

KNOWING OUR PURPOSE

BY TAHNEE BOWEN



Spring is in full force! It is hard to believe that the school year is more than three quarters over. This also means that the counseling profession is in overdrive. Just like you, I have been preparing for the impending end of the school year—upcoming testing, academic advisement, course selections, conflict resolution, and the list goes on. However, two events have caused me to reflect on my role as a school counselor.

First, I was honored to meet Governor Asa Hutchinson as he recognized the work school counselors do by signing a proclamation designating February 1-5, 2016, as National School Counseling Week in Arkansas. This special week honoring school counselors provides recognition for our role in implementing comprehensive school counseling programs, which are a vital part of the education process for all students. While at the capitol, our newly elected Governor asked us to tell a little about our role in education and said that he imagined we had a lot to do with primarily preparing students for careers. I do not mind telling you, dear colleagues, I was a little gobsmacked. Those of you who know me well may find this hard to fathom but...I had trouble finding words. It had been one of those weeks, and career preparation was the furthest from my mind. I tried to recover and express that career education was only a fraction of a school counselor's role. I began to describe the vast array of needs our students face daily and the multitude of directions in which we are pulled. Listening to myself, one word came to mind: triage.

Fast forward one month. I am working with my district's counselors on the Student Services Plan. As my colleagues and I ponder our daily activities, that day at the capitol and that word come to mind again—trriage, a cringe-worthy word, indeed. School counselors are so much more than triage. We are a key resource in the prevention of triage. We are so much more than career preparers, schedulers, test administrators, etc. Yet is that the perception parents, teachers, administrators, legislators, the community, and, most important, our students, have of us?

I encourage you to look at your school counseling program and your role within your school and community. What is your purpose? What part do you play in the success of your students? One thing is evident: we must be advocates for our profession and explain to all what a valuable role we have in student success. Maybe that day in the capitol, my momentary speechlessness was due to being star struck, maybe there just wasn't enough time to explain everything a school counselor does, or maybe I had not truly taken a good look at my role as a school counselor. Regardless of the reason, I assure you, I will be prepared the next time I am asked. ■■■

School counselors are so much more than triage. We are a key resource in the prevention of triage.

Contact Tahnee Bowen, ArSCA president, at tbowen@tigersmail.org.

ARKANSAS 2014 - 2015 LEADERSHIP TEAM

PRESIDENT

Tahnee Bowen, tbowen@tigersmail.org

PRESIDENT-ELECT

Angie Gill, Angie.gill@pgttigers.org

PRESIDENT-ELECT-ELECT

Lisa Riels, Iriels@hstdlions.org

PAST PRESIDENT

Cathy Edmonds, cedmonds@drewcentral.org

ELEMENTARY VICE PRESIDENT

Cindy Cossey, ccossey@hstdlions.org

MIDDLE/JR. HIGH VICE PRESIDENT

Elizabeth Nichols, nicholse@wolverines.k12.ar.us

SENIOR HIGH VICE PRESIDENT

Ramona Hill, rhill@dequeenleopards.org

POST-SECONDARY VICE PRESIDENT

Chris Riggins, criggins@uca.edu

CENTRAL REGION PRESIDENT

Donna Wilchie, wilchied@conwayschools.net

NORTH CENTRAL REGION PRESIDENT

Kim Liggett, kliggett@hps.k12.ar.us

NORTHEAST REGION PRESIDENT

Breta Dean, breta.dean@gctsd.k12.ar.us

NORTHWEST REGION PRESIDENT

Jane Cornell, jcornell@bentonvillek12.org

SOUTHEAST REGION PRESIDENT

Karon Parrish, karonparrish@gmail.com

SOUTHWEST REGION PRESIDENT

Denise Rogers, denise.rogers@bsd-lions.net

SECRETARY

Lynn Murray, lmurray@maynard.nesc.k12.ar.us

TREASURER

Susie Harvison, sonandsue@gmail.com

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION GUIDANCE REPS

Suzanne Knowles
suzanne.knowles@arkansas.gov
 Roger Palmer
roger.palmer@arkansas.gov

CRITICAL INCIDENT/CRISIS RESPONSE

Phyllis Curtis, pcurtis@bay.crcs.k12.ar.us

ETHICS

Open

FINANCE

Debbie Drake-Gordon, ddrake@elkinsdistrict.org

GRANT WRITER

Open

HISTORIAN

Alicia Donner, alicia.donner@gctsd.k12.ar.us

HOSPITALITY

Jolene Sanders
jolene.sanders@viloniaschools.org

MEMBERSHIP

Beverly Webb, beverly.webb@tasd7.net

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Cathy Edmonds, cedmonds@drewcentral.org

PUBLIC POLICY & LEGISLATION

Michele Gerhardt
mgerhardt@batesvilleschools.org
 Robin Hudson-Spark
robinhudson@bentonschools.org

PUBLIC RELATIONS & ADVOCACY

Susan Whatley, swhatley@pcssd.org

RESEARCH & HUMAN RIGHTS

Open

SUMMER CONFERENCE

Terri Callaway, terri.callaway@warrensd.org

TECHNOLOGY / WEBSITE

Robin Finley
 Toni Thorn
 Tawyna Shelton
heather.barron@arscacounselor@gmail.com