

COUNSELOR CHRONICLES

February 2008

NATIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELING WEEK

FEBRUARY 4 - 8, 2008

“School Counselors: Creating Pathways to Success”

Our mission statement, “...to facilitate personal and academic growth of all students... counselors as central members of the educational team support students in making positive life choices and becoming responsible, caring adults.”

School counselors switch gears many times when working with students in the course of a school day. However, the overriding focus is student achievement. How do we best go about our business as school counselors and ensure that the needs of all students are met?

Our job as school counselors is to help all students connect the dots to reach their full potential in all areas.



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Components of the School Counseling Program

CCPS counselors provide services via:

- ◆ Guidance curriculum and classroom lessons,
- ◆ Individual student planning,
- ◆ Responsive services, and
- ◆ System-wide support.

Each school has a counseling plan aligned with the school improvement goals. Our program goals are to help students improve in their:

- Personal and academic skills,
- Career and decision-making skills, and
- Interpersonal skills.

WELCOME NEW STAFF

We welcome the following counselors to Carroll County Public Schools to be among the best school counseling professionals in the State of Maryland.

<u>Katie Barrett</u>	Eldersburg Elementary School
<u>Shawn Minnier</u>	Westminster High School and New Windsor Middle School
<u>Melisa Weinberg</u>	East Middle School

Each new counselor is paired with an experienced mentoring counselor for ongoing support and professional networking. Additionally, in the last year, CCPS counselors have served as site supervisors to 19 graduate interns from Johns Hopkins University, Loyola College, and McDaniel College who are studying to be professional school counselors. Our counselors provide an invaluable service in assisting these interns in the practical application of their education.

PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

WHOLE CHILD COMPACT

Counselors participated in a summer workshop to research, discuss, and explore strategies and programs to address the ASCD Whole Child Compact. Building relationships with students is the key to student achievement. A brochure was developed for all staff members to provide strategies and materials to use with students of all grade levels in an attempt to identify specific social/emotional gaps and address those areas of need.

Thank you to:

*Katie Barrett
Valerie Bortz
Vonnie Fiore
Carla Hirsch*

*Judy Klinger
Gwen Lilly
Melisa Weinberg*



Please see your school counselor for a copy of "Unlocking the Door to Student Achievement."

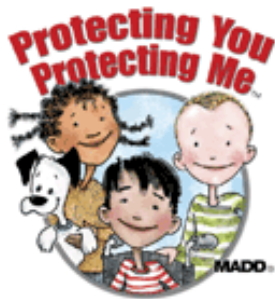
"Parents, teachers, and the community believe schools should focus on developing students who are academically proficient and physically and emotionally healthy and respectful, responsible, and caring individuals."

~ Steve Carter, ASCD
Executive Director

STUDENT PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Student Peer Facilitators from **Century, North Carroll, and South Carroll High Schools** attended Genesee Valley Outdoor Learning Center for a day of team building, including the ropes challenge course, in October 2007. Thank you to Lea Nappier, counselor at **Liberty High School**, for organizing this event.

Under the guidance of Rachel Walker, Crisis Intervention Specialist at **South Carroll High School**, students erected a Peace Pole in honor of Unity Day as a demonstration of each one's ability to "make a difference." The peace pole stands in the school's courtyard as a symbol of hope for all to see.



Peer Facilitators at **Westminster High School**, under the guidance of Joe Geiger (school counselor), are partnering with **Robert Moton Elementary School** to teach drug and alcohol prevention lessons to elementary students. This research-based program, *Protecting You/Protecting Me*, positively

<http://www.pypm.org/>

impacts the high school students as well as the students they are teaching.

In December 2007, **Cranberry Station Elementary School's** 4th and 5th grade students enjoyed a field trip to the Eichelberger Performing Arts Center to see "The Nutcracker." The combined efforts of the guidance counselor, Heidi Kohls, and the fine arts team taught students the appreciation of cultural activities as well as proper etiquette for the theatre.



Over 150 CCPS middle and high school students attended a student leadership conference on June 20, 2007 at the New Windsor Conference Center. Kevin Wanzer, internationally acclaimed motivational speaker, was the keynote speaker. He used comedy to address the important issues of character, bullying, and acceptance. Mr. Greg Kozera, local author of Learned Leadership, discussed the principles outlined in his book that will help students become effective leaders. Students attended workshops on the following topics:

- ◇ Conflict Resolution
- ◇ True Colors
- ◇ Internet Safety
- ◇ Grief and Loss
- ◇ Action Planning
- ◇ Public Speaking

Students were encouraged to use their newly learned skills upon returning to their home schools after the summer vacation.

Under the direction of school counselors, Student Mentor Programs are up and running at several schools around the county.

- North Carroll High with North Carroll Middle & Spring Garden Elementary
- Francis Scott Key High with Northwest Middle & Taney town Elementary
- South Carroll High with Winfield Elementary

- Mt. Airy Middle with Parr's Ridge Elementary
- Winters Mill High with East Middle

The relationship between the mentors and "mentees" strengthens the connection between the schools. Mentoring programs foster relationships, teach responsibility, and help all students to be more successful in school.

PROFESSIONALS IN ACTION

All school counselors participate in a variety of training and inservice activities.

High School counselors have had the opportunity to refresh their career counseling strategies by learning about the future of the world of work and practicing with online tools such as "Bridges" to use with students.

Crisis Intervention Specialists joined with the school psychologists for a full-day workshop where they were introduced to additional intervention strategies through RTI (Response to Intervention). The training was provided by Dr. Todd Gravois, Ph.D., from the University of Maryland, Co-Director of the Laboratory for Instructional Consultation Teams at the University of Maryland in College Park.

At their February inservice, Elementary and Middle School counselors will learn about the unique needs of our students with military family members who are deployed away from home. In addition, presentations regarding new insights into working with autism-spectrum students and traumatized students will be included in their inservice day.



Behavior Support Specialists continue to facilitate behavior plans at the elementary and middle school levels. The BSS staff have presented an overview of their services to all of their schools' staff meetings.

SHARING OUR EXPERTISE

Dan Lohrman and **Christy Perdomo** served on a panel during the Cyberbullying Summit held in January 2008. Both Mr. Lohrman and Ms. Perdomo were instrumental in providing information from the perspective of a school counselor.



Sean Hembree currently serves as the Carroll County representative for the Maryland School Counselors Association (MSCA).

CONGRATULATIONS...

... To **Diane DeAtley** who was named the 2007 Maryland School Counselor of the Year. This award was presented to Ms. DeAtley at the annual Maryland School Counselor Association (MSCA) Conference.

... To **Beth Prestianni** who completed her requirements for National Board Certification for Teachers in the area of School Counseling.

Marissa Terrano serves as the school counselor representative to the Minority Family Forums that meet 6 times during the school year. The Forums are open to all families in the community and have been supportive and informational for both parents and children.

Counselors from around the county participate in professional development on a variety of topics, including but not limited to the following:

- Love & Logic
- Mean Girls
- Bullying
- Autism/ Asperger's
- Self-Injury
- Treating Trauma
- Children with Cancer
- College Admission/ Financial Aid
- Students w/ Addicted Parents
- Risk Factors for Suicide/ Violence
- MySpace.com
- Teen Anger
- CPI / PBIS

Please feel free to contact Judy Klinger if you would like more information on any of these topics.

CHARACTER EDUCATION IN OUR SCHOOLS



Peer Facilitators from each high school have been instrumental in planning and producing the monthly *BUILDING CHARACTER* newsletters. They also write and record the monthly WTRR-AM 1470 radio spots highlighting the character traits of the month. This project has enabled students to further realize and take ownership of their behavior and learning.

In February 2008, the Maryland Schools of Character Award was presented to **East Middle School**. This is the second year in a row that East Middle received this prestigious award. They were also honored in 2007 as a National Schools of Character finalist, along with 25 other schools nationwide.

Carrolltowne Elementary School and **East Middle School** were both named as a 2007 Carroll County "School of the Year" by the Maryland Center for Character Education.



A TIME TO SAY, "Thanks!"

CCPS school counselors would like to take this opportunity to thank our administrators and school staff for their continued support.

CARROLL COUNTY COUNSELORS AT A GLANCE

- 33 High School Counselors
- 19 Middle School Counselors
- 22.5 Elementary School Counselors
- 12 Crisis Intervention Specialists
- 6 Behavior Support Specialists



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