



Northwest Missouri School Counselors Association

Counselors Helping Counselors

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

▶ NWMSCA Website Updates - Pg. 2

▶ Hanging Out in Elementary School - Pg. 4

▶ MSCA Fall Conference Recap - Pg. 3

▶ NWMSCA 2013 Scholarship - Pg. 5

▶ High School Planning Timelines - Pg. 3

December 2012



Presidential Perspective

Geoff Heckman
NWMSCA President

Staying on the Path

Tonight at supper my oldest daughter, who started Kindergarten this year, started talking about the teachers at her school. Rest assured she loves school and they were all positive comments. At some point she mentioned Mrs. Kendall, her school counselor. Curious as to what perception she had of what school counselors, and Dad, do I asked her – what does Mrs. Kendall do? Without skipping a beat she said, “She teaches good touch, bad touch” and went on to explain what each were with examples. It was at that moment that I had the realization that I’m praying all parents do when you know that as much as you have prepared your child for the dangers and challenges in life, there is going to be something you missed. Trust me, we have talked with her about who can and can’t interact with her in a personal manner, but I don’t know that we’ve ever spelled it out as

— Continued on Page 2 —

Fall Meeting: “There’s a Path for That!”

by Lisa Pruitt, Resolutions

NWMSCA hosted a Fall District Meeting at Missouri Western State University on Friday, September 28, 2012. Registration and a breakfast sponsored by MWSU started at 8:00 a.m. with exhibitors across the hall on the 2nd floor of Blum Union Building. There were approximately 100 members in attendance. Theme-inspired stepping stones decorated the tables. Envelopes at each table collected money to be donated to the designated charity for the year, Camp Quality.

The business meeting was called to order at 9:00 am by District President, Geoff Heckman. Past President, Kim Schank, was recognized along with currently-serving Governing Board members. In keeping with the theme, governing board members were presented with a small, glass stone. They were instructed to pass the stone on to a colleague who is traveling the professional school counseling path as a token of encouragement. Connie Teaney, Professional School Counselor at Northeast Nodaway in Ravenwood, MO, was the drawing recipient of a free district membership.

The title of the program was “Coping with Troubled Youth and Suicide” and it was presented by David Slawson, M.A. in the Kemper Recital Hall. Counselors then enjoyed a deli lunch, which was sponsored by Army National Guard, complete with ice cream for dessert. New counselors and their mentors convened for a short meeting after lunch.

SAVE THE DATE!

NWMSCA Spring Meeting

Friday, March 8, 2013

at the emPower Plant in St. Joseph

Sponsored by Northwest Missouri State University

Watch for future mailings.

Perspective . . .

— Continued from Page 1 —

to what constitutes good and bad touch. I was instantly grateful for the instruction provided by Mrs. Kendall. And it made me wonder if over the years middle school students and now high school have sat down to supper with their parents, or during some moment of communication, and discussed with them the things that Mr. Heckman prepared them for. In my nightmares I see them saying, "Mr. Heckman led an assembly today that made a kid throw up!" or "Mr. Heckman said today that people with your job Dad make less than the national average."

But I'm hoping that if those conversations have happened they have talked about the conflicts that have been resolved or the career path they newly discovered or that they can now successfully cope with stress or disappointments in life because we talked. However, these aren't ideas that are specific to me, these are issues that all school counselors deal with at all grade levels and could be the subject of conversation for lives you have changed at any dinner table. We are charged with the awesome responsibility of directing students down the path that is appropriate for them and guiding them in their journey.

Especially at this time of year we start to think about the things that matter most to us and what we are grateful for. As we gather with family and friends for holiday celebrations we tend to focus on those things that are important to us in life. And as I start to reflect on those things I am most grateful for, I think about those people who helped me find the path to where I am today, but even more important I am grateful for Mrs. Kendall who is already helping my daughter with the difficult issues in life and finding the path that is right for her. It is my hope too that as you assist your students with their paths that you find yourself grateful to have the wonderful job of a school counselor. Let's stay on the path for that!



NWMSCA Website Updates

by Becky Houtchens, Technology

NWMSCA has a newly renovated website. It is a work in progress, and will be continually under construction for the next several months. Please take a moment to check it out at www.nwmzca.org.

Suggestions for improvement or of new features to include are very welcome! If you have suggestions, you can use the website's "contact us" form or you can email ideas to technology chair, Becky Houtchens at houtchens@maryville.k12.mo.us.

One new feature that is in the works is a spot on our website to link to webpages maintained by counselors in the NWMSCA district. This will be a good way for all of us to share resources, see how our counselor colleagues are using their webpages, and to network with each other. If you maintain a guidance counseling webpage for your school building or school district, and would be willing to have it linked to the NWMSCA website, please email Becky Houtchens (email address listed above) or use the Contact Us form on the NWMSCA website.

Send newsletter submissions to:



Editor Corrine Allee, BS, MA, EdS
Professional School Counselor, Gr. 6-12
West Platte Jr-Sr High School
1103 Washington St.
Weston, MO 64098
(816) 640-2292, ext. 201
alleec@wpsd.net

This newsletter sponsored by:

**NORTHWEST
MISSOURI
STATE UNIVERSITY**
Maryville, Missouri

MSCA Fall Conference Recap

by Becky Whitmer, Multi-Level VP

This past November many of us from Northwest Missouri made the long haul down to the Tan-Tar-A Resort for the Fall MSCA State Conference. The weather was beautiful this year and the professional development was worth the trip. We also had the opportunity to brag on and honor some of our great counselors from Northwest Missouri. NWMSCA had two state winners; Dee Anna Kelley of Pickett Elementary in the St. Joseph School District was honored as the State Elementary Counselor of the Year and Alicia Saunders of Central High School in the St. Joseph School District was honored as the State Counselor Advocate of the Year. We also honored our very own Jennifer Grossman of Cameron High School as our State President.

If you have never attended our state conference, I would recommend it. I have been able to use my time to go through materials at the exhibit hall, gain training from some of Missouri's best counselors, learn from national education and counseling professionals and hear from world renowned speakers on education topics. The presentations and discussions are something that you cannot put a price tag on. As a K-12 counselor, I have the opportunity to network with other counselors and share our resources and experiences with each other. I truly believe that you won't find better or more professional development opportunities anywhere else.

This year our opening speaker was Dr. Todd Whitaker. Dr. Whitaker shared his own personal experiences with us as a teacher, coach, and administrator. His presentation challenged and inspired us all to do more for students. He has written 24 books all dealing with education and leadership. It was an interesting, entertaining, and motivating speech that I was glad to hear. If you have an opportunity to read up on Dr. Whitaker I think it will be worth your time as an educator.

Curt Steinhorst served MSCA as our closing speaker this year. His presentation dealt with explaining generational differences in the work place. As a member of Gen Y, he poked fun at the stereotypes of the generation and how parenting styles have changed. I think it is fair to say that he had everyone in the room curious and focused. Curt also talked about the strengths Gen Y can bring to a work environment. I know I left that speech understanding that many of the challenges that we face as educators is because of generational differences. Each generation has their trends, both positive and negative, that shape our students. The reality is that our society, students, parents, and schools will change over time and as educators we must continue to give our best and hope for the best.

I hope that if you have never been to the MSCA Fall Conference you would consider it next year. I know that budgets are tight in all of our districts and it is hard to leave your building for more than five minutes sometimes. Talk to your administrators about how much you can gain from this experience and give it a try. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or if you would like to share something with NWMSCA about your experiences.

High School Planning Timelines

from campusexplorer.com

SENIORS:

Winter (November-February)

- Complete your FAFSA as soon as you can to ensure you get the most money for college.
- Cross everything off your post-application checklist.
- Continue your hunt for scholarship money.

Spring (March-May)

- Make your final college decision!
- Verify your financial aid is in order before you set foot on campus.
- Final transcripts and housing deadlines: Your last admissions checklist.
- Cross everything off your graduation checklist and graduate!

— Continued on Pg. 6 —

Hanging Out in Elementary School

by Sharon Evans, NWMSCA Elementary VP

Let's not monkey around. Being an elementary school counselor can sometimes feel like a song and dance show. LOL. How many different hats do you wear each day? Beginning by greeting the students each morning with a friendly, helpful attitude, wading through the multitude of classroom lessons, individual interventions, and responding to telephone messages we call upon our reservoirs of experience, empathy and resources to meet the challenges we face.

Attending the Fall MSCA Conference always boosts my energy and adds to the ideas I have stored away to use later. If you collected information, participated in the 'bring and sling', or shared ideas with a fellow counselor, take a few minutes to review them before stashing them away to file later or dropping the pile in a 'vertical file'.

I always try to prioritize the top three ideas that I bring home. This year all three are from the Level Sharing Meeting on Monday morning. After researching further information and giving some focused thought to how I might implement my top three, I will be able to develop and use two immediately and continue to investigate the third.

First, being in three buildings located miles apart, documentation and record keeping has been a persistent issue. An electronic calendar and note taking system appears to be the solution. Several were discussed including Google and Outlook. Since our school uses Google mail, I checked it out. Using one of my children's discarded smart phones (they usually change out to a new one every year or two) I was able to integrate, access, and update an electronic calendar that is accessible to me wherever I go via the cell phone. Both Google and Outlook have a note taking system that will also help organize the multitude of messages and notes I collect in my 'travels'. Outlook seems to have an edge on being more user friendly if you have a newer version of Microsoft Outlook. Check with your tech person to see what you have available and for assistance in setting it up. I can already see the benefits in terms of what I have to carry with me from building to building and planning ahead.

Second, with MSIP5 building in a component on attendance, I have been brainstorming for new, innovative ideas to motivate students. We are now giving 'perfect attendance' dog tag awards we found online at the end of each quarter. Other ideas include organizing student led chants and cheers to celebrate in a perfect attendance assembly, classrooms developing a tribal song or chant for a similar focus, and organizing classroom competitions like popcorn and movies if the entire classroom has perfect attendance for a week. Another idea being considered is the possibility of partnering with a local business



Go Bearcats!

Be challenged. Be noticed.

Be involved. Be successful.

Be a Bearcat.

www.nwmissouri.edu



NORTHWEST
Missouri State University

to give away a Wii or nook at the end of the year for perfect attendance and possibly a different 'big' prize for students who have two consecutive years of perfect attendance. A student/family fun celebration with snacks, crafts and/or activities could also be organized at the end of the semester or year for those students who have excellent attendance (establish a goal, such as 95% for students to work toward).

Third, sensory interventions appear to hold promise for the overly active or impulsive student in our elementary classrooms. The research I have located sets up a 6 to 10 minute intervention for individual students who need a 'break'. Each intervention provides opportunities for movement and calming. The space utilized should be available the majority of the day with peaceful or soothing music in the background. The intervention is broken into three sections of equal time. The following is an example; 2 minutes-Alerting Activity (bouncing a ball, scooter, hula hoop, etc.), 2 minutes-Large Muscle Movement (crawling, jump rope, etc), 2 minutes-Calming (rice tray, play dough, etc.) In the majority of the cases, students are able to return to their classroom and participate in instruction/learning. In a few cases where the student is still not able to calm down a second round of all three steps may be warranted. Seek further information from your district's Occupational Therapist or online.

Stay open to new ideas, be willing to research possibilities and take the initiative to be a leader when looking for solutions. I hope your Fall Conference experience was rejuvenating and informational. See you next year!

2013 NWMSCA Scholarship Opportunity = \$300!

by Lorraine Bowers, Scholarship

Earning your School Guidance and Counseling Degree? Would you like a little assistance in paying for those graduate credits? Go to our website at <http://www.nwm sca.org>, click the "Applications/Forms" link, and proceed to the NWMSCA Scholarship Form. It's that simple of a process to get started on your chance to WIN!

The application has four parts:

1. a two-page, simple application form;
2. a current transcript which validates a minimum 3.0 GPA in school counseling coursework (with a minimum of twelve cumulative hours being completed);
3. a listing of remaining classes needed to complete school counseling certification;
4. a letter of recommendation from a supervisor who will elaborate upon the candidate's guidance counseling potential.

Additionally, applicants must reside within the geographic boundaries of a school being served by the Northwest Missouri School Counselor Association.

If you know of people who are taking graduate classes for the School Guidance and Counseling degree, please give them this article to read or tell them about our website!

All applications must be postmarked or submitted on or before February 1, 2013.

Additional information can be obtained from: Lorraine Bowers (lorraine.bowers@sjsd.k12.mo.us)

Or Mail to:

Lorraine Bowers
Spring Garden Middle School
St. Joseph, MO 64503

Ph: 816-671-4380

Fax: 816-671-4489

High School Planning Timelines

from campusexplorer.com

SENIORS: (Continued from Pg. 3)

Summer (June, July)

- Get the lay of the land by attending your college's summer orientation.
- Apply for student housing and get matched with a great roommate.
- No time to waste, prepare for your college academic career now.

JUNIORS:

Winter (November-February)

- Junior year grades are key. Keep studying!
- Scared you'll bomb the SAT or ACT? Make a test prep plan today to avoid such a disaster.
- Millions of dollars in scholarships goes unclaimed every year. Start your quest for free money.
- Compare and contrast schools, attend college fairs, and refine your college list.

Spring (March-May)

- Dominate the SAT or ACT.
- Beat the letter of recommendation rush by asking your teachers before everyone else does.
- Get educated about admissions requirements.
- Contact prospective colleges to schedule interviews and campus visits.
- Construct a strong senior schedule and a stellar student portfolio.

Summer (June, July)

- Grab a summer job to expand your experiences and to earn money for college.
- Develop a financial aid plan before the deadline stress rears its ugly head.
- Be your own campus explorer. Schedule your first round of college visits.

SOPHOMORES:

Winter (November-February)

- Develop your standardized testing plan and go ahead and take the tests you're ready for.
- Discover unique tips on how to manage the hundreds of things on your mind.
- Practice your writing now so you can reap the benefits later.
- Capitalize on your resources and learn more about colleges and universities.

Spring (March-May)

- Consult your counselor to make sure you're prepped for junior year classes.
- Expand your college knowledge by attending information sessions and college fairs.
- Plan a solid summer, filled with volunteering, internships, and of course, fun.

Summer (June, July)

- Talk with your family about college finances.
- Secure a summer job and build your credentials while having fun!
- Enroll in ACT or SAT prep over the summer while you still have free time.
- Visit local college campuses to see which types of schools appeal to you.

FRESHMEN:

Winter (November-February)

- Start your college search: What kinds of schools should you be looking for?
- Worried about how you'll pay for college? See how you can prepare for college expenses now.
- Explore volunteering options that are good for you and good for the world.
- SATs already? Think about taking SAT subject tests while the content is still fresh in your mind.

Spring (March-May)

- As your peers are losing momentum, refocus your study habits and finish the year off right.
- Build your college credentials by planning fun ways to get involved this summer.
- Set yourself up for college success with a sophomore schedule that emphasizes college prep.

Summer (June, July)

- Use your summer to explore jobs and careers that interest you.
- Get yourself to campus!
- Prepare for a new year by finishing your summer reading and AP prep.

NWMSCA GOVERNING BOARD 2011-2012

President – Kim Schank

kim.schank@sjsd.k12.mo.us

Past President – Kim Hill

kim.hill@sjsd.k12.mo.us

President-Elect – Geoff Heckman

gheckman@savannah3.com

Secretary – Shelly Vertin

svertin@savannah3.com

Treasurer – Casey Arambula

casey.arambula@yahoo.com

Elementary VP – Laura Shelton

lshelton@savannah3.com

Middle School VP – Susan Edwards

edwardss@lawson.k12.mo.us

Secondary VP – Jennifer Grossman

kgrossman@cameronschools.org

Multi-Level VP – Erin Hunter

erinhunter@kingcity.k12.mo.us

Post-Secondary VP – Bev Schenkel

bevs@nwmissouri.edu

Government Relations – Jeanie Benitz

jeanie.benitz@sjsd.k12.mo.us

Membership – Ashlee James

ashleejames@maryville.k12.mo.us

Advocacy – Peggy Payne

pmpayne@missouriwestern.edu

Publications/Research – Jeremy Waldeier

jeremyw@nwmissouri.edu

Nominations/Elections – Kim Hill

kim.hill@sjsd.k12.mo.us

Resolutions – Lisa Pruitt

lpruitt@cameronschools.org

By-Laws – Glenda Fine

fineg@lawson.k12.mo.us

Human Rights/Diversity – Elizabeth McKinley

emckinley@trentonr9.k12.mo.us

Professional Recognition – Natalie Adkins

natalie.adkins@sjsd.k12.mo.us

Professional Recognition – Lorraine Bowers

lorraine.bowers@sjsd.k12.mo.us

Career Guidance – Casey Arambula

casey.arambula@yahoo.com

Ethics - Debbie Fite

debbie.fite@sjsd.k12.mo.us

Historian – Alicia Saunders

alicia.saunders@sjsd.k12.mo.us

Historian – Sharon Evans

sevans@savannah3.com

Newsletter Editor – Becky Whitmer

bewhitmer133@gmail.com

Critical Incident Response – Karen Taylor

ktaylor@savannah3.com

Technology – Elizabeth Chase

elizabeth.chase@sjsd.k12.mo.us

Finance – Ashley Howren

ashley.howren@sjsd.k12.mo.us

Promotions – Corrine Allee

alleec@wprii.k12.mo.us

Promotions – Michelle Delaney

mdelaney@northandrew.org

Scholarship – Theresa Tommey

tommey@ebs.k12.mo.us

Mentoring – Rachel Peek

rpeek@savannah3.com

Mentoring – Michelle Veasey

mveasey@nwmissouri.edu

Emeritus – Sandy White

slwhite_64429@yahoo.com