



CS0-1

Construct-Based Approach (CBA) to School Counseling

CS0-1 Topics	Page
Introduction	2
Purpose of CS0-1	2
Definition of a CBA	2
A Simple Language Set	2
Key Terms	3
CBA Overview	6
Primary Focal Points for a CBA	6
Developing a CBA for Your District	7
How the Book Helps You Develop, Deliver and Evaluate a CBA	7
CBA Toolkit Overview	8
From Concept to Practice	8
Toolkit Components	9
Four Types of Tools	10
How the Toolkit Can Help You	11
Why We Think This Approach is Worth Implementing	11
How the Book and Toolkit are Connected	12
Hyperlinks to Other Construction Sites	13



Introduction

Purpose of CS0-1

CS0 (Toolkit Portal) provides an introduction to a CBA and the *CBA Toolkit*. It helps you get started on your journey into the Toolkit Construction Sites and provides access to all CS0 tools. This knowledge exercise (CS0-1) provides relevant knowledge regarding a construct-based approach to school counseling and how the Toolkit can be used to develop, deliver and evaluate a CBA as part of your counseling program. It provides a crosswalk between chapters in *Achieving Excellence in School Counseling through Motivation, Self-Direction, Self-Knowledge and Relationships* (Corwin Press, 2014) and the Construction Sites in the *CBA Toolkit*.

Definition of a CBA

A Construct-Based Approach (CBA) began as a reframing of the discussion about school counseling student standards. It evolved into an approach to designing, delivering and evaluating school counseling programs that are firmly grounded in research. The CBA is not intended to replace your existing counseling program, but to help transform it into a more effective way to address students' developmental, learning and social-emotional needs. Among the defining characteristics of a CBA, the following are noted:

- A CBA supports a K-12 program by firmly grounding it in school counseling and developmental psychology research.
- A CBA defines and combines high standards for student excellence with high expectations for student performance.
- A CBA provides meaningful learning opportunities that enable and inspire students to learn what they are being taught, apply and transfer their learning in authentic contexts, and supply compelling evidence of their learning by demonstrating their proficiency and achievement to others.
- A CBA utilizes ongoing student assessments to provide students, parents/guardians, school counselors and other educators with accurate and timely feedback on students' learning progress and challenges.
- A CBA uses data-based decision making to establish student need, determine appropriate strategies/interventions, and evaluate the impact of the interventions.

A Simple Language Set

It is impossible to read current literature on education in general, or school counseling specifically, without seeing the phrases “research-based” and “evidence-based.” For example, a description of how districts manifest these attributes is required by both government agencies

and by organizations that fund educational improvement initiatives. Other frequently used terms are “results-based,” “standards-based” and “competency-based.” All these terms point to the need for school counseling programs to be firmly grounded in what research determines works and/or has promising potential to make a difference in the future. All require that high quality school counseling programs and counselor practice are substantiated by data.

In an attempt to expand our language set (e.g., research, evidence, results, standards, competencies), the Book and Toolkit add another key term: construct-based. This term reflects an approach that uses research to determine in what areas school counselors are most likely to have a substantive impact on student development, learning and achievement.

Key Terms

Before jumping into our discussion of a CBA and the Toolkit, it is important to have an understanding of the key terms used in our discussion about the CBA. Current discussions on student excellence as a result of school counseling programs and counselor practice contain and are often plagued by numerous key terms with a wide range of definitions and applications. It is important in the development of a CBA that a simple language set be agreed upon and used to discuss how best to help students become proficient and achieve excellence in school and life.

The following terms are considered central to a meaningful dialog about a CBA. These terms define the core ideas used to develop, deliver and evaluate a CBA school counseling program. Any language set will, over time, expand in the number of terms and the complexity of definitions, but it is always important to be able to identify a core set of terms that can be consistently used to frame and advance the dialog. The terminology and definitions that follow are not intended to duplicate Chapter 2 (“A Simple Language Set”), but to offer a summary of key terms that form the basis of your work at the Toolkit Construction Sites.

Construct

Four research-based constructs have been selected to represent critical aspects of student learning on which school counselors can have the greatest impact: a) motivation, b) self-direction, c) self-knowledge and d) relationships. Focusing on these constructs enable school counselors to support students’ academic achievement, guide their preparation for future success through educational and career planning, and help them cope with the myriad challenges of learning and growing up.

Collectively, these are called a “Construct-Based Approach” (CBA) to school counseling because they serve as primary filters that help to design, deliver and evaluate more effective school counseling programs. A summary of the research that yielded the four constructs is described in Chapter 3 (“Research on Constructs.”) in the Book. The constructs are used in Construction Sites 1, 2 and 3 to develop a CBA.

Context

Constructs, in and of themselves, are only four words and have little meaning outside of “context.” The notion of context describes a set of student-related processes or conditions in which all students participate and for which school counselors have a responsibility to help students successfully address. Five contexts have been selected as critical to school counselors maximizing their potential for helping students succeed: a) student planning, b) academic

support, c) college and career readiness, d) personal growth and e) social interaction. Each context contains essential processes in which students are expected to become proficient. Processes associated with the five contexts are discussed in Chapter 4 (“Relevant Contexts for K–12 School Counseling Programs”). Contexts are used in Construction Sites 1, 2 and 3 to develop a CBA.

Results

A central focus of a CBA is on measurable student results—what students are expected to know and demonstrate as a result of participating in the school counseling program. Results establish clear expectations (outcomes) for student achievement and success. They constitute the difference school counselors make in students' learning and lives. Results focus on the acquisition of relevant knowledge, development of skills appropriate to educational and career pathways, and the attitudes, behaviors and habits of mind that lead to success. See Chapter 5 (CBA Student Results: Standards and Competencies) for a discussion on school counseling student results. Proposed CBA student standards and competencies are offered.

Standard

There are two primary types of student results: standards and competencies. A standard is an end-result to be achieved within a specified period of time. School counseling student standards are end results that students are expected to achieve by the time they graduate from high school. Use of the term “standard” is restricted to what students should know and be able to demonstrate by the end of Grade 12. It is not used to articulate what students should know and do along the K–12 learning continuum.

See Chapter 5 for more information on student standards. See Chapter 6 (“The Role of Curriculum in a CBA”) for a discussion on how standards are used as the foundation of the CBA curriculum.

Competency

Competencies clarify the intent of the standard in measurable terms. They provide more precise examples of evidence and proficiency that can be used to determine student progress along the K–12 learning continuum. Standards establish the long-range learning targets, while competencies define what students are expected to know and do along the learning continuum. See Chapter 5 for more information on student competencies. See Chapter 6 for a discussion on how competencies are used as the basis of CBA curriculum activities.

CBA standards and competencies are used in Construction Site 2 to develop a CBA curriculum. Competency statements become learning targets for the activities. Student assessments are embedded in the curriculum activities and measure students' progress toward being able to demonstrate their proficiency and what they have achieved as a result of participating in the activity. Construction Site 1 focuses on defining CBA student standards and competencies.

Curriculum

The CBA school counseling curriculum is an integrated set of planned and documented interventions that provide optimal learning opportunities for students. It is the primary vehicle for delivering a CBA program. The curriculum is the only component of the school counseling

program where all students can receive equal opportunities for learning and where their progress can be uniformly assessed. Core curriculum activities focus on motivation, self-direction, self-knowledge and relationships. Counseling curriculum activities, organized in a developmentally appropriate scope and sequence, are aligned with CBA standards and competency statements to ensure that students are provided with meaningful opportunities that maximize their learning potential.

See Chapter 6 for more information on curriculum and examples of a scope and sequence and a documented CBA curriculum activity. Construction Site 2 focuses on developing a CBA curriculum.

Student Assessment

Standards are end-results to be achieved. Student standards articulate what knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors (aggregate of competency statements) students are expected to achieve by the time they graduate from high school. Standards and their related competency statements provide the criteria by which student proficiency and achievement can be determined. Proficiency is a function of measuring progress that places individuals on a spectrum of “no progress” to “achieving or exceeding the expected result.” The term answers the question: To what extent is the competency or standard achieved?

See Chapter 7 (Assessing Student Proficiency and Achievement) for a discussion on embedding assessments in curriculum activities, and other measures of student progress. Construction Site 3 focuses on student assessments.

Strategic, Annual and Personal Planning

Implementing a school counseling program requires well-developed plans. Four types of plans are used in a CBA: a) 3-year district-wide strategic plans, b) annual school-based implementation plans, c) counselor-supervisor agreements and d) plans for achieving personal results related to the CBA.

See Chapter 8 (Strategic, Annual and Personal Planning) for a discussion of the four types of plans. Construction Site 4 contains templates for developing effective front-end plans.

Program Implementation and Evaluation

A CBA must be delivered with fidelity. It is important to build a reliable infrastructure to support the implementation of a CBA. Data must be gathered about the impact of implementing a CBA. Formative assessments and summative evaluations monitor progress in implementing the program through the implementation of continuous improvement principles. Implementation results are analyzed and data is used to make adjustments to the plans and implementation efforts.

See Chapters 9 (“CBA Program Implementation: Focus on Delivery”) and 10 (“CBA Program Implementation: Focus on Program Evaluation”) for a discussion on CBA program implementation and evaluation. Construction Site 5 focuses on program implementation from the perspective of a reliable support infrastructure. Construction Site 6 focuses on CBA program evaluation and provides some sample data gathering instruments.

School Counseling Data Management

A CBA is grounded in data-based decision making (DBDM) that uses data to establish student need, identify and deliver appropriate interventions, and evaluate the impact of implementing the interventions. Data are required to understand and effectively address students' learning needs and provide valuable information to help students improve their capacity to learn. Data are critical to the successful implementation of a CBA and in determining student progress toward, and achievement of, the CBA school counseling student standards. Data are needed to promote the significant contribution of school counselors to student achievement and the quality of the school community.

The need for data permeates all areas of a CBA. In particular, see Chapter 7 and Chapter 10 for a closer look at how data are used in a CBA. Construction Site 3 (Assessing Student Progress and Achievement) and Construction Site 6 (CBA Program Evaluation) contain multiple sample assessment instruments.

CBA Overview

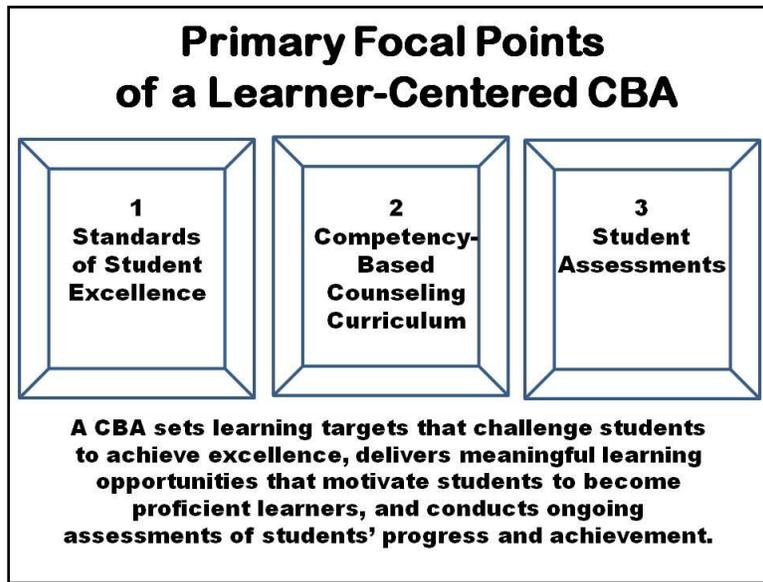
The CBA overview begins with a vision for student excellence as a result of the CBA school counseling program. This section briefly summarizes central aspects of a CBA. A detailed description of the conceptual foundation for a CBA is provided in the Book.

Primary Focal Points for a CBA

A CBA, simply stated, focuses on a three-part continuum of activities related to school counseling programs: a) challenging standards with high expectations, b) the delivery of meaningful learning opportunities to all students and c) the assessment of student progress toward, and achievement of, school counseling student standards. These are articulated in terms of motivation, self-direction, self-knowledge and relationships.

Figure 0-1.1, "Primary Focal Points of a Learner-Centered CBA," illustrates the primary three-fold focus of a CBA school counseling program.

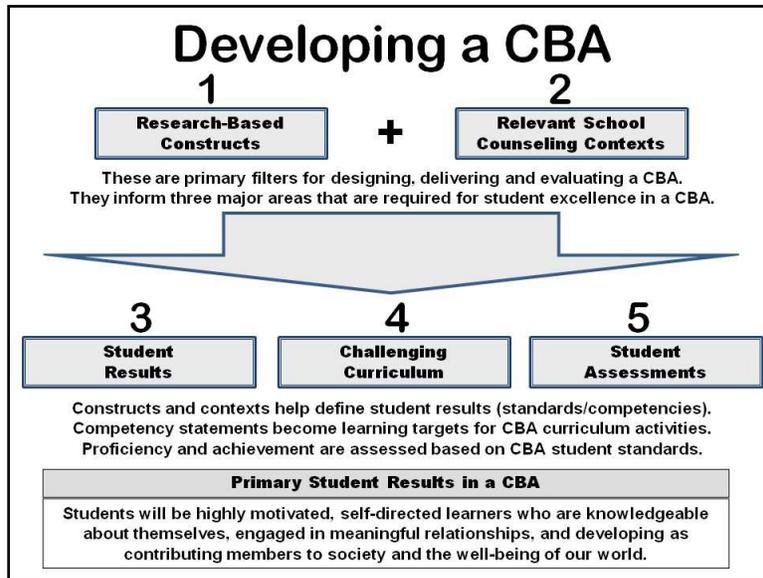
Figure 0-1.1



Developing a CBA for Your District

The purpose of the Book and Toolkit is to help you develop a construct-based approach for your district and integrate it into your school counseling program. Figure 0-1.2, “Delivering a CBA,” shows the CBA development.

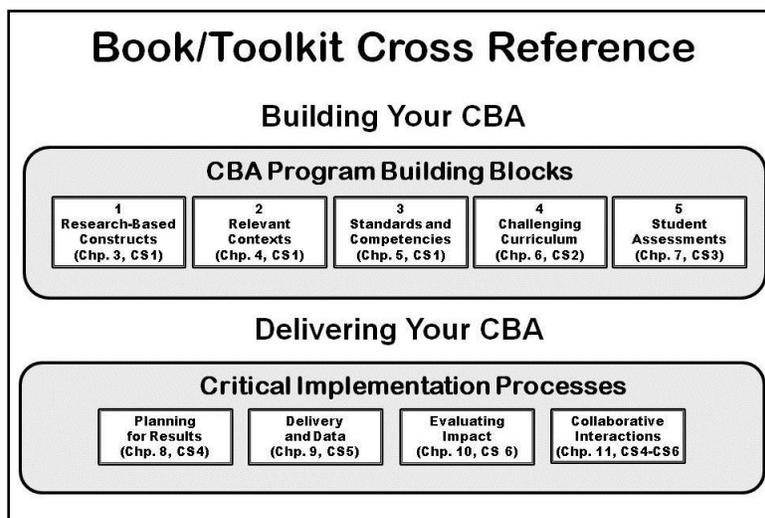
Figure 0-1.2



How the Book Helps Develop, Deliver and Evaluate a CBA

Figure 0-1.3, “Book/Toolkit Cross Reference,” shows how individual chapters provide the steps in developing a CBA and then planning, implementing and evaluating it.

Figure 0-1.3



Chapter 1 introduces the CBA. Chapters 2-5 are used to define student excellence by focusing on research-based constructs, meaningful contexts in which all students participate, and establishing student results (standards and competencies) students are expected to achieve as a result of the school counseling program. Chapter 6 focuses on delivering the CBA, primary through the school counseling curriculum. Chapter 7 describes how to assess student proficiency and achievement through multiple assessment processes and instruments. Chapters 8-10 focus on CBA program planning, delivery and evaluation. Chapter 11 focuses on collaborative interactions with other improvement initiatives.

The graphic above indicates the Book chapter number and title, and the Toolkit Construction Sites (CS#) to which the chapters are connected. A description of the sites and how the Toolkit is organized are provided in the “CBA Toolkit Overview” below.

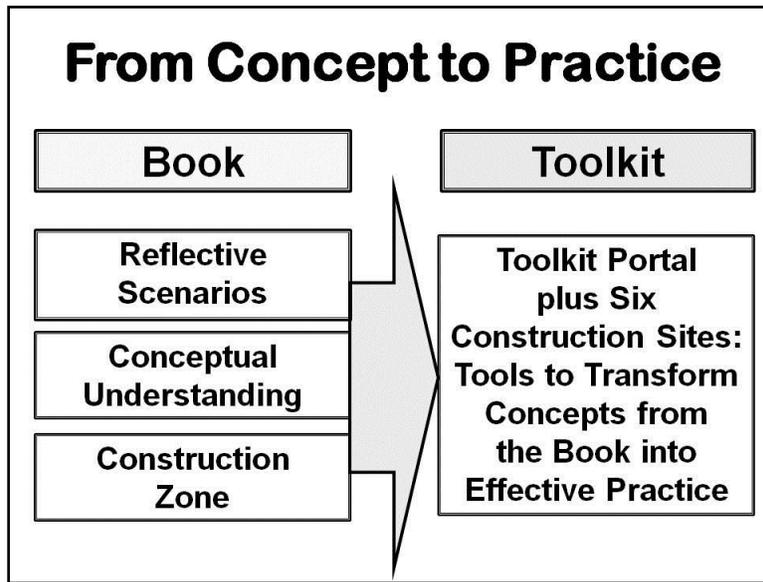
CBA Toolkit Overview

From Concept to Practice

As noted above, the Book provides the conceptual foundation for a CBA. It is now time to talk about how a CBA can be successfully developed, delivered and evaluated. The CBA Toolkit is a collection of tools that can help you accomplish these tasks by turning your attention from learning about concepts in the Book to what is required to transform these concepts into practice.

Figure 0-1.4, “From Concept to Practice,” illustrates the process of transforming ideas in the Book into effective practice. An effective transformation is critical to the full implementation of a CBA.

Figure 0-1.4

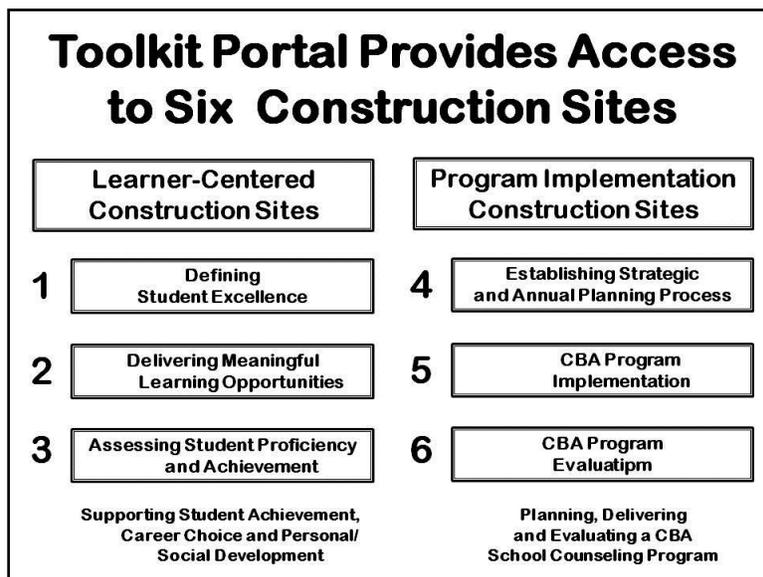


The chapters of the Book are organized into three sections: a) two reflective scenarios to help contextualize the content of the chapter, b) conceptual considerations for the theme of the chapter and c) a construction zone that connects the chapter to specific sites in the *CBA Toolkit*.

Toolkit Components

Figure 0-1.5, “Toolkit Portal Provides Access to Six Construction Sites,” shows how the *CBA Toolkit* is organized in seven modules: one Portal (CS0) and six Construction Sites (CS1 through CS6). Collectively, these sites are designed to help you develop a CBA for your school and district, incorporate it into your school counseling program, implement it and evaluate its impact on students’ development, learning and achievement.

Figure 0-1.5



Each module is structured in the same way. Entry to the Portal and Construction Sites is via a Welcome Center at each site. Hyperlinks to site files are located in a “Tools and Tasks” section at the end of each Welcome Center. Additional hyperlinks are embedded in knowledge exercise and template instruction documents. All hyperlinks are bolded and underlined. Click on the hyperlink to access the desired file. You can also navigate around the Toolkit using the “Quick Links” and “Full Index” hyperlinks at the end of this document.

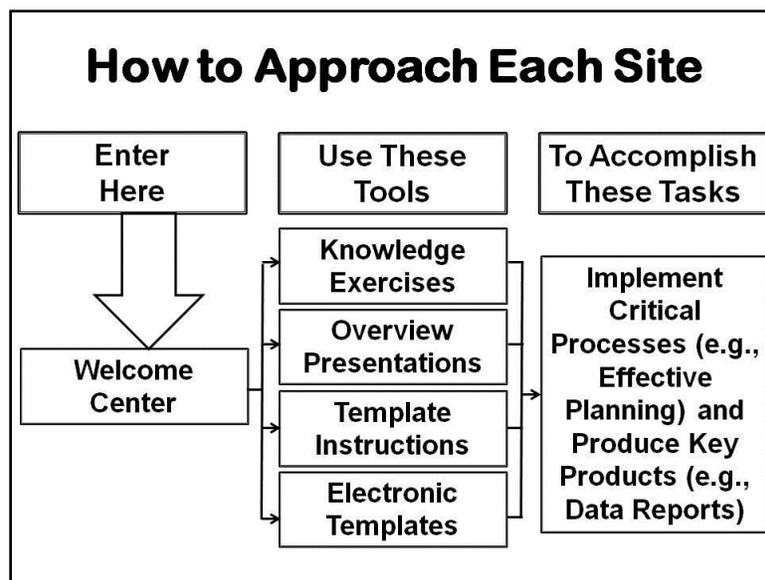
Four Types of Tools

The *CBA Toolkit* is a collection of tools designed to help school counselors and other educators develop and implement a construct-based approach to school counseling. The Toolkit provides four types of tools: a) knowledge exercises, b) presentations, c) template instructions, and d) electronic templates (MSWord). Each type addresses a primary question:

- ✓ **Knowledge Exercises:** What information do I need to understand and be able to successfully complete the various tasks? All sites begin with a knowledge exercise that introduces the site and provides background information.
- ✓ **Presentations:** What information do I need to communicate to others to convince them of the value and desirability of integrating a CBA into the school counseling program? The presentation slides are aligned with the flow of information in the knowledge exercises.
- ✓ **Template Instructions.** How do I use the templates to complete essential tasks associated with each site? The instructions for all templates at each site are contained in a single “Instructions” file.
- ✓ **Templates:** What evidence (data) do I need to generate to determine the impact of completing the tasks? The word “template” can include different types of forms that collect and organize data (e.g., data input templates, surveys, checklists, rubrics).

Figure 0-1.6, “How to Approach Each Site,” displays how to approach each Toolkit site.

Figure 0-1.6



Completing the four types of tools enables you to achieve the expected results for each site. Learner-Centered Construction Sites focus on building the content of a CBA program (knowledge and skill requirements, curriculum, assessments). The Program Implementation Construction Sites focus on designing, planning, implementing and evaluating the program.

How the Toolkit Can Help You

Among the ways the CBA Toolkit can help you, the following are noted. The Toolkit can:

- Provide structured processes, clearly-defined protocols and easy-to-use tools to design, deliver and evaluate a CBA school counseling program.
- Provides a set of planning, delivery and evaluation tools capable of establishing sustainable processes (e.g., strategic and annual planning processes, school counseling data processes), and producing critical documentation (e.g., a Curriculum Framework or an Administrative Handbook for School Counseling).
- Help school counselors introduce a CBA program in their schools and/or districts by helping them define student excellence, develop a challenging curriculum and assess student progress toward the CBA school counseling student standards. The Toolkit is a comprehensive implementation plan for districts wanting to implement a construct-based approach to school counseling. The CBA has great potential for helping students with their metacognitive skill development, learning how to reflect on their learning experiences and improving their thinking and behavioral processes.
- Help initiate a dialog on how to improve the quality of the school counseling program and through collaboration with other initiatives improve students' academic success and sense of well-being.
- Provide task-oriented exercises that help you learn what to do by doing it.

The CBA focuses on helping students become proficient in implementing processes that are critical to their success, and to produce results that demonstrate their learning and achievement. Each site contains multiple tools to help you learn about a CBA and develop a CBA for your counseling program.

Why We Think This Approach is Worth Implementing

Component	Description
Research-Based Program	The CBA is grounded in research that suggests areas in which school counselors can potentially have the greatest impact on student learning, development and achievement. The four constructs of motivation, self-direction, self-knowledge and relationships serve to guide the design, delivery and evaluation of a CBA.
A Vision To Live By	This CBA vision statement provides a visual representation of the results that can be expected from implementing a CBA.

Component	Description
<p>An Approach to be Integrated into Existing School Counseling Programs</p>	<p>A CBA is not intended to be a replacement for your current school counseling program. Rather, it is an approach to be developed and integrated into your current program. The CBA enables school counselors to reexamine school counseling student standards, curriculum delivery and student assessments through the lens of the four constructs.</p> <p>A CBA establishes clear linkages between student standards, curriculum delivery and student assessments. Learning opportunities are delivered primarily through CBA curriculum activities that build competency by teaching students how to learn, plan for their future success, and cope with the myriad challenges of learning and growing up.</p>
<p>Increases Counselor Capacity for Developing Student Competencies</p>	<p>Research-based constructs and relevant school counseling contexts are primary filters for developing CBA competency statements. CBA competency statements use language that links performance requirements to our four constructs and five contexts. For example, when you look at CBA-informed data gathering instruments, you will see references to motivation, self-direction and so on. CBA competency statements become the learning targets for individual school counseling curriculum activities.</p>
<p>Data is Used to Determine Student Proficiency and Achievement in Terms of the Four Constructs</p>	<p>A primary focus of CBA student assessments is to provide immediate and ongoing feedback to students regarding their performance in relation to what is expected of them. This information is critical to students' ability to increase their potential for learning through ongoing adjustments to their learning and behavior processes.</p> <p>Data is generated to demonstrate the impact of the CBA curriculum on student achievement, attitudes and behavior as it relates to our four constructs. Competency-related assessments are embedded in the curriculum activities. Data from other assessments (e.g., needs assessments, reflective surveys) also provide valuable information about student performance.</p> <p>CBA data is tied to a part of the report card and made available to parents and teachers each time the report card is distributed.</p> <p>CBA data can be combined with other data sources to produce a more comprehensive and accurate profile of students (district SIS, PBIS).</p>

How the Book and Toolkit are Connected

The Book provides the research-base and conceptual foundation for a construct-based approach to school counseling. The Toolkit provides a variety of tools to help you develop a CBA for your school. The following chart shows which Construction Sites (CS#) are used with each chapter in the Book.

Chapter	Chapter Title	Sites
1	Introduction	Portal
2	A Simple Language Set	Portal
3	Research-Based Constructs	CS1
4	Relevant School Counseling Contexts	CS1
5	Student Results: Standards and Competencies	CS1
6	Role of Curriculum in a CBA	CS2
7	Assessing Student Proficiency and Achievement	CS3
8	CBA Program Implementation: Focus on Planning	CS4
9	CBA Program Implementation: Focus on Delivery	CS5
10	CBA Program Implementation: Focus on Evaluation	CS6
11	Contribution of CBA to National School Improvement Initiatives	CS4
12	Power and Potential	N/A

Hyperlinks to Other Construction Sites

Access to other Toolkit Construction Sites is provided by clicking on the “Quick Links” or “Full Index” hyperlinks below. The Quick Links contain hyperlinks to the Welcome Center at each site. The Full Index contains hyperlinks to every file in the Toolkit. The index contains a brief description of each file for your convenience.

[**QUICK LINKS**](#)

[**FULL INDEX**](#)

Thank you for visiting the CS0-1 Knowledge Exercise. We are looking forward to helping you with other CS0 tools and working with you at the other Toolkit Construction Sites.

Take Time to Reflect, Dialog and Act