

SEMOSCA

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HANG IN THERE, CHRISTMAS IS COMING

Melanie Duncan -
SEMOSCA President

I kept trying to come up with a topic to write about for this newsletter and all that kept coming to mind was, "Hang in there, Christmas is coming". I think that this is the advice that I myself need this time of year. I hope that I am not the only one that feels this way but it seems like this is the time of year that I keep waiting for things to slow down at school so that I can catch up but with each passing day it seems like I get another week behind. We have to remember with all of the stresses of the counseling profession that we must also take a little time and do something for ourselves.

My weekly pick-me-up is my women's group at church on Wednesday nights called, Circle of Friends. I have a hard time saying no to most things but the one thing that I have been adamant about is not working with the children's ministry on Wednesday nights. I have been asked repeatedly to do this but you all know that when you work with children all day long you get no break if you

turn around and go work with children again in the evening especially when you have your own children at home who need your attention. My ladies' group always lifts my spirits and gives me the umph I need to make it through the rest of my week with the energy and passion that I want to pass on to my students. My weekends are usually spent with my family and most often include going to a ballgame or some other activity in which one of my children is participating. Truly enjoying my family also puts the wind back in my sail that I need to be positive and upbeat with my students and colleagues. I hope that each of you have a few pick-me-ups during your week that help keep you going strong.

Being a counselor, a few of the things that really boost my energy in my profession are attending meetings, workshops, and conferences where there are other counselors. I enjoy going to college information meetings and ACT workshops. Not because the information I am getting is so interesting but because I

know there is going to be a room full of counselors. There is such a comfort in being in a room full of people who know what you go through on a daily basis and deal with the same issues that you do. Just to be able to talk to each other and share ideas is tremendous. I hope that all of you attended the MSCA Fall Conference if you have the opportunity. This is the one time of the school year that I set aside for myself. Not only do I gain insight and new ideas into the counseling profession, I also get a little time to relax, socialize, and just plan have some fun with other counselors. Attending SEMOSCA meetings and workshops is another way to boost your energy and gain that sense of comradely. And remember, the times you feel the least like going are the times you usually gain the most.

Being a counselor is not an easy job. We wear at least a dozen different hats in our profession and we are always supposed to be the positive, cheery people who

pick everyone else up. Please don't forget to do something for yourself every once in awhile in the middle of fixing everyone else's problems. I hope to see you on November 26th at the Hickory Log where we can share a little counselor time and admire the beautiful Christmas decorations. And remember to hang in there, because Christmas is coming. Take time this Christmas holiday to enjoy your family, friends, and the spirit of the season. Let this time be your energizer to rocket you through the rest of your school year.

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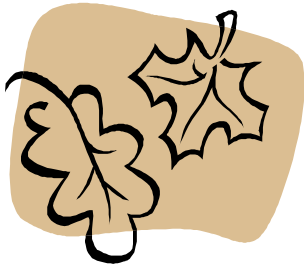
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SECONDARY LEVEL SHARING

Katy Andersson - Secondary Vice-President

Forty one secondary counselors met for level sharing as part of our fall SEMOSCA meeting. Debbie Below, Southeast Admissions Director, outlined admissions and financial aid procedures. Following the presentations, virtual instruction, graduation requirements, and Student Information System were topics for discussion.

Secondary counselors are starting to feel the effect of the opportunity for students to earn credit

through virtual instruction. With seats still available, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education once again opened up enrollment for the 9-12 program. Several counselors shared their building's current enrollment for virtual instruction.

Another policy that is being implemented across the state is that of graduation requirements. With new subjects and total requirements in place beginning with the graduating class of 2010, districts are implementing policies to handle

the two sets of requirements. As outlined in last spring's newsletter, it is up to each district to decide how to handle students who fail or repeat a grade.

As far as Student Information Systems, many present were able to share "areas of concern" with the implementation of the web version of the program. Issues with incorrect transcripts, multi-step processes, and the inability to share information with Career Centers were items causing frustration.

"BEFORE YOU
SPEAK, ASK
YOURSELF, IS IT
KIND, IS IT
NECESSARY, IS IT
TRUE, DOES IT
IMPROVE ON
SILENCE?"

SAI BABA

MIDDLE LEVEL SHARING

Janine Mayberry - Middle School Vice-President

There were 20 middle school counselors who attended the level sharing session. Our time began with Dr. Leitner sharing information on a possible PRBE training in March of 2008. She asked for our input using a survey which everyone completed.

The remainder of the time was spent sharing ideas and

discussing concerns within our schools. An area of concern centered on our lack of time to conduct small group sessions with our kids.

Another area of concern was the unmotivated child or students that do not turn in homework. Barb Macke mentioned that they use an Academic Lab which seems to be working. Other schools are using time before and/or after school.

Finally, a sheet was passed around the room for email addresses. Janine Mayberry would like for the middle school counselors to be able to connect with each other between SEMOSCA meetings. Sherri Scherer graciously offered to create a list serve for us.

Thanks to all who traveled near and far to share ideas!!!

REGISTER EARLY FOR THE FREE SCHOOL VIOLENCE TRAINING -

NOVEMBER 29, 2007 / DEXTER HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

Glenn Berry; Director of the Missouri Center for Safe Schools

SEPTEMBER NEW COUNSELOR WORKSHOP

Nancy Bland - SEMOSCA Past President

Welcome to all new counselors! Thirteen new counselors attended the workshop at SEMO on September 14th. I was certainly glad to meet each one of them and hope that they found the workshop beneficial to their early stages in our profession.

For the new counselors that could not make it to the workshop, I will take this opportunity to fill you in on what we discussed. First of all we talked about the natural feeling of being overwhelmed in your new responsibilities. This is an experience we all go through when we encounter something new that also has many expectations and responsibilities. New counselors are encouraged to network with other counselors. This can be done by contacting experienced counselors that you know or even contacting any member of your current SEMOSCA Governing Board. As I explained during the workshop I still need to consult other counselors for ideas and/or validation of my actions.

Remember it is good to ask for help. We are in a profession that encourages people to seek help and we need to do the same when it is needed.

Secondly, we discussed advocating for your program. It is important that all counselors let others know what is going on in your department. This can be done through newspaper articles, school newsletters, announcements, and/or monthly calendars. The only way to demonstrate the value of our profession is to let people know what we are doing. Attendees were encouraged to understand that we are not bragging about ourselves but just sharing information the same way classroom teachers do. It is important to get the word in order to demonstrate that we are an integral part of the education system.

Next, we discussed the MSCA Conference. Several handouts were provided on this topic, including a registration form for the regular conference and one for the pre-conference. Details about the many breakout sessions available to attendees

were also covered. The most important piece of information that a new conference attendee needs to know is that the breakout session presenters are volunteers; they are not paid for their breakout presentation. It is also important for them to know that in most cases the presenters are other counselors sharing an idea that works for them or that they have used in their own program.

Finally, Charlie Holt, MSCA Past President stopped by to speak with the attendees. He shared information about the welcome banquet for new counselors held at the Fall Conference and that this year there will be Ambassadors to help first time conference attendees with what ever they may need help with.

Once again, I would like to welcome you to SEMOSCA! We hope that you will attend every one of our four meetings this year and become an active part of your organization.

“IF SOMEONE LISTENS, OR STRETCHES OUT A HAND, OR WHISPERS A KIND WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT, OR ATTEMPTS TO UNDERSTAND, EXTRAORDINARY THINGS BEGIN TO HAPPEN.”

- LORETTA GIZARTIS

ELEMENTARY LEVEL SHARING

Rocky Boyer - Elementary Vice-President

Our level share was very successful. We had approximately 40 elementary counselors there! Items discussed included ways to improve attendance.

Dr. Leitner spoke on PROBE and MOVIP. Fredericktown and Portageville are implementing the School-Wide Positive Behavior Support program. If you are interested in implementing this program at your school, con-

tact RPDC.

We also discussed the counselor's role in Teacher Support Teams and procedures for referring students to outside counseling.



SEMOSCA

SOUTHEAST MISSOURI
SCHOOL COUNSELOR
ASSOCIATION

**WE'RE ON THE
WEB:**

[WWW4.SEMO.EDU/
COUNSEL/SEMOSCA/
INDEX.HTM](http://WWW4.SEMO.EDU/COUNSEL/SEMOSCA/INDEX.HTM)

FREE SCHOOL SAFETY TRAINING

**Nancy Bland; SEMOSCA
Critical Incident Re-
sponse Committee Chair**


Glenn Berry; Director of the Missouri Center for Safe Schools will be our presenter at the Dexter High School Auditorium on November 29, 2007 with registration beginning at 12:00 pm. He will be speaking to us on a variety of topics that directly concern the safety of our students and our schools.

The topics will include Internet Safety, Cyber Bullying, and Changing the Bullying Culture.

The world of school safety is forever changing and SEMOSCA is providing you with an opportunity to receive free training on topics that are the newest ways our students are put at risk on a daily basis. I know that I personally have had training on some of these subjects but still plan to attend. I am a counselor who believes that if I attend an in-service and take away one piece of information that I did not know before then the time I dedicated to the professional development was well worth it. To me this is especially true where school

safety is concerned.

SEMOSCA attempts to make its opportunities as convenient as possible to by hosting trainings on the same day as our meetings. So please plan to attend the Free School Safety Training at Dexter High School Auditorium on November 29. Registration will begin at 12:00 pm. The presentation will start at 12:30 sharp. Once the training is over we have our second meeting at the Hickory Log. I look forward to seeing you at Dexter!



Return Address:
107 N. Frederick
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701