psychology of Education*, *23*, 837–859.

Redding, C., & Nguyen, T. D. (2024). Teacher working conditions and dissatisfaction before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Educational Researcher*. *https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X241232657*

Roorda, D. L., & Bosman, R. J. (2022). What if I don't like all of them? A person-centered approach to examine student–teacher relationships in the first year of secondary school. *The Journal of Early Adolescence*. *https://doi.org/10.1177/02724316221088755*

Roorda, D. L., Koomen, H. M. Y., Spilt, J. L., & Oort, F. J. (2011). The influence of affective teacher-student relationships on students' school engagement and achievement: A meta-analytic approach. *Review of Educational Research*, *81*(4), 493–529. *https://www.jstor.org/stable/41408670*

SAMHSA. (2023). Mental health client-level data: Annual detailed tables, 2017–2022. *Substance and Mental Health Services Administration*.

https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt45306/2022-mhcld-annual-detailed-tables.pdf

Sewell Jr, W. H., & Sewell, W. H. (2005). *Logics of history: Social theory and social transformation*. University of Chicago Press.

Shulkind, S. B., & Foote, J. (2009). Creating a culture of connectedness through middle school advisory programs. *Middle School Journal*, *41*(1), 20–27. *https://doi.org/10.1080/00940771.2009.11461700*

Sizer, T. R. (2004). *Horace's compromise: The dilemma of the American high school*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

State of Michigan Department of Education. (2021). *Clarity on 75 percent attendance requirement*. *https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/2021/11/18/Seventy-Five_Percent_Attendance_.pdf?rev=8eb450e391324ebabe22e05b704e1da1*

Taleb, N. (2012). *Antifragile: Things that gain from disorder*. Random House.

Thompson, K. F., & Homestead, E. R. (2004). Middle school organization through the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. *Middle School Journal*, *35*(3), 56–60. *https://doi.org/10.1080/00940771.2004.11461433*

Torpey, E. (2020). *Education level and projected openings, 2019–29 Career Outlook*. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, October 2020. *https://www.bls.gov/careeroutlook/2020/article/education-level-and-openings.htm#s4*

Underwood, K. (2019, August 28). Why America needs more black male teachers. *Ed Surge*. *https://www.edsurge.com/news/2019-08-28-why-america-needs-more-black-male-teachers*

Wang, L. (2022). Exploring the relationship among teacher emotional intelligence, work engagement, teacher self-efficacy, and student academic achievement: A moderated mediation model. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *12*, 810559. *https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.810559*

Wasser Gish, J. (2023, October 4). Schools are 100k counselors short: Here's a new approach to student mental health. *Washington Post*. *https://www.the74million.org/article/schools-are-100k-counselors-short-heres-a-new-approach-to-student-mental-health/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=rasa_io&utm_campaign=newsletter*

Waters, M. (Director). (2004). *Mean girls* [DVD]. Paramount Pictures.

Winters, M. A., Haight, R. C., Swaim, T. T., & Pickering, K. A. (2013). The effect of same-gender teacher assignment on student achievement in the elementary and secondary grades: Evidence from panel data. *Economics of Education Review*, *34*, 69–75. *https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2013.01.007*

Wood, C. L., Goodnight, C. I., Bethune, K. S., Preston, A. I., & Cleaver, S. L. (2016). Role of professional development and multi-level coaching in promoting evidence-based practice in education. *Learning Disabilities: A Contemporary Journal*, *14*(2), 159–171.

Yin, R. K. (2017). *Case study research and applications: design and methods* (6th edition). SAGE Publications, Inc.

Zamarro, G., Camp, A., Fuchsman, D., & McGee, J. B. (2021, September 8). How the pandemic has changed teachers' commitment to remaining in the classroom. *Brookings*. *https://www.brookings.edu/articles/how-the-pandemic-has-changed-teachers-commitment-to-remaining-in-the-classroom/*

Appendix A: Documents Obtained from Case Locations for the Purpose of This Study

This appendix provides documentation of the artifacts collected, interviews performed, and observations carried out. Dates and times are reported in the researcher's time zone.

Location 1

1. Recruiting email with administrator – May 31, 2024
2. Student surveys related to advisory for high school grades – June 18, 2024
3. Study surveys related to advisory in middle school grades – June 18, 2024
4. Interview with administrator participant labeled L1A1 – August 14, 2024
5. Interview with teacher participant labeled L1T1 – October 12, 2024
6. Interview with teacher participant labeled L1T2 – October 15, 2024
7. Interview with teacher participant labeled L1T3 – October 17, 2024
8. Student demographic information chart from teacher handbook – October 25, 2024

Location 2

9. Initial recruiting email with district – April 29, 2024
10. Face-to-face recruiting conversation with administration – May 29, 2024
11. Interview with administrator participant labeled L2A1 – June 20, 2024
12. Interview with administrator participant labeled L2A2 – August 23, 2024
13. Staff and student advisory expectations poster – August 23, 2024

14. Student passes for middle school advisory – August 23, 2024
15. Interview with union president and classroom teacher labeled L2T1 – September 12, 2024
16. Letter of understanding between Location 2 Union and Board of Education regarding advisory formation – September 12, 2024
17. Interview with teacher participant labeled L2T2 – October 3, 2024
18. Interview with teacher participant labeled L2T3 – October 11, 2024

Location 3

19. District Board of Education advisory program approval document – Obtained February 2022
20. Initial involvement letter (email with school administration) – February 21, 2022
21. Administrator interview (performed through Google Meet) – February 25, 2022
22. Observation of high school advisory classes – March 8, 2022
23. Union Representative/Teacher Advisory Leader interview – April 8, 2022
24. Initial email outreach with principal for study participation – April 12, 2024
25. Planning documents for advisory in the upcoming year – June 12, 2024
26. Interview with administrator participant labeled L3A1 – September 24, 2024
27. Interview with teacher participant labeled L3T1 – October 14, 2024
28. Interview with teacher participant labeled L3T2 – October 16, 2024
29. Participant created document for student weekly academic planning – October 17, 2024

Appendix B: Informed Consent Form

Teacher Perceptions of advisory preparation in secondary school

HUM# 00254818

Principal Investigator: P. Eric Bottorff, Ed.S., University of Michigan Dearborn.

pbottorf@umich.edu

Faculty Advisor: Professor Paul Fossum, Ph.D., University of Michigan Dearborn.

pfossum@umich.edu

You are invited to participate in a research study about perceptions of teachers and administrators in the use of advisory programs in secondary schools. Advisory may also be called homeroom, homebase, pastoral care, etc.

If you agree to be part of the research study, you will be asked to reflect on aspects of your own professional practice, perceptions of educational practices, and interact with the researcher through interviews.

There are no expected direct benefits associated with this study.

There are no expected risks or discomfort associated with this study.

Participating in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you decide to participate now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. You may choose not to continue with an interview for any reason.

I will protect the confidentiality of your research records by anonymizing your responses through the use of a pseudonym.

Your research information will be stored electronically on the cloud; the term "cloud" refers to large computers located in different parts of the world where individuals may keep and remotely access their personal and professional files. Each cloud service has its own policies and methods for preventing unauthorized individuals from accessing files stored on their cloud servers. The cloud service used to store files associated with this study meets University of Michigan protection standards.

If you have questions about this research study, please contact P. Eric Bottorff (*pbottorf@umich.edu*).

As part of their review, the University of Michigan Institutional Review Board Health Sciences and Behavioral Sciences has determined that this study is no more than minimal risk and exempt from on-going IRB oversight.

Appendix C: Notice of Exemption

Subject: Notice of Exemption for [HUM00254818]

SUBMISSION INFORMATION:
Title: Teacher impressions of advisory preparation in secondary schools
Full Study Title (if applicable):
Study eResearch ID: *HUM00254818*
Date of this Notification from IRB: 5/29/2024
Date of IRB Exempt Determination: 5/29/2024
UM Federalwide Assurance: FWA00004969 (For the current FWA expiration date, please visit the *UM HRPP Webpage*)
OHRP IRB Registration Number(s):

IRB EXEMPTION STATUS:
The IRB HSBS has reviewed the study referenced above and determined that, as currently described, it is exempt from ongoing IRB review, per the following federal exemption category:
EXEMPTION 2(i) and/or 2(ii) at 45 CFR 46.104(d):
Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) **if at least one of the following criteria is met**:

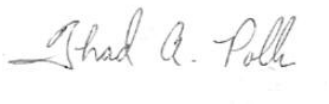
(i) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that **the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained**, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects;

(ii) Any disclosure of the **human subjects' responses** outside the research **would not reasonably place the subjects at risk** of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation
Note that the study is considered exempt as long as any changes to the use of human subjects (including their data) remain within the scope of the exemption category above. Any proposed changes that may exceed the scope of this category, or the approval conditions of any other non-IRB reviewing committees, must be submitted as an amendment through eResearch.

Although an exemption determination eliminates the need for ongoing IRB review and approval, you still have an obligation to understand and abide by generally accepted principles of responsible and ethical conduct of research. Examples of these principles can be found in the Belmont Report as well as in guidance from professional societies and scientific organizations.

SUBMITTING AMENDMENTS VIA eRESEARCH:
You can access the online forms for amendments in the eResearch workspace for this exempt study, referenced above.

ACCESSING EXEMPT STUDIES IN eRESEARCH:
Click the "Exempt and Not Regulated" tab in your eResearch home workspace to access this exempt study.



Thad Polk
Chair, IRB HSBS

Appendix D: Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1) What is your classroom experience?
    a. Years, subject, level
    b. If Administrator, experience at administrative level?
    c. Did your prior experience include advisory? (expand)
2) What is the structure of your advisory program?
    a. Probe for:
        i. When is it offered, for how long?
        ii. What is the focus? Affective, academic, or flexible?
        iii. What is the curriculum/hidden curriculum?
    b. Follow up:
        i. When was it incorporated into the day?
        ii. What process was involved in adopting the program?
3) What, if any, do you feel is the focus of a "perfect" advisory program?
    a. Alternate: What does the ideal advisory look like?
4) What trainings or preparation do staff receive to act in their advisor role?
    a. What do you feel is needed?
    b. If training is provided, how would it best be delivered and received?

5) What do you feel are strengths of the advisory program offered in your school?
    a. Probe for:
        i. Student focused
        ii. Prep-time
        iii. Established purpose
6) What do you think is the value of the advisory program in your school?
    a. Follow up: what would you change about it?
7) What is a story from your advisory program that you feel exemplifies the program?
8) Are there any aspects regarding your advisory program that you wish to share that I have not covered?
9) Do you think this focus (academic/social) should be the focus or should it go in a different direction?
10) What differences have you seen in the students since starting this program? What about teachers?
11) Have you seen informal teacher student relationship building taking place as part of this advisory program?
12) Has the advisory program been a worthwhile investment of time and resources?