



Northwest Missouri School Counselors Association

Counselors Helping Counselors

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September 2020



Presidential Perspective

Rebecca Arway
NWMSCA President

I LOVE roller coasters. I love the ups, the downs, the quick turns, the drops, everything about them. I love the entire ride and experience! At times, I have felt like this year, 2020, has been a never ending roller coaster. I feel like there have been many ups for the year, some quick turns, some unexpected drops, and some smooth riding. As I embark on my 11th year as a school counselor, in many ways I feel like this is my first year! With new expectations, procedures, virtual learning, etc. I know that this year is going to be a continued ride on the roller coaster of education!

I think back to my first year as a school counselor and I do not think I would have survived without the support of NWMSCA. Having a network of counselors to rely on and to reach out for support was paramount. Being able to serve as the President of this amazing organization during these interesting times is an honor. I hope we are able to continue to provide the support, networking

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MSCA Fall Conference: Riding the Wave

by Lori Snead, NWMSCA Secretary

When the theme for this year's conference was announced last November, no one could have guessed just how big of a wave we would be riding in 2020. MSCA has announced that they are going virtual with the 2020 Fall Conference. This event has always been such a special time for counselors around the state to come together to collaborate and find a renewed sense of purpose. It may look a little different this year, as counselors will "gather" in a virtual format for three days of quality professional development. All sessions will also be offered on-demand following the conference for those that are not able to attend live. Hopefully just being able to connect, even from our homes, will be enough to boost our spirits for the wave we continue to ride throughout the rest of this school year. You should have received an email from MSCA with details on how to register for the conference and a tentative schedule of events. More detailed information will be shared soon.

Counselor Mentoring Program

DESE and MSCA collaborate on a statewide two year mentoring program for school counselors who are new to the profession. To upgrade from an Initial Student Services (ISS) certification to a Career Student Services (CSS) certification, a school counselor must participate in a two year mentoring program (in addition to other criteria). After completion of this two year program, mentees will be issued a DESE certificate that can be used in the upgrade process. All mentor/mentee pairs have received pairing information from region mentor chair Becky Arway, arwayr@polo.k12.mo.us, and have participated in virtual training opportunities.

Mentees needed to be registered with DESE by August 30, 2020. If you are a new counselor and were not able to enroll in the program, please contact Becky Arway.

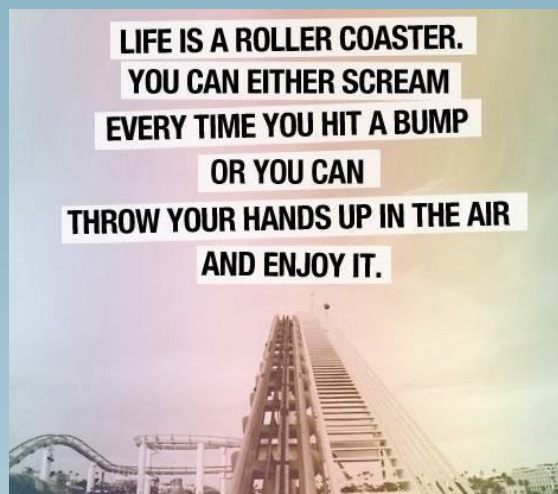
Perspective . . .

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(even if it has to be virtual), and voice for the counselors of the Northwest Region. There might be some changes to our “normal” opportunities but we hope to still be able to provide valuable professional development for our members.

Change has been inevitable this year, but we still want to help be your voice and your support during these uncharted waters! One of the things that will be changing for the Fall is that our Fall Meeting will be held virtually. We are still working out the details, but we felt it was important to still offer an opportunity for us to meet and network with each other. Be sure to check the website, Facebook, and email for upcoming information about the Fall meeting and other professional development opportunities that are being offered.

There is a quote, “Life is like a roller coaster, you can scream every time there is a bump OR you can throw your hands up and enjoy the ride.” As this school year gets off to a start, whether it be virtually, hybrid, in-person or any variation in between, I encourage you to “throw your hands up and enjoy the ride.” This year might teach each of us a little bit more about embracing change, trying new things, and remembering that we are part of the greatest profession EVER! Good luck to each of you as you start this year and remember if you ever need anything, your NWMSCA Governing Board is here for YOU!



Send newsletter submissions to:



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Join or Renew: NWMSCA Membership

By Heidi Webster, Membership Chair

Happy September!!! Now is the time to renew your Northwest Missouri School Counselor Association (NWMSCA) membership. Don't miss out on the awesome resources, meetings and networking opportunities available to you through the NWMSCA organization. In the Northwest Region, we are lucky to have one of the largest and strongest member networks.

Last year we had around 150 members and now is the time to renew your membership for this year. There are now three ways you can conveniently renew your membership:

#1 - You can mail your membership form and money to Heidi Webster at 525 W South Hills Drive, Maryville, MO 64468.

#2 - You can renew your membership online after you renew your MSCA (Missouri School Counselor Association) membership at www.MOSchoolCounselor.org

#3 - You can use paypal: nwmsca@gmail.com

#4 - You can follow the Google doc sent out in Becky Arway's email and send your dues to Heidi Webster at 525 W South Hills Drive, Maryville, MO 64468 or by using paypal

****If you renew/join prior to the (virtual) Fall meeting, you will be entered into a drawing for a FREE 2020-2021 membership!!!****

Feel free to contact Heidi at webster@maryviller2.com or 660.562.3244 if you have any questions or need assistance. Here's to another fantastic year supporting kids—and each other!

Governing Board to Propose Bylaw Changes

By Becky Houtchens

This fall, the NWMSCA Governing Board will propose changes to the NWMSCA Bylaws to update the format and composition of the Governing Board. If approved, these changes will be implemented for the 2021-22 school year. An edit of the Bylaws requires a vote of the membership. Please be watching for an email, which will invite members to examine the proposed changes to the NWMSCA Bylaws prior to the October 9 Business Meeting.

There will be discussion of the proposal at the October 9 NWMSCA Business Meeting (virtual), and a vote to accept or deny the changes to the Bylaws. Generally, the Bylaws amendment would move NWMSCA from a 27-member Governing Board, to a 9-member board with several committees. Please be watching for an email soon with more details.

Technology Information

By Sarah Pedersen, Technology Chair

Welcome back! I hope everyone is getting settled. It is nice being back at school and seeing all the students. At my school we are adjusting to our "current" normal. I just wanted to take a few minutes to share some suggestions about virtual counseling sessions and lessons with students that were discussed on an MSCA level sharing zoom last spring. Hopefully most of you are able to visit with your students in person, but in the event that a district moves to remote or you need to zoom with a student because they are homebound for an extended period of time, these are some suggestions that were shared.

1. It is best practice and strongly recommended that you have a signed parent permission slip that gives consent and acknowledges that you will be working with their child through zoom or other platform.

2. This one probably goes without saying but make sure both you AND the student are appropriately dressed for the meeting.

3. Remember that if you are doing an individual counseling session via zoom and the student is at their home, there is a good chance that someone else may be listening so it may be hard to get honest and open responses from the student.

4. Be cautious if doing a small group through a digital platform

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Scholarship Opportunities!!!

By Heidi Webster, Scholarship Chair

MSCA Fall Conference Scholarship

The Northwest Missouri School Counselor (NWMSCA) MSCA (Missouri School Counselor Association) Fall Conference Scholarship is awarded to a full-time School Counselor. NWMSCA seeks to assist counselors in their professional development goals by providing financial assistance to a full-time school counselor so they may attend the fall conference. NWMSCA will award a \$100 scholarship to ONE lucky counselor employed by a school district in the geographic area served by NWMSCA.

Requirements include:

1. Complete application form and submit to the NWMSCA Governing Board's Scholarship

Chairperson (Heidi Webster) on or before **September 25th**. Incomplete or late applications will not be accepted.

2. Be employed as a full-time School Counselor.
3. Provide a statement explaining your desire to attend the MSCA Fall Conference and what the applicant hopes to attain from attending.

Northwest Missouri School Counselor Association Scholarship

This \$300 scholarship is awarded to a graduate student who is seeking completion of a certification in school guidance and counseling. You can help us by advertising this scholarship to eligible applicants. If you know someone who is taking graduate

classes toward a school counseling degree, please show them this article or tell them about our website! NWMSCA wants to encourage and provide support for qualified students who are pursuing a school counseling degree.

Requirements include:

- Complete the scholarship application form and submit it to the Scholarship Chairperson no later than **February 1**.
- Current transcript with at least a 3.0 GPA and a minimum of 12 graduate course hours.
- List of remaining coursework needed to complete your school guidance counseling certificate.
- A letter of recommendation from a supervisor who can elaborate on the candidate's guidance and counseling potential.

Perhaps you have someone in mind who would qualify for this scholarship. If so, don't delay! Let them know about it today!!

The application forms for both scholarships can be found on the NWMSCA's website:

www.NWMSCA.org
under "Application/Forms"

Submit to:

Heidi Webster: NWMSCA
Scholarship Chair
525 W. South Hills Drive
Maryville, MO 64468
webster@maryviller2.com

The winners will be announced at our virtual Fall NWMSCA meeting!

Technology...

— Continued from Page 3 —

because of privacy reasons and what students may share and the possibility that other group members' parents are listening.

5. Possibly explore other platforms that may be more secure than zoom for these types of meetings with students but consult with district policy to make sure you are using a district approved method.

It was strongly recommended that when doing virtual meetings you have another staff member present to protect both you and the student but I know that most of us are the only counselor in our building so this isn't feasible. Most importantly always refer to your board policy and visit with administration to make sure your virtual meetings are adhering to district policy. One thing to look for when doing this is to check to see if it is allowed for your counseling sessions to be recorded. Some districts do not allow for recording of these types of meetings.

These are just a few suggestions to protect both you and the student in the event that you are doing virtual counseling sessions. Hope everyone's year continues to be smooth and I look forward to seeing everyone via zoom at the fall meeting!

Critical Incident Response

We hope your school year is off to a great start! Our required CIR training will be held via ZOOM on September 25 (timeTBA). If you are interested in serving on a 2020-2021 CIR Team, please contact us ASAP and plan to attend this required training. We look forward to hearing from you!!

Michele Veasey
mveasey@nwmissouri.edu

Lori Snead
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Professional Development Opportunities

By Becky Houtchens

MSCA has a variety of professional development opportunities scheduled for the upcoming months. Members can register for these events on the MSCA website www.moschoolcounselor.org.

MSCA Level Sharing. Every other month, MSCA will offer Level Sharing via Zoom. This is a great time to participate in discussion with fellow level colleagues as you learn and share ideas, suggestions and concerns. Upcoming dates:

- Sept. 23, 1 pm (Counselor Educators)
- Nov. 19, 5 pm (all levels)

MSCA Happy Hours. Join MSCA for virtual Happy Hour! These virtual events provide open discussion time for school counselors across the state to share information, resources, and concerns and are a great way to connect with others.

- October 15, 5 pm
- December 17, 5 pm

MSCA Counselors, Coffee & Conversation. These bi-weekly Zoom meetings, facilitated by Dr. Shari Sevier, MSCA Director of Advocacy focus on various topics of interest to school counselors.

- Sept. 30, 9 am: Featured Speaker, Matt Berry; Topic: Google Strategies
- October 14, 9 am: Featured Speaker, Dr. Andy Schuerman; Topic: Strategies on Race
- October 28, 9 am: Featured Speaker, Dr. Melissa Maras; Topic: Self-Care and Mental Health Wellness
- November 11, 9 am: Featured Speaker, Gen Nelson; Topic: Grief Strategies
- December 9, 9 am: Featured Speaker, Chrissy Bashore; Topic: Missouri Connections
- December 23, 9 am: Featured Speaker, Dr. Shari Sevier; Topic: Gratitude

NWMSCA Merchandise Survey

Please take time to provide input for our merchandise survey at the link below:

**Click Here
to Complete
Survey**

Governing Board Members met virtually on September 16



