Jen Walsh :

From the American School Counselor Association, this is, I Hear You Say, a podcast for school counselors and other leaders in education. I'm Jen Walsh, director of education and training here at ASCA. Pernicious occurrences like a global health pandemic and social unrest tied to structural racism, inequality, inequity, and injustice, have illustrated how essential schools can be for a great number of people, given that schools are intended to provide learning and social opportunities to youth, serve as a resource for career exploration and development and impart appropriate social and mental health care. These essential ingredients to schools are supported by a variety of educational professionals, especially school counselors who act as both educators and counselors in the delivery of services pertaining to student learning, social emotional growth and career development. Today we're joined by Dr. Ian Levy and Dr. Matthew Lemberger-Truelove.

Dr. Levy is an assistant professor of school counseling at Manhattan College, New York City native and former high school counselor. His research explores preparing school counselors to use hip hop based interventions to support youth development. Most notably Dr. Levy piloted the development implementation and evaluation of a hip hop based counseling framework, which has been featured in the New York Times, CNN and published in a variety of reputable academic journals.

Dr. Matthew Lemberger-Truelove is a professor of counselor education at the University of North Texas. He is the current editor of the Journaling of Counseling and Development, the immediate past editor of the Journal of Humanistic Counseling and the senior associate editor of the Journal of Child and Adolescent Counseling. Dr. Lemberger-Truelove is interested in culturally responsive, evidence-based school counseling practices and outcomes and the development and validation of the advocating student within environment approach, which is one of only a few empirically supported theoretical approaches tailored specifically for school counseling.

Welcome Dr. Levy and Dr. Lemberger-Truelove. I hear you say that the combined identity as educator, counselor can affect roles and responsibilities associated with school counseling.

Ian Levy:

Yeah, I think this is a great place to start Jen, and thank you so much for having us both on to talk about this special issue. Matthew and I had a lot of discussions about this non dual identity that we'll get into a lot. And I guess they theoretically stem from the understanding that the school counselor is always pulling from both their educator and counselor identity. And oftentimes they might be led to believe that they're pulling from one or the other, and we wanted to be very clear in this entire special issue in our intro specifically in saying that they're always both. And this is actually something that we believe very strongly sets the school counselor apart from any other ancillary mental health professional.

And I say that to say, if you think about something like collaboration with families or communities, something that is inherently wedded to the school, counselor's role, that in and of itself is an educational task, it is a task that is connected to schools as ecosystems and our roles within schools. However, the way that the school counselor in comparison to other educators within the building engages with family and community is through the lens of a counselor. And that sets us apart from other educators, but also sets us apart from other counselors or mental health professionals. And so we really wanted to be clear, looking at school counseling as a standalone profession that is always educator and always counselor in this combined way.

Matthew Lemberger-Truelove:

Yeah, I pretty much echo the same point. There's something unique about the situatedness of a school counselor that affects the disposition of their daily activities. And yet there are many occasions when they're pulled into these identities and they're compelled to oscillate between the two. And yet even in that oscillation, if you really consider what a school counselor does and what's expected of them, that dual identity seems to percolate to the top and you think of a classical counseling role. When you're counseling as a school counselor, it's always tethered to the educational mission of the school or the fact that this is a student who has come from a classroom, will be interfacing with peer students and a teacher in the very near future after a formal counseling session with the school counselor.

And so therefore there always has to be this immediate relevance. So it changes not just what the school counselor does, and it certainly does that as well, but it also changes the topic of the conversation, it influences the types of counseling behaviors that would be performed. And so it just became quite apparent that these really helpful heuristics that we'd use to inform our identity, weren't sufficient as discreet from each other. And instead, what we suggested was is that this educator, counselor, dual identity is really informed by this deep situatedness.

Jen Walsh :

We know that the ASCA national model contains a series of strategies and activities that operationalize the direct and indirect services generally provided by school counselors, such as appraisal and advising, collaboration, consultation, counseling, instruction, leadership, and advocacy and referrals. All of these strategies and activities contribute to the school climate and outcomes, but without a coherent frame for how these strategies and activities pertain to a unified school counselor identity confusion about the utility of school counseling, both within and outside of the profession can happen.

Ian Levy:

Absolutely. And there's tons of directions that one could go in thinking about this and on my mind right now is how I came into the profession. So I went to a master's program where many of my professors who were counselor educators were not school counselor educators. So they either were heavily clinical and they were practicing LMHCs in some case, but in other cases, they were counseling psychologists, and my program existed as a master's feeder into a doctoral program in counseling psychology. And why is this relevant? Well, this is relevant because as a master's student, I was getting trained very well with regards to my clinical skills, but I learned to see myself as somebody who then would enter a school environment, not as an educator, but as solely a counselor.

And then I'm now compelled to cling to that identity, I'm confused when I'm asked to not have a manageable caseload that is conducive to long-term ongoing counseling. I'm not able to really stay within my office and do a lot of work within that space or run a groups maybe as often as I would like to. And I'm not saying that we should not be able to run groups or things like this, but what I am saying is that I think the nature of how I even entered the profession forced me to privilege my counselor identity over that of an educator. And only over time did I learn about my educator identity, but then the flip side is also true when we're almost forcing the school counselor to become too much of an educator, where then they're divorced from their counseling identity.

Matthew Lemberger-Truelove:

We even see this upon post-graduation. And one of our articles in the special issue, that was led by Emily Goodman-Scott, and some of her colleagues, they had talked with district level school counseling supervisors, and you see that dichotomous way of looking at identity as educator or counselor really coming out in the qualitative themes that they ascertained. And you see school counselors oftentimes get really disenchanted because they're having to perform that constant oscillation based on circumstance or based upon external pressure of an administrator, whether it be a principal or the demand of a particular circumstance. And there is something useful, I think, to those identities as discrete when thinking about them as emphases, but really that's the outer edge of their usefulness, because when you're a school counselor, it really affects each and every behavior.

It affects how we conceptualize our work, it affects the nature of our conversations, it affects how we look at ourselves in terms of what outcomes to anticipate. And reifying one identity or another as an absolute really delimits all of those various things that we know school counselors do on a daily basis. Also, it's not just a trivial issue, there are so many incredible things that are going on now, and yet how a school counselor operates in a school, we think that this framework has consistent, pertinence. This conversation has been going on for a long time, but it's still incredibly pertinent in terms of training, but then also in terms of the practice behaviors expected of school counselors.

Jen Walsh :

How might reshaping the narrative to suggest that school counselors and educators who are oriented by counseling, have the potential to solve much of the role ambiguity that has existed in the profession?

Ian Levy:

Well, yeah, building on what Matthew was just suggesting. What is the role of the school counselor when it comes to something like mental health? We always love to, rightfully so, suggest the school counselor is a mental health professional, and I am in complete agreement with that. But I think that the way that as educators and counselors, we are different than other mental health professionals is in the way that we address mental health. And that is, it is always bound to being preventative, being developmental and not being reactive. And I think that a lot of the role ambiguity for me, and then Matthew and I have discussed this quite a bit, comes from this thought that in order to engage in mental health work, you have to be responding to the emergence of a concern.

And that it's not this ongoing, it's oftentimes pathologized, it's very deficit oriented, it's very, even therapy as a construct, is inherently reactive. And so how do we think about our work as developmental, which we know, ASCA has done a great job at really detailing that we are inherently a developmental professional, but that, I think, is what helps with our role ambiguity. As a school counselor and as we engage in these educational tasks through counseling, we're naturally bound development and bound to prevention. And we are, in that way, part of creating mental health systems and positive mental health systems, but in a very different way than another professional in the building, like a social worker, or a school psychologist, or a licensed mental health counselor might be, because we are trained to engage in more of a developmental way, in a more education bound and situated way.

Matthew Lemberger-Truelove:

Yeah, I want to press on that same point even prior to you framing it that way I was thinking. I think many school counselors and in many cases rightly, are concerned that our kindred mental health providers are infiltrating schools and that that will displace the school counselor. And while I think that we certainly have to heed any caution that that might occur and that school counselors are placed erroneously in these quasi administrative positions, I think if we really focus on that identity, the counselor identity within that non dual scheme, it clearly illustrates that school counselors consistently focus on those things that make us unique, re counseling. And that is again, that development, prevention and wellness.

And so what does that look like, brass tacks, when a school counselor is in a school? Well, helping build capacities in students when we're performing direct services, rather than just responding to this particular episode that has occurred in their lives. Now that's not to suggest that we can't be responsive when those things occur, but it's always going to be to the advantage of the young person and also the counselor, that if they have already worked on those resilience or those life skills in advance, and this is that preventative part, in the scheme of their ongoing development, that any responsive work is only going to be amplified and made better and more effectual. In a similar way, when there are some of these confusions that other players in the school, like teachers or administrators might have, this helps minimize that ambiguity because we know that the school counselor is really satisfying a mental health need that is not satisfied really in any other place.

And so this actually even in some ways transcends the single school unit. I mean, this, I think, helps minimize some of the ambiguity that we've endured as a profession over many, many decades, even beyond just a single school or a single district, or even single state. Because what we know from the literature is that preventative based work generally is more effective, and yet it's really hard to capture that as empirically substantiated because you're looking at longitudinal effects. And even if there are effects, the best outcomes you can anticipate is that you don't see disturbances, where the kid was, that pristine internal capacity doesn't get knocked off course because of the various stressors or various impediments in their lives.

And so when you're looking at development, you're really anticipating that there's that natural progression over the course of time. And so you're not necessarily going to see the value of that, but then if school counselors occupied this role as a unified identity, it really not only benefits that perceived ambiguity of what exactly does the school counselor do. It then suggests that there is a mental health provider, an educator who provides these wraparound services that otherwise won't be met because either as a society, we haven't necessarily valued them, or we haven't found a way to formalize them.

Jen Walsh :

So when you talk about preventative work, are we really talking about that tier one level?

Matthew Lemberger-Truelove:

That's a great question. So I think primarily, yes, the short answer, but I also think that we get a bit shortsighted in that way, because even those spontaneous things that aren't so formal, tend to be preventative. So for example, if you've cultivated a strong relationship and what we know from the literature of the strong relationship, and that's not just does the person who you're working with like you, but it's things such as the installation of hope, is it culturally responsive, so on and so forth, but those common factors is all predicated on this idea of a quality relationship.

You can work with a kid spontaneously, you can give a high five to a kid who has profound anxiety, whether that's unbeknownst to you, that activity, that brief moment actually potentially prevents, or at least it's beneficial in generative ways, well beyond just what they might be coming to talk about as a specific case. So yes, it certainly is primarily those formal things that school counselors do that help build up and work across classes and work across different topical areas, but I also think it's preventative in spirit as much as it is in activity.

Jen Walsh :

You also mentioned that sometimes it's hard to quantify this type of work. To me, when you say that, that makes me think of just the model and how that could be helpful in doing that.

Matthew Lemberger-Truelove:

When I described that, it's hard to quantify, but in terms of the work as a school counselor, it's very practical and I wouldn't want anyone to be disenchanted by the difficulties, and I think the national model does a great job of giving a number of resources and specific recommendations of how one might do this. Where it becomes challenging is showing causation from a clearly scientific perspective, but there are ways to do this. I think from a practical perspective, you can show, as a school counselor, development by tracking progress with students in a variety of ways. I think that the ASCA mindsets and behaviors is a great place for many school counselors to start. And there's very effective ways looking at castle, for example, using some of their assessment instruments, and you can track on student growth over long periods of time and compare that to either students who have not had formal exposure to the types of deliveries that the school counselors are doing in schools, or even just as comparison to national norms and those types of things.

Jen Walsh :

Could reshaping the narrative, sharpen practice and contribute to greater student and school-wide outcomes?

Matthew Lemberger-Truelove:

We draw from a great variety of professions and it's been very helpful for school counselors, but we, as school counselors, there's just unique ways in which we are challenged in the school. And so therefore I think our frameworks have to fit what we do as school counselors very specifically. Looking at things such as depressive episodes, we know students can feel melancholy and experience the typical and sometimes atypical doldrums, and that affects in school behaviors and learning outcomes. But that's not always the language, our peer educators don't always use that same nomenclature, they're not always trained in the same ways and so is it really helpful? And so having frameworks that is conversant both within what we know is useful as counselors, but then also something that's relatable to the people who are with the students many hours out of the day, can also be helpful.

And so in terms of how a educator counselor identity can affect practice, that can help us really identify what practices can influence things. So going back to the ASCA mindsets and behaviors is a great example, we know that students regulatory capacities, how they experience themselves and themselves in relationship to external stimuli and how they regulate their emotion in response to those, affects not only their social development, but it also affects learning outcomes. And so a school counselor who is informed by this non dual identity, would tailor interventions to say, if I work in ameliorating the classroom environment by doing consultation with a teacher, and if I simultaneously help the young person develop some type of response to stressful situations, the reflectivity between those interventions, as informed by my non dual identity, it's more likely going to contribute to positive learning outcomes, it's more likely to contribute to a hospitable feelings of connection between the student and the adult.

And that's what we've shown. And so pointing to one particular article that we included in the special issue, and we performed an intervention using combined social emotional learning, and mindfulness based interventions with children in a economically depressed environment and adapted those interventions so that it fit with the context of what a school counselor does. And so fewer sessions than what was typically delivered in other settings, and catered to classroom settings, and then had complimentary consultation training sessions with the teacher so that there could be reflective experiences. So anything that the students were exposed to, the teacher could then help reinforce and celebrate when it was germane to the students in the classroom outside of the counseling sessions.

And what we found was is that not only did that improve a number of things, it improved social curiosity, which other literatures have shown influences a great variety of student outcomes, similarly it improved feelings of connectedness to the school that has similar associations, and then what we call the executive functions, and that is those neuro phenomenological experiences of self-regulation. So basically how we make purposeful decisions and regulate ourselves so that we can get back into making purposeful decisions when we're sometimes confronted by challenging circumstances. And so we saw significant improvements in each of those areas, based upon a five session classroom guidance unit with the students, and then five sessions with consultation with the teachers. But then we also saw that each of those also predicted outcomes on a standardized academic test.

And so those students in our treatment groups not only improved on these more proximal, psychological, and social skills, they also improved in their learning content. And yet we didn't talk about mathematics, we didn't talk about science, we didn't talk about social studies and yet the greatest improvements, in fact, our effect sizes were greater in those areas than they were even on the things that are talked about very explicitly in the ASCA mindsets and behaviors. And so I think it nicely illustrates that there are things that we can do that are really germane to our identity as counselors, and yet have incredible pertinence to an educational setting.

Ian Levy:

Yeah. Matthew, and I think in that one intervention, you see multiple school counseling tasks converging through counseling. And so there's consultation, there's instruction, there's attention to the thoughtfulness around how do you take a group counseling curriculum and develop it for instruction, for classroom instruction. These are all things that we know that school counselors have to do that are distinct from others, but it's not one which I think is also important here. And something that we tried to make clear is if I'm consulting, I'm not only consulting, all of the roles inform the other. And oftentimes not only am I educator and counselor, but I can engage in multiple educational tasks towards the same end, rooted in counseling.

And I think as you were describing it, I heard multiple different tasks, that all had to happen to make sure that a singular intervention could unfold in a way that supported students development. And I don't know how another professional other than a school counselor, could do that in the school building. And I mean that as an educator, but also as another mental health professional, I don't know how, even if you think from just the application to instruction requires pedagogical skills, but it requires the ability to adopt or adapt rather, a group curriculum to a more pedagogical setting and who else has that other than the school counselor. So I loved that paper and really all of the papers in the issue, because I think they detailed how while one task might be central, in this case in classroom instruction, other tasks like consultation, like attention to group work, in counseling and then rooted in development and prevention and wellness, all of that came to the fore..

Matthew Lemberger-Truelove:

Yeah. And it would be exhausting. I mean, if you think about it just from a day to day, what a school counselor endures, it would be exhausting to not have a cohesive, and when we say things like this, that it's non dual or grounded, we're not suggesting that we over essentialize what a school counselor does, but it would be exhausting to not have a coherent framework that in some ways tethers together all these things that we know school counselors do. Because in that example, yeah, you had to do work related to appraisal, we had to do work related to ... showing the efficacy of it is something parallel to what a school counselor does when they have to show the ways in which they're utilizing evidence-based practice in choosing an intervention, but then also on the backend, that they evaluated the efficacy of it.

And having a coherent frame to say, well, how do all of these things cohere with each other, but then also how do they fit within my disposition as a counselor, who's interested in prevention, wellness, and development and social justice, but then also are situated in the school so that a teacher finds them valuable. So they'll more likely want me to come into their classrooms or perform small group counseling or deliver consultation with them or perform advocacy work with the administrators, because there's that very clear pertinence and it would be exhausting, I think, and in fact, I know for many of my own anecdotal conversations with counselors, they feel that sense of exhaustion.

And while this is no panacea by any means, we believe that having a framework that is coherent in this way, can make us more efficient as a profession. So even maybe more important than minimizing the role ambiguity, making more efficient and more effective what a school counselor does because we can be really, really good at this identity, and it has pertinence to all these various manifestations that we know a school counselor is challenged to do on a daily basis.

Jen Walsh :

Based on what we have talked about already, I think the interrelatedness between educator and counselor is pretty evident, and how all practices must be relevant to that school environment. But what about the focus on development, justice, prevention and wellness?

Matthew Lemberger-Truelove:

So we've talked a lot about the counselor identity and how this particularly can inform practice, especially how it pertains to the choice of intervention, and Jen, you had rightly brought up is this indicative of tier one services. But I think it also can inform our work at the systems level, especially on the heels of COVID and that the awareness of the longstanding racial injustices that many students who have endured, that having this non dual identity compels a counselor, you unavoidably cannot look at the school as an ecosystem, as a total unit. And again, there's many different facets within that total ecosystem that have different ways of response that are required of a school counselor. And yet having this coherent frame compels the counselor to say, if I choose to do this, this is the implications that it might have on students as they exist in the total school culture.

We're not saying, here's the students who are struggling academically, let me work with them, as a isolate from the students who are also struggling with grief. Instead, we were looking, okay, how do all of these differing circumstances really affect the total school climate, and how do we advocate with different stakeholders so that we can have the greatest investment and the greatest yield in our efforts without overwhelming-

Ian Levy:

Yeah. And I think when we consider a lot of the incredible work that's being done right now, by the school counseling collective on anti-racist approaches, is this ability of school counselor to be really thoughtful about dis-aggregating data, understanding in what ways different school policies and practices and procedures, disproportionally marginalize specific groups of students, and in a lot of cases, mostly Black and Latinx students. And therefore, how can those policies be either gotten rid of, or how can new policies be created, that create an equitable playing field, an equitable opportunity and access within schools. And all of that is rooted in prevention and social justice and wellness.

If we're not creating environments where youth can come to school and have access and feel physically, even within the building, able to actualize and become their full selves and understand all of who they are, then we're not doing what we should be doing a school counselors. We're not actually upholding what counseling is, which is this, again, this development, this justice, this prevention, this wellness. And so I think when you think about right now, like Matthew was saying on the heels of COVID and amidst many movements that are necessary to celebrate and center Black lives and the mattering of Black lives and joy, the school counselor is such a crucial person to support that from a developmental and ecosystem perspective.

Matthew Lemberger-Truelove:

Yeah. I mean, really our hope for this special issue is, it's not to promulgate that there's a specific way to do school counseling, but we are suggesting that school counselors, that there is a framework that we can have as a given, a prior that as we approach all of these many different challenges that exist at the school level, at the student level, at the systems level independent of the school, that if there is a certain framework, that we come into these as an assumed predisposition of counselors, then again, we can be more efficient and more effective in our work, and we're not so reactive and responsive. And even in those situations where they're classically seen as responsive roles or roles that we have been compelled to occupy because maybe an administrator, because there's just a dearth of resources in our school district, that it can change the complexion because of those prior assumptions.

So not that I would suggest that school counselors just embrace lunch duty or all the things that are duties as assigned that take us away. But with this disposition, it can change how you do those things, we can apprehend every new opportunity in a different way. So that if a school, we know that inevitably kids are going to go to lunch and there's going to be things that don't go the way most adults would want them to go during the lunch period, because of this disposition, it can affect the way the counselor approaches hose duties, and that it can be actually helpful. I was expecting this adult to discipline me in, in a certain way, but instead really helped me figure out how to do this differently, was helpful and encouraging because of that unique situatedness as a, as an educator.

So things have to occur with a certain expected [inaudible 00:33:31] in a school, but because of that counselor orientation, they prevented it to escalate in a way that would cause more problems for the kid. They helped it become developmental so that the kid still is going to be seen as cool, and not just compliant to what all the adults want, but that they can still express themselves in a way that is appropriate within a school context, but then also appropriate within a context of peers. And I think only a counselor can do that, but only a counselor can do that if that school counselor has this awareness that is non-dualistic between, again, their situatedness as an educator at a school and their orientation as a counselor who is focused on prevention, development, wellness, and justice-

Ian Levy:

And Matthew, just quickly to add to that too, and I think this touches on something that we've discussed that might be, I don't know if controversial is the right word, but we talk about how we should not do certain things as a school counselor, like lunch duty is often thrown into there. And I think rightfully so in some instances, but as I think back on, what's not that long ago that I was practicing as a school counselor, but a few years ago, I did some of my best work while I was assigned lunch duty. I helped to collaborate with different Dean and aid staff that were working within that space, to students had created playlist, of songs that they liked that made them feel comfortable and at home within the space.

So we had created a physical environment that was inviting for students. It was oftentimes very game centered in the space, and that was important because I would have a lot of students who I'd be working on, I'd be running a small group, let's say, with some students around the development of specific social skills. And then we'd be able to say, okay, well today we're going to practice those social skills, to a student, I know you've been working on trying to have more conversations with some peers, and it's been really hard for you to develop friend groups and a social support system within the school. So I'm going to be up in the lunch room with you, and let's set you up to play some dominoes in the corner because I know that that's going down during lunch. And we'll set it up, I'll go play. There were ways that I could support students in building on things that we were doing in group work within that space.

And I say that to say, when we look at, a lot of the times our frustration with our role is often, that's not what I do, and yes, but if the school is going to make me do that, then can't I do that role and pull from everything that I know to make it this incredible space. And if I do that, can I then collect data around that? Can I then go back to my principal and say, hey, look at what I'm doing when you just throw me a little bit of time during lunch, imagine what I could do if I had more time to push into classrooms to do instruction, if I had more time to run some groups, imagine what else I could do.

And I think that there's a lot of value in that. And I think all of that is again, bound to what we've tried to push in this issue with regards to all of that is developmental. That doesn't look like, you see a counselor with some youth around a table with dominoes, that the naked eye might say that has nothing to do with counseling and the school counselor's role. But in fact it could actually be all of what we do.

Matthew Lemberger-Truelove:

As you were talking, it reminded me of an anecdote from my days as a high school counselor. And the one that came to mind was what's the most inappropriate duty oftentimes assigned to counselors and it's proctoring a standardized high stakes test. And my first year as a counselor, I remember there was a student who, when we were handing out the test and I walked into the room, they were already in there, sitting there, and she looked she was going to regurgitate. And as I handed her her test, she said something along the lines of thank you, I'm so glad it was you who handed me this, I feel so much better. I feel like I'm okay taking this. And this was a girl who was in one of, I can't recall if it was a classroom guidance activities using the student success skills program or a small group that I was performing as a school counselor.

But either of which were very much pertinent to, again, this relatedness between social emotional development and the student as a learner. That moment, it certainly wasn't me who did this, but it exemplified that she was able to be present, she was able to be focused on what she was able to do rather than just completely be mired and preoccupied by her test taking anxieties. And again, all that was precipitated on the work that I had done in direct services as a counselor, but it was reinforced by this duty that would have otherwise something that I would have abhorred doing. And so I saw the at least episodic value in that.

And I think that that's true for many counselors, and you put this so wisely, that then what happens is as we feel so disenchanted and with anything, we're like, oh, well if my principal or my administrator, my school district doesn't support me doing direct services, then I can only take so much rejection. I'm just going to fall in line and be compliant with the ways in which I'm being demanded to do this, because my career vitality is being pushed in this way. But instead if we have this reframe, if this framework that we're suggesting can be a slight change of perspective, it affects the behavior, the ways that we do the things that we do, whether they are in a classroom as consistent with the national model, but then it also helps, I think, recalibrate those things that are spontaneous or potentially inappropriate, so that they can actually become more educational and they can become more counseling, and so therefore defacto, this non dual educator counselor practice.

Jen Walsh :

So how can a non dual educator counselor identity be embodied in the various roles and responsibilities described in the ASCA national model, such as instruction, counseling, appraisal, and advising, consultation, collaboration and referrals?

Ian Levy:

Each of these components or responsibilities of the national model are detailed in our special issue, in each of the respective articles. So we have incredible authors that are featured throughout, and each article addresses each responsibility in a way that we were really proud of and actually stems from the creation of this nice visual that Matthew, maybe you can break down for us.

Matthew Lemberger-Truelove:

Yeah, I'll try to do it briefly. I mean, certainly, I think, there's a reason why it's in pictorial form, it wasn't just the convenience of it being a journal article in two dimensions. But we thought about it almost as like a wheel because wheel has two contact points for it to move forward, which very much is in the spirit of development, is this ongoing movement. And so at the center is the fulcrum of a wheel where there's that educator, that situatedness as an educator, but that wheel can't move if it doesn't have that identity as a counselor. And so the educator, you see all these various different ways it manifests, that Ian rightly mentioned, that really came from the national model. And so when we recruited authors and looked for the composition of the special issue, was how can we illustrate this non dual identity as it pertains to referrals, as it pertains to collaboration.

So you can see this immediate relationship to the educational milieu of a school, but then you see there's something distinct because of the counselor contribution. And so then underneath of those various manifests, again, if this is a wheel, like spokes of the wheel, the foundation, the grounding being the identity as a counselor, and that fulcrum pushing off of prevention, development, wellness, and social justice, really the axioms of counseling. And so it's this idea that when you do any one of these roles, there is value for a school counselor to think of these as discreet, that this is a circumstance where I might need to make a decision. What I'm going to do is focus on consultation, or I'm going to be instructing, or this is an advocacy activity. But then it gets pulled back into this total scheme where, okay, how does that current activity really get informed by my total non dual identity?

So if I am advocating or doing something leadership, that it pertains to the total school ecosystem, that it pertains to doing it in such a way that is not just concerned with responding, but then helping the system develop over time, or helping young people develop over time. And so we tried to be very intentional to tie it directly to the ASCA national model so it was familiar nomenclature and familiar practices with school counselors. And really illustrate that there's a more coherent and again, efficient framework that can make what could otherwise seem just an untenable and incredibly exhaustive amount of activities, that any activity you do is going to have relevance to all of those other things that the school counselor does.

Ian Levy:

All of our roles, while they might seem like a lot or again, like Matthew was just saying, they might seem to perhaps interfere with each other or feel overwhelming or feel like nobody knows what we do. In fact, our ability to navigate between all of them while having this really, really strong grounding as counselors, makes us distinct and makes us, in my opinion, the profession, the profession, particularly right now, that is necessary to create the changes in education that we need.

Jen Walsh :

Thank you so much to Matthew and Ian for joining us today. Please remember to check out the Professional School Counseling Journal's special issue, educator, counselor, a non dual identity for school counselors. We hope to have you back for our next episode, but until then, be sure to check out our website at schoolcounselor.org, for school counselor resources. Also, we'd love to engage with you on all of our social media platforms. Find us on Facebook at the American School Counselors Association, Twitter at ASCA Tweets and Instagram at We Are ASCA. Thanks to you all for listening and hear from you soon. I'm Jen Walsh, and this has been, I Hear You Say, the podcast from the American School Counselor Association.