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Removing Silos: 3 Graduate Programs Working Together

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Removing Silos: 3 Graduate Programs Working Together

Drs. Nick Abel, Jill Jay, Brooke Kandel-Cisco, Tom Keller, & Brandie Oliver

Framing the Project

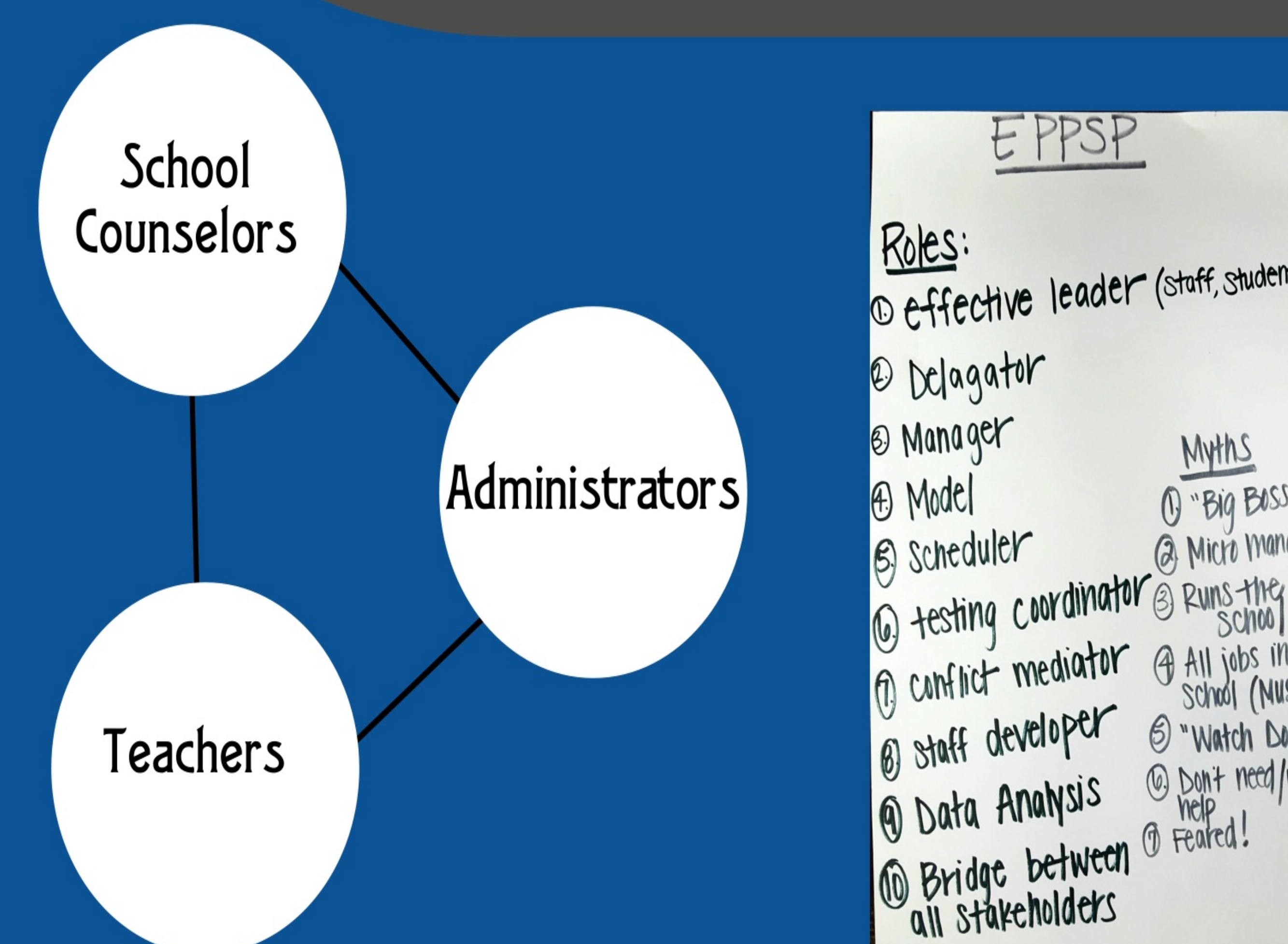
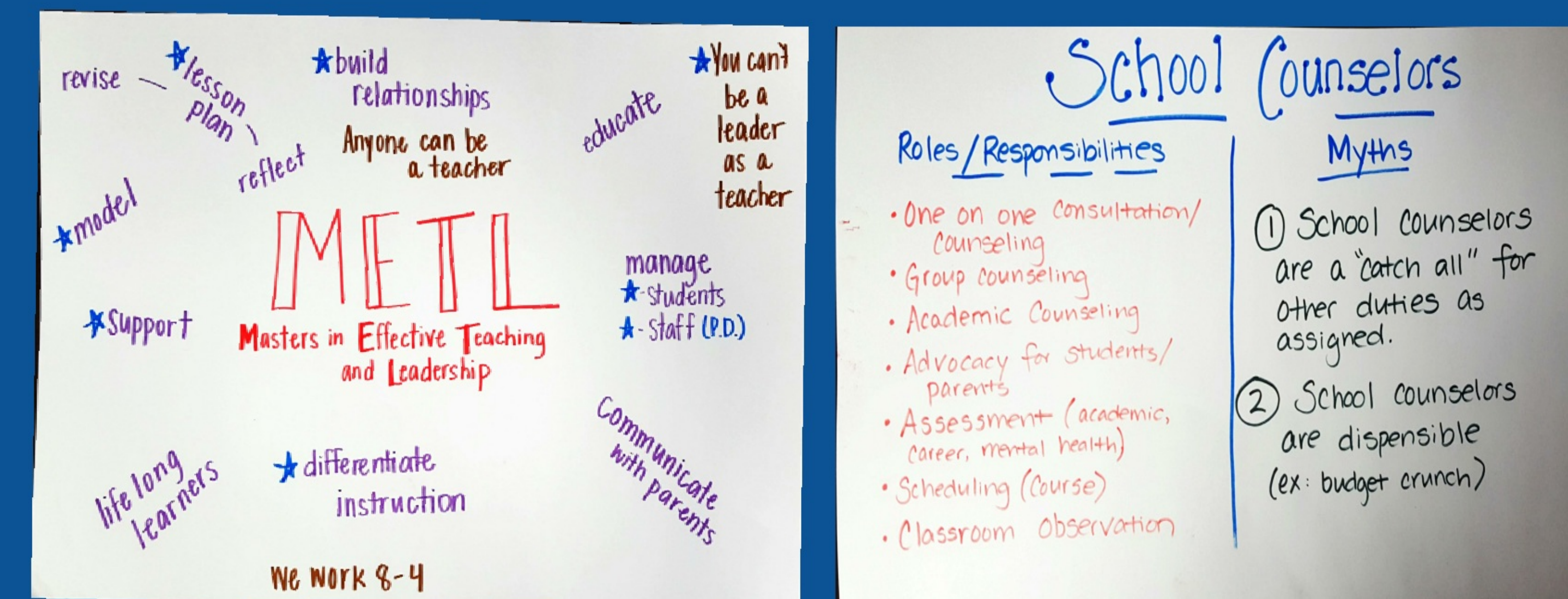
A majority of high school teachers (Reiner, Colbert, & Perusse, 2009) and administrators (Perusse et al., 2004) believe counselors should engage in activities that ASCA categorizes as inappropriate, such as registering & scheduling all new students, maintaining student records, and computing grade point averages.

Both principals and counselors rank communication and respect as the two most important elements in their relationship (NOSCA, 2009).

Despite agreeing on the importance of many school tasks, high school principals and counselors disagree on the perceived importance of the counselor's role in administrative tasks such as record keeping, scheduling, and test coordination/facilitation (NOSCA, 2009).

Rationale For The Project

A collaborative experience that would be required for all College of Education degree-seeking graduate students (EPPSP, METL, SC). The experience would be designed to use a variety of frames (Empowered leaders, collaborative action, advocacy for social justice and equity, research, etc.) to learn about and create positive change around educational issues that are relevant at the local and national levels. Through purposeful face-to-face and online interaction, students would have multiple opportunities to gain multiple perspectives on educational issues, the relationships within the school, responsibilities, and roles of all educators.



Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.
-Helen Keller

Project Overview

Intentional community-building that will help graduate students develop relationships across the three graduate programs.

Readings/discussion related to the historical, political, and social precedents that undergird current educational issues.

Learning engagements related to research and data collection including attention to bias and whose knowledge counts in research.

Cross-program small groups become experts on an educational issue of choice that is relevant in the local (and likely national) context. The pilot group engaged in a collaborative discussion around disproportionate school discipline practices and trends.

Lessons Learned

Strengths

All participating students and faculty believe the pilot program led to an increase in understanding and broadened perspectives on addressing educational issues from a true collaborative approach. Students indicated a desire to continue and expand this project and found the discussions to be instrumental in their professional development.

Challenges

Logistical issues are really the main barrier to this collaborative project. Graduate students from the three programs all meet on different evenings. In addition, faculty continue to discuss whether this should be a required experience or a credit-bearing course embedded in each program.