

Title of Session: School Counselors Corner

Moderator: BJ Berquist

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Room: School Counselors Group

BJB: while we wait for Barbara to log in, you might want to look at the resources in this group room

BJB . o O (there's a bunch!)

CeliaH: yes, I was reviewing then a little earlier, thank.

CeliaH: are you a counselor, already?

BJB: no, I'm just a helpdesk volunteer for Tapped In.

BJB . o O (here to help facilitate the discussion)

CeliaH: great, when do these start.

BJB: Barb may be having technical difficulties...like power failure... [Ed. Note: This was indeed the case!]

BJB: she lives in New Jersey and they had some wicked weather today

BJB: Hi, Alma

AlmaV: Hi

BJB: normally, the discussions start at the hour

BJB: Celia, you're interested in becoming a school counselor?

BJB: are you also, Alma?

CeliaH: yes, I'm starting my masters

AlmaV: at the moment, I will become a teacher, but when I get my master's I want to be a counselor

CeliaH: same here.

BJB nods to Alma and Celia. The world needs effective counselors!

JeffC: you should both join the group then.

BjB agrees with Jeff...and that was going to be my next suggestion...

JeffC: scroll down the top frame, and at the end of the "Welcome" box click the little "i" in the green circle next to the link for the group.

JeffC: then click the link to "join this group."

BjB : by joining the group, you might miss a real time text chat (like if Barb can't log in)...

BjB : but you'll be able to communicate with all the members of the group by posting to the discussion board

JeffC: that will add this room to your Favorite Places menu, as well as allow you to post to the threaded Discussion board (which forwards via email to all group members).

BjB : so you have lots of colleagues with whom to collaborate...even after you're done school

BjB . o O (which will happen in the blink of an eye, even if it doesn't seem like that right now!)

CeliaH: thanks, I just did, I need all the help I can get.

CeliaH: with a lot of question.

JeffC: you could post to Discussion then with your questions... someone might respond today... or even in a few months.

BjB : and you'll also have access to Barbara's expertise

CeliaH: great, but Jeff I hope it won't be months

BjB : do counselors get certified K-12?

BjB : I know Barbara does elementary level kids.

CeliaH: don't know if they actually get certified for a certain grade, I know you can be at any grade level.

CeliaH: or campus

BjB nods to Celia. Thanks

BjB : Counselors are needed more than ever in the classrooms!

BjB . o O (and for the students.)

JeffC: I just made the comment about months, because when you post to the Discussion board... it's there...

CeliaH: thanks Jeff

CeliaH: Jeff, are you a counselor?

BjB : good point, Jeff...something to consider also is just read all the posts on the discussion board...

BjB : they may be old, but they also might be the same questions you have

CeliaH: ok, good to know

CeliaH: if Barbara does not show, will this discussion be rescheduled?

BjB : that's one of the advantages of Tapped In...it preserves an archive of discussion posts

BjB : Celia, I just emailed her that very question!

BjB . o O (but if she's out of power, she won't see it right away :-))

BjB : I can post something to the discussion board if Barbara reschedules

CaroleF joined the room.

BjB : hi, Carole!

CaroleF: hello

CeliaH: ok, that would help

BjB : Carole, the discussion leader isn't here....I'm thinking she may have a power outage with all these wicked winds we've had today

BjB . o O (Barbara is in New Jersey)

CaroleF: oh ok good to know

BjB : we were just discussing whether she would reschedule the discussion

BjB : I recommend you join the group and then if Barb reschedules, I'll post something to the discussion board

CaroleF: ok

BjB : do you know how to join this group, Carole?

CaroleF: do I go up to the action and click the join button?

BjB : do you see the welcome note above the chat screen?

CaroleF: yes

BjB : the next to the last sentence is This is the group room for School Counselors Corner

BjB : click on the green i in that welcome note sentence

BjB : then you'll see join this group in the top left

BjB . o O (the join in Actions is to move to a room where another person is located)

AlmaV: hi...I am sorry, but I was looking at the rubric for my class...I cannot be in a session before doing the tour...Maybe next time

JeffC: well... this isn't going to be a session today anyway.

JeffC: who's your prof, Alma?

BjB : maybe by the time Barb reschedules, you'll have done the tour, Alma :-)

BjB . o O (and we promise not to tell Evelyn)

TravisPa joined the room.

BjB : Carole, are you interested in becoming a school counselor?

BjB : hi, Travis

BjB : Travis, the discussion leader isn't here....I'm thinking she may have a power outage with all these wicked winds we've had today

TravisPa : Hi, what are we talking about?

CaroleF: I am actually a new classroom teacher but I thought I could get some good ideas

BjB nods to Carole....take a look at all the resources Barbara has stored here

BjB : Travis, we're kind of discussing the importance of school counselors today

BjB : Carole, do you plan on collaborating with your school counselor?

BjB : counselors can give you great ideas for character building and self esteem issues and bullying issues

CaroleF: yes, we have had some lessons where she has come in but I love getting ideas from lots of different sources

BjB : and I just attended a discussion about how elementary children who miss a lot of school are more prone to dropping out before they graduate

BjB : so absenteeism is a big issue right now

CeliaH: that's a problem where I am, so I know how important it is to help with this issue

BjB nods to Celia. Perhaps I'll suggest that as a topic for Barbara's next discussion

BjB : there was a live chat on edweek yesterday on that topic

CaroleF: goodbye everyone

CaroleF left the room (signed off).

TravisPa : I'm a data guy. I am director of counseling at a Virginia middle school.

TravisPa : My principal loves the data that I give him on issues in our school.

BjB : ahhhh, a number cruncher ;-)

BjB : do you tabulate data on absenteeism?

CeliaH: what kind of data do look at?

TravisPa : Our state assessments are called SOL (standards of learning). We have benchmark tests. I look at data to figure out which students need remediation classes.

BjB : Here's the transcript for the edweek chat: http://www.edweek.org/chat/transcript_10_27_08.html

BjB : do you find that the number of students needing remediation is dropping, Travis?

TravisPa : I am also in charge of scheduling. My school is 6-8 grades with about 625 students in Virginia. Everybody else?

BjB : I'm just here to poke sticks at you all and see what responses I get ;-)

TravisPa : No, we continue to assess the weakest students no matter how high the scores.

BjB . o O (seriously, I'm on Tapped In helpdesk and trying to facilitate this discussion without the discussion leader)

CeliaH: you're doing a good job.

BjB : but do the weakest students seem to be gaining ground?

BjB . o O (are they learning anything....will they ever?)

TravisPa : Yes. Do Alma and Jeff have anything to add?

BjB . o O (don't get Jeff started on NCLB! We'll be here all night!)

BjB : Alma and Celia are planning on being school counselors

BjB : they're both in Texas

BjB . o O (Texas has it's own problems right now with education!)

CeliaH: you have any advice, Travis.

TravisPa : Counselors have to make themselves valuable to the school. If a counselor is doing the minimum, he/she could be the first to go.

AlmaV left the room (signed off).

BjB : can you give us an example, Travis? Is the value perceived as contributions within the classrooms? With data collection?

BjB . o O (or with a combination of the two?)

CeliaH: exactly, in what ways can we contribute?

TravisPa : Stay involved with your administrators. Find out what the students or teachers need to be successful and have solutions. Become a person who always seeks to have possible solutions. I'll give an example.

BjB : thanks, Travis! You're our expert here today :-)

TravisPa : My school used to have a 7 period schedule, but the teachers wanted more instructional time. So I created a 6 period day that added an average of 13 minutes more to each class period. I showed it to the principal and we went with it.

TravisPa : The teachers liked it. One less period to teach and more instructional time!

BjB . o O (and longer lunch!)

CeliaH: that's great, I'm curious, though, what was cut out?

BjB : did that schedule change effect the number of students in a class?

BjB . o O (I'm curious also, Celia)

TravisPa : we had a period for electives and a reading content class. the reading content class was cut. Now we have health/pe, math, Language, science, social studies, and elective.

BjB : so the reading content class was absorbed into all the other classes?

BjB : I'm all for the longer periods...makes sustaining learning much easier

TravisPa : The class size increased maybe 3 to 4 students in some classes. The reading content class was not successful, so it would have been replaced with some other class.

BjB : great job, Travis!

CeliaH: good job, thanks for sharing..

BjB : This is elementary or secondary level?

BjB . o O (I forget)

CeliaH: should be secondary.

TravisPa : Not all your ideas will adopted, however, you want to be a person who is about solutions. not adding to the problem or not contributing to solutions.

TravisPa : This is a middle school grades 6-8

BjB nods. Do you provide curricular materials to the teachers for topics like bullying and character development?

BjB . o O (Barbara had a discussion on emotionally safe schools that was interesting)

TravisPa : Also, when you see a problem in the school, make administrators aware and

also have possible solutions. Having possible solutions is key, that's what makes you valuable!

BjB nods to Travis. It's easy to point out problems and criticize...having solutions is a great idea!

BjB : Celia, do you have any other questions?

BjB . o O (I'll forward this transcript to Barbara and see what she wants to do.)

CeliaH: no, Travis has been very helpful.

BjB cheers for Travis. Travis, I hope you've joined the group?

CeliaH: I will be signing off now, but how do we get a transcript of this session?

TravisPa : When there are no problems at the time, look to improve something or collect data on a situation. Always be moving in a positive direction. Once when I had down time I improved my new student registration process.

BjB : do you know how to join a group, Travis?

BjB : Celia, about 10 minutes after you log out you will get your transcript in your email

CeliaH: ok, it was great talking with you and getting your input and advice.

TravisPa : Stay busy solving, improving or collecting data! No I do not know how to join a group.

BjB : working with middle schoolers is a trip, Travis ;-) I'm sure everyone appreciated the streamlining for new students

BjB : do you see the welcome note above this chat, Travis?

CeliaH: you have a lot to offer, Travis, you should join.

BjB . o O (if you've detached, the welcome note is on your web window)

BjB smiles...thanks, Celia!

TravisPa : Counselors must be able to multi-task and be organized. yes I see it.

BjB : the next to the last sentence in the welcome note is This is the group room for School Counselors Corner

BjB : in that sentence is a green i Click on the green i

BjB : you will see Join this group in the top left of the page

TravisPa : done

BjB : good job!

TravisPa : so explain what I just did?

BjB : now you will be able to receive and post messages to the discussion board

BjB : this allows all the members of the group to collaborate asynchronously

BjB . o O (not many posts so you won't get a lot of mail)

BjB : but, for example, if Barbara wants to reschedule the chat, she can post that info to the discussion board

BjB . o O (only members of a group can post to the discussion board)

TravisPa : where is discussion board?

BjB : click on Room View at the top of the web window

BjB : on the left of your screen is a blue menu...welcome, etc

BjB : in that menu is Discussion. click on that and you'll see the discussion board

TravisPa : ok

BjB : the discussions are an archive of questions and topics discussed by members

BjB : pretty nice discussion for not having a discussion leader! And now you're keeping me up past my bedtime!

BjB : thanks so much for your contributions, Travis and Celia

TravisPa : Thanks, Good night & God Bless!

CeliaH: bye

BjB waves goodnight