



SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Randy I. Dorn Old Capitol Building · PO BOX 47200 · Olympia, WA 98504-7200 · <http://www.k12.wa.us>

January 7, 2012

Washington School Counselors,

The public schools in Washington State are responsible for providing high quality learning opportunities for all students and to assist them in becoming capable and confident learners, prepared for career and life.

Having worked in the schools for 34 years, there is no question that school counselors have the ability and the mission to positively impact the lives of all students, from the most vulnerable to the most fortunate. I believe that all kids need to be supported in becoming college, career, and life-ready. School counselors are central to that work in our schools.

Comprehensive school guidance and counseling programs provide a school environment by which school counselor skills and compassion can achieve optimal student results.

The alignment of school counselor efforts with the missions of school districts and the state is a priority focus in our Secondary Education and School Improvement Division at the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). We are committed to assisting school counselors and other guidance staff in helping ALL students acquire critical knowledge and skills in the academic, career, and personal/social aspects of student development.

Our division advances comprehensive guidance and counseling through our collaborative efforts in:

- a) Navigation 101 and other career and college readiness initiatives;
- b) Including school counselors in the workgroups developing and delivering our state's response to dropout prevention, intervention, and retrieval;
- c) Working directly with guidance and counseling programs, counselor educators, school counselors, and other guidance and counseling program staff to build better tools to support effective guidance and counseling practice;
- d) Sharing effective prevention/intervention programs for our most vulnerable students with school counselors

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I believe that school counselors are central to the mission of our schools. They are in a strategic position to support school improvement initiatives and to be collaborative leaders with building principals and other stakeholders to advocate for, and facilitate better outcomes through the development of effective programs.

It is my pleasure to join Superintendent Dorn in recognizing the contributions of Washington school counselors as they implement programs making positive differences in the lives of our students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Newell".

Dan Newell, Assistant Superintendent
Secondary Education and School Improvement

"Professional school counselors serve a vital role in maximizing student success. Through leadership, advocacy and collaboration, professional school counselors promote equity and access to rigorous educational experiences for all students. Professional school counselors support a safe learning environment and work to safeguard the human rights of all members of the school community and address the needs of all students through culturally relevant prevention and intervention programs that are a part of a comprehensive school counseling program." The Role of the Professional School Counselor, ASCA, revised, 2009.