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One of my friends tells a story about how he once entered a hotel elevator, and briefly nodded to the two men already inside as he reached for the button to his floor. As the elevator started moving, he realized who the two men were: Lou Piniella and Dave Niehaus.

A baseball enthusiast and dedicated Mariners fan, my friend always carries his “lucky baseball,” and began pulling it from his coat pocket. Immediately, the gruff Piniella, noticed the action and grumbled, “I’m not signing any autographs today.” Respectfully my friend responded, “Actually, I wanted Mr. Niehaus’ autograph, sir.” My friend ends his story that Niehaus grinned from ear to ear.

I remembered this story when I heard about the crowd that recently gathered at Safeco field in remembrance of Niehaus. The event, initially scheduled from noon to 3p.m., was extended an additional hour as over 3,400 people waited to pay their respects and say goodbye to “Mr. Mariner.” Baseball fans interviewed at the event expressed their sadness over the loss of a legend, which struck me as relevant to school counselors.

Niehaus was not owner, manager or even player, but for so many fans he was the voice of the Mariners; he was the unofficially authorized representative – how fans connected with the team. As school counselors, we aren’t owner or manager of the building. Administrators lead the team in an official capacity, yet for so many students, parents or fellow educators, we are the voice, the face, the representative they seek when they need information or help. The stakes are high and, much to my friend’s chagrin I would assert, even higher than in baseball. As school counselors, we serve our students through similar leadership.

Our students may not seek our autographs or consider us legends, but Niehaus’ mission was communication – how appropriate since as school counselors, we have the potential to lead within our buildings by advocating for students and fostering positive building-wide systemic change. We regularly communicate with all our students. We help students and parents navigate the educational system whether our play-by-play involves an individualized education plan meeting, graduation requirements or behavioral concerns. Providing comprehensive guidance and school counseling, we can lead our team to success. We become legends by serving all students.

Richard Cleveland, WSCA president, can be reached at rcleveland@everettsd.org.

As school counselors, we aren’t owner or manager of the building. Administrators lead the team in an official capacity, yet for so many students, parents or fellow educators, we are the voice, the face, the representative they seek when they need information or help.
Counselor advocacy has multiple layers. We need to advocate for ourselves, but we also need to advocate for our students. Since time is precious and we never seem to have enough of it, I am so thankful to be a part of WSCA as well as the American School Counselor Association (ASCA).

These two organizations provide strong advocacy for all Washington school counselors. Knowing that a strong membership speaks with one voice to legislators and state educational leaders on my behalf is reassuring, so I can focus on my primary job: advocating for students.

Every week parents contact me for help. These parents are frustrated and feel that they are out of options, so school counselors advocate for these students and their parents. We use our expertise and experience to identify deficiencies, gaps in skill level or lack of motivation. We act as a liaison between students, parents and educators. Our advocacy makes the difference for students and allows them to be successful. We need to focus on the students we serve, and in order to do this we need to maintain a strong membership at the state level.

Take advantage of the benefits of membership in WSCA and ASCA. Join forces with school counselors in our state and nation to advocate for our needs. Membership is powerful, and there is no better way to advocate for our profession than as a unified group.

Jeannie Beierle, WSCA high school level vice president, can be reached at jbcounselor@live.com.

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WSCA/OSCA 2011 ANNUAL CONFERENCE: “SCHOOL COUNSELORS ROCK!”

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Christopher A. Sink, Ph.D.

Christopher A. Sink, Ph.D., professor of counselor education at Seattle Pacific University, has been active in the school counseling profession for nearly 30 years. Prior to serving as a school counseling professor, he worked as a secondary and postsecondary school counselor. His many years of editorial experience in counseling-related journals include ASCA’s Professional School Counseling Journal and ACA’s Counseling and Values in areas related to school counseling and educational psychology. Sink is a strong advocate for systemic and strengths-based, school-based counseling. Currently, his research agenda includes topics examining the outcomes of comprehensive school counseling programs, research methods in school counseling and spirituality as an important feature of adolescent resiliency. Sink’s latest book is “Mental Health Interventions for School Counselors,” and he’s coauthor of the forthcoming “Group Counseling in the Schools.”

Brian Law, ASCA President

Law received the 2003-04 Georgia School Counselors (GSCA) Human Rights Award, Region 10 Elementary Counselor of the Year and Georgia Elementary Counselor of the Year award. He went on to receive the 2004-05 National Elementary Counselor of the Year. He received the 2009-10 Georgia Secondary School Counselor of the Year award and was an ASCA Top 10 School Counselor of the Year Finalist for 2009.

He has served on the GSCA leadership team for eight years and served as president for 2008-09. Currently he serves as the GSCA finance chair. He has recently become a part-time adjunct professor in the department of psychology and counseling at Valdosta State University teaching graduate school counseling students.

SCHOOL COUNSELORS ROCK

The school counseling profession is one that strengthens student academic and personal growth. School counselors are valued school employees who are highly respected. It is our role to support students and their families. We must become change agents in the school counseling profession by talking about the important work we do, our impact, and the high value of our work. We must share our stories, our curriculum, and our work with the media. We must build a national and global voice for school counselors.

PRECONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

Helping Teachers With Motivating Students to Learn: Techniques That Really Work, presented by Chris Sink, Ph.D., Leslie Rondeau, Lauren Burris

Motivating students to learn is tricky business. It drives teachers to distraction when they genuinely try to reach kids with a bad attitude. How can school counselors lend a hand to teachers in the motivational process? Taking a strengths-based and learner-centered approach, participants conceptually and practically explore key motivation topics that resonate with teachers. Look at the different sides of motivation, and address individual differences related to ethnic diversity, special needs, etc.

In this multimedia session, participants (1) talk about conceptual issues that shape students’ motivation to learn; (2) discuss how to support teachers as they motivate students to achieve, improve academic self-efficacy and reach academic potential; (3) share their student motivation victories and struggles; and (4) experience small-group conversation with real-life student motivational issues.

Sink is a strong advocate for systemic and strengths-based school-based counseling. His current research includes the outcomes of comprehensive school counseling programs, research methods in school counseling and spirituality as an important feature of adolescent resiliency.

Spanish for School Counselors, presented by Sarah Rowan

Schools and other educational facilities across the country have a great need for Spanish language and cultural diversity training due to the growing number of non-English speaking students and families they encounter. Participants in this interactive workshop learn basic Spanish language skills. The workshop meets the needs of beginning and intermedi-
We Hate Sarah: Games, Activities and Discussion on Creating Emotionally Safe Schools, presented by Peggy Rubens-Ellis

In this full-day workshop, learn to empower preteen girls to make healthy choices about friendship problems. Look at current research, explore feelings toward relational aggression (RA), discover the affects of RA and learn how to create an emotionally safe school. Participate in activities that engage higher-level thinking skills about RA. All activities are easy to facilitate, require few materials and fit in with current research. Discuss and set goals for your school. Wear comfortable clothing and come prepared to play; participate and share your valuable insights. Leave with a variety of engaging activities and ideas and inspiration for creating an emotionally safe school.

Rubens-Ellis is a practicing elementary school counselor and the founder of Creative Crossings, a company committed to helping preteen girls cross through adolescence with self-esteem intact. She is passionate about helping girls emerge from the adolescence with a strong voice, high self-respect and a positive relationship with their female elders and peers. She presents to educators and professionals such as the Association of Experiential College, Washington School Counselor Association, Pacific Northwest Association of Independent Schools, American School Counselor Association and the Mean Girls Conference. She also presents her program for girls in collaboration with the YWCA, YMCA, the Girl Scouts, The Oregon Girls Summit, Big Brothers/Big Sisters and other schools and organizations in Washington and Oregon.

The Dependable Strengths Articulation Process: Identifying Strengths, Building Self-Esteem and Increasing Mutual Respect, presented by Allen Boivin-Brown and Beth Landy

Participants experience key steps of the Dependable Strengths Articulation Process (DSAP). Begin to identify your own unique pattern of skills, talents and abilities (Dependable Strengths®), gain self-esteem and increase appreciation for others. This powerful process was originated by the pioneer of career-and-employment counseling, Bernard Hal dane, Ph.D., refined for over 50 years and

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Once you join WSCA SCENE you are eligible to win one of two Apple iPod Touch 8 GB (4th Generation). The drawing occurs at the annual conference Feb. 17-19, 2011, in Vancouver, Wash. We will draw two names randomly from the pool of WSCA SCENE members and announce the two iPod Touch winners at the conference. Sign up today for WSCA SCENE, and tell your fellow Washington school counselors to sign up for this unique opportunity to win one of these cool devices.

Qualified participants must be a member of WSCA SCENE, hold a valid Washington school counselor certificate and be presently working as a school counselor in Washington State or a school counseling student enrolled in a state school counseling program at a university in Washington state.

For more information about WSCA SCENE, visit http://connectshaman.na5.acrobat.com/wascaSCENE/.

-ate Spanish speakers. Discuss cultural issues for a better understanding of the Hispanic population’s background and relevant cultural values.

Rowan, the founder of ¡Salud! Spanish programs, has more than 20 years experience in teaching, translation and curriculum development in a variety of educational environments including universities, elementary and secondary schools, private companies and healthcare facilities. A group of Spanish-speaking school counselors assists Rowan in teaching this workshop.

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researched at the University of Washington. It is a foundational step in knowing one’s best self and reaching full potential. The DSAP is an essential tool for any school counseling professional. This session gives participants valuable preparation for reviewing the elementary, middle and high school adaptations of the DSAP for students at a later session in the conference. Discover what the DSAP does for you and how it helps students.

Landy is a college-career counselor and instructor with more than 18 years experience, first at the University of Oregon and at Lane Community College since 1998. A critical foundation of her work is DSAP: helping people discover, articulate and develop confidence in their strengths and potential. Landy is a past-president of the Oregon Career Development Association and a past board chair of Oregon Career Information System.

Boivin-Brown is president of the Center for Dependable Strengths, a nonprofit charity in Seattle, and former career counselor for the Everett School District for more than 20 years. He is president of the board of directors for the Washington Occupational Information System.

Child Abuse for School Counselors-Contemporary Child Abuse Issues, presented by Manivong Ratts, Ph.D.

This full day workshop explores types of child abuse, mandatory reporting requirements, teacher consultation, sexual predators, Child Protective Services and civil/criminal systems as they relate to child abuse. This workshop meets the requirement for Washington State Continuing Education Staff Associate school counselor certification. Participants complete an exit exam to receive 10 clock hours for this workshop.

Ratts is assistant professor and school counseling program director in the department of counseling and school psychology at Seattle University. He is a nationally certified counselor, a licensed school counselor and serves on the editorial board of the Journal of Counseling and Development and the Journal for Social Action in Counseling and Psychology.

Ratts’ writes and researches on topics of social justice, multicultural and advocacy competence and school counseling. Specifically, his teaching, scholarship and service focus on advancing social justice counseling as the “fifth force” among counseling paradigms.
MENTORING THE NEXT GENERATION

The benefits of conference attendance for school counseling students

BY CHER EDWARDS

One of my favorite roles as a school counselor professor and practicum/internship supervisor is that of mentor for the next generation of school counselors. Coursework and clinical experiences within the program provide obvious opportunities to support student learning and professional development. Faculty and supervisors can continue to build on this excellent foundation by encouraging student attendance and participation at professional conferences such as the upcoming Washington/Oregon School Counselor Association joint state conference in Vancouver, Wash.

Professional conference involvement can benefit school counseling students during their program and beyond. Current students can cultivate relationships with individuals from other programs, school counselors and school counseling professors throughout the state who may serve as support systems during their current program. As students prepare for graduation and professional practice, the relationships formed at conferences may serve graduates well during their search for employment. Professional organization membership, such as WSCA, demonstrates a commitment to the profession and to ongoing professional development. Conference attendance cultivates relationships with professional organizations, encouraging ongoing membership which supports our profession and in turn, provides opportunities for leadership and advocacy.

As practitioners, school counselors can stay current on issues in the field and best-practice recommendations – a great way to stay up to date and informed as a professional school counselor. Networking continues past the job search phase; relationships formed at conferences provide school counselors with resources for consultation and collaboration. Conferences offer a venue for students and school counselors to give back to their profession through volunteering, serving on the board and giving professional presentations.

The benefits of conference attendance are great for students at every stage of their school counseling program and professional development. School counselor professors and supervisors can foster this connection in the students that they mentor through the following:

- Make students aware of the conference dates and opportunities for attendance. E-mail students links to conference information, and provide conference registration materials in class or during supervision.
- Seek scholarship opportunities for students to attend. WSCA provides scholarships for volunteers. Some universities and school settings have scholarships or professional development funds that can be accessed for conferences. If conference requires travel or accommodations, support students in carpooling or room sharing.
- Talk to students about the benefits of attending the conference, including networking and professional-development opportunities.
- Encourage students to submit presentation proposals. Offer to review the proposals and provide feedback. Consider copresenting with students or linking interested students together for joint presentations.
- Promote professional organization membership throughout the year, not just at conference time, to facilitate a culture of professional involvement at your university or site. Talk with students about the benefits of being a part of the organization both personally and professionally and how membership supports the profession as a whole. Share details of the purpose of professional organizations including how membership dues are spent and the organization’s contribution to the profession.

ATTENTION STUDENTS

Students can take the lead. If you have not been approached by a faculty member or supervisor, take the initiative to contact them to see what resources are available to you. Contact WSCA directly. WSCA board members encourage student involvement and are here to help. Ask about scholarships, reduced conference fees for student attendance, and presentation and leadership opportunities. Professional organization involvement and conference participation provides you with a great skill base as you continue your journey from student to professional and soon after, as a mentor to the next generation of our profession.

Cher Edwards, WSCA postsecondary vice president, can be reached at edwards@spu.edu.
CONFESSIONS OF A RELUCTANT ADVOCATE

Be a compassionate school counselor and a passionate force to be reckoned with.

BY JAUNITA HILL

I am the hand-holding, tear-wiping, friendship-mending, puppet-using instructor that often comes to mind when you envision an elementary school counselor. I am also passionate about my work with students, families and staff. I strive to understand and implement a comprehensive program that serves the academic, social and career needs of students in my school. I seek out professional development about research-based best practices in my field. I participate in multidisciplinary teams at building, district and community levels. I believe that handholding compassion balanced with passion, drive and advocacy is what my students need and what makes me successful in this field.

Here is my confession. I have been selfish with my abilities and a bit afraid to advocate beyond the comfortable boundaries of my school and community. The reasons are many: small children, national boards and other distractions. And as a result I’m quick to respond “not now” when asked to get involved in WSCA despite a sincere interest in professional advocacy.

However, I am glad I finally made the leap and agreed to get active on the WSCA Board. The board members have made my transition delightful, and all they bring to our association inspires me. The opportunities to participate at the state level are both challenging and inspiring.

I challenge you to step outside of your comfort zone. I challenge you to believe that you can be a compassionate school counselor and a force to be reckoned with. I challenge you to find a way to share your gifts and talents on behalf of your students and fellow school counselors across the state. Challenging times ahead will require our collective voice, our collective energy and our collective resolve to move forward this year. The WSCA board is here to help you find your voice.

Jaunita Hill, WSCA elementary level vice president, can be reached at nitascott@harbornet.com.

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A PLACE AT THE TABLE

Every decision-making team needs your role as a student advocate.

BY DIANA GRUMAN

As we enter the season of family gatherings and group parties, some of us may celebrate Hanukkah or the Solstice and others Kwanza or Christmas. No matter our reason for assembling, we’ve all had the experience of sharing a meal with multiple generations. In my house, I remember the “tween” years when was I was assigned to the table with the smaller children. It was awkward. At that age, sitting at the kids table felt like I was not recognized as a contributor to the “real” conversations with the adults.

When I talk to school counselors, they sometimes feel they have not been invited to “sit at the big table” – the place where important decisions are made in the school building. They contribute to student-assistance teams, work on committees or prepare materials for large-scale programs, but sometimes these duties are on the periphery of influence.

Are you part of the group that shapes policy in your school building or district? Do school board members know you by name because you attend meetings or volunteer for a task force? Are you present when the team determines next year’s school-improvement plan goals?

PULL UP A CHAIR

When we talk about advocacy, we often mean the energy we put into advocating for our students. In this role, we give voice to a silent individual or group in an effort to change the system. As part of these efforts, we must be in the room when decisions are made that affect these students.

If the decision-making bodies in your setting haven’t invited you, it is time to volunteer. The ASCA National Model promotes the school counseling program as integral to the mission of the school. It is time to move our place setting and settle in for business at the big table.

Diana Gruman, WSCA president-elect, can be reached at diana.gruman@wwu.edu.
“What should I do when my principal asks for specific information about students?”

Contemporary school-reform literature consistently notes the importance of school counselor-principal relationships, and that their collaboration is an essential approach for improving services to students. Yet one of the most difficult issues for school counselors and principals is student confidentiality in the school counseling relationship.

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) 2010 Ethical Standards for School Counselors includes references to school counselors’ responsibilities to other school professionals such as faculty, staff and administrators. For example, Standard D.1 specifies that the school counselor “inform appropriate school officials of conditions that may be potentially disruptive or damaging to the school’s mission, personnel and property while honoring the confidentiality between the counselee and [school] counselor.”

According to the American Counseling Association, when required to disclose confidential information without a client’s permission, school counselors are to reveal only essential information. For example, even during an individualized educational program meeting in which all participants have a general idea of a student’s counseling goals and how these relate to other academic goals, school counselors are expected to present information related to the student’s progress in meeting those goals but should not disclose specific details of their counseling sessions. School counselors may have difficulty determining the proper ethical standards from the professional organizations if expected to keep student disclosures confidential within limits but also to inform school officials of potentially destructive or disruptive acts of students.

ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS

Despite the advent of the ASCA National Model, which has established a clearer definition of the school counselor’s role, many administrators may not be aware of school counselors’ ethical requirements. According to Rhonda Williams, Ed.D, in her 2009 ASCA School Counselor article, “Confidentiality vs. Principal Relationships,” a recent study at the University of Colorado, at Colorado Springs, documented that students were unaware school counselors even had ethical standards. That might explain their lack of understanding about the impact breaching confidentiality might have on the relationship between students and school counselors.

DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

Principals and school counselors often differ in their perception of a productive school environment and the limits of confidentiality. This different perspective on confidentiality may lead to a conflict and ineffective use of time and energy for both principals and school counselors. According to Williams, most principals assess an effective school environment from a macro level. They must consider the big picture regarding the school’s operations. They fulfill a multitude of roles including disciplinarian, curriculum planner, supervisor, negotiator, budgeter and change agent. Principals operate from the perspective of what is done for one must be done for all. They assess the impact to the safety and climate of the entire educational institution. Some principals view confidentiality as an impediment to collaborative problem solving. They may feel that only one side of the story is being heard under the pretext of confidentiality.

School counselors, on the other hand, operate from the micro level, which demands they assess how each student becomes self aware and self motivated to achieve academic success. School coun-
Professional school counselors struggle with the dilemma of respecting student privacy and confidentiality while working closely with principals and other school personnel. They do not decide to breach confidentiality easily, and when they do they provide what they believe to be sound and justifiable reasons for doing so, relying on ethical and legal standards as well as professional-personal priorities and values. They balance confidentiality between both personal and professional values as well as other factors. How shall I act? What is necessary information? What constitutes the best interest of the student? They consider the contextual applications regarding confidentiality such as maturity of the student or what is considered of legitimate educational interest.

**DIFFERENT TRAINING**

Research shows that school principals and professional school counselors often approach student concerns from different perspectives based on their training and philosophical orientation. They also have different approaches for addressing the same student concerns and use different frameworks for dealing with challenges. School counselors advocate for individual students while principals focus more on the school as a whole.

A recent study found that only slightly more than two-thirds of the school counselors surveyed said their training helped them understand how much to disclose to principals regarding student confidences. Even fewer elementary principals stated their training prepared them to know to what extent school counselors should disclose. The study concluded that both school administrators and school counselors viewed their professional training as inadequate to prepare them to work together and understand the boundaries of confidentiality in this relationship. Since administrators and school counselors receive separate training, they have few opportunities to learn about each other’s roles, responsibilities and perspectives.

Despite differences in professional preparation and orientation, research confirms that collaboration among principals and school counselors results in more effective programs and services that positively influence student academic, personal and social growth. Numerous studies identify the unique and powerful relationship that emerges between a school counselor and principal when they collaborate on student issues. This relationship appears to develop over time as a “felt sense” of trust that is built "unconsciously.” Risk-taking often represents the evolving relationship, but once trust is established with the principal, the principal-school counselor working relationship improves. This suggests that principals and school counselors need to work toward building trust and establishing a mutually respectful relationship.

**STRATEGIES**

**Regular Meetings**

A number of strategies to build strong collaborative relationships between school counselors and principals have surfaced. Regular meetings allow the team to establish a respectful and trusting relationship. These meetings provide a time to discuss ongoing student issues, to develop processes and protocols for handling complex and sensitive student issues and to become familiar with differing perspectives on critical issues like confidentiality of student information. In order to facilitate administrators’ awareness of confidentiality’s complexity, school counselors should explain their ethical concerns about harming the student if they reveal confidential information.

**Trust**

When we examine issues of collaboration between school counselors and their principals and student confidentiality, we find that the relationship is most productive when each respects the role of the other including ethical and legal guidelines that shape their roles. When trust is present, principals don’t ask school counselors to break confidentiality. Likewise, when trust characterizes the relationship, school counselors openly advocate for students but respect the principal’s need to discipline students and maintain a safe school environment. Both parties understand and respect the role of the other and acknowledge how that role contributes to the health of the school. It is important for school counselors and principals to form partnerships based on knowledge, trust and positive regard.

**Clear Policies and Procedures**

Strong relationships between school counselors and principals are built by clearly voiced policies and procedures for
handling confidentiality issues where their roles might differ. Procedures for sharing information should be in place and understood by both parties. “Collaborative ethics” means constant, effective communication. It entails having the hard discussion before the crisis occurs. It means educating each other on the boundaries, both legal and ethical. Most importantly, it means mutual respect from both sides and building a collaborative relationship.

**Advocacy**

Because school counselors’ roles include student advocacy, they are often at odds with other school personnel. Principals who understand the importance of confidentiality demonstrate respect for the importance of confidentiality by interceding with other school personnel to support the importance of confidentiality in the student-school counselor relationship.

**Sharing Ethical Standards**

Confidentiality is a concept based on ethical principles, so school counselors should share information about ethical standards of practice for school counseling. By reviewing pertinent standards with principals, school counselors can better explain their role and professional behavior. Section A.2 of the ASCA Ethical Standards addresses confidentiality, and your review should specifically focus on A.2.f, which states:

“The professional school counselor protects the confidentiality of information received in the counseling relationship as specified by federal and state laws, written policies and applicable ethical standards. Such information is only to be revealed to others with the informed consent of the student, consistent with the counselor’s ethical obligations.”

A.2.g states,

“The professional school counselor recognizes his/her primary obligation for confidentiality is to the student but balances that obligation with the understanding of the legal and inherent rights of parents/guardians to be the guiding voice in their children’s lives.”

These standards pertain to the school counselor’s relationship with students and other school personnel, such as principals. Future conflicts can be prevented by sharing results of various studies. School counselors can demonstrate their commitment to confidentiality as well as provide information about ethical, legal, procedural or other conditions that may lead to breaching it. Sharing this information enhances trust in school counselors as professionals who act according to ethical principles that are primarily in the best interest of the client, which contributes to the enhancement of the school counseling profession’s status in general.

**Professional Development**

School counselors can request that their district provide professional development workshops on current local and state policies and laws regarding confidentiality and their duty to protect students from danger. These professional development sessions should include information on procedures for when school personnel must breach confidentiality. It is helpful for school counselors to have a network of peers with whom they can consult when difficult situations arise. When possible, they can broaden their own perspectives by including colleagues in their network who work at other school levels as well as those who work in nonschool settings.

Educating principals about the school counseling process helps them understand how disclosing against a student’s wishes may result in negative consequences.

Contact the authors for a list of references to this article.

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SCA supports school counselor efforts to promote student success. With increasing workloads and diminishing resources, school counselors need to collaborate, make data-driven decisions, and implement and improve programs. Below is a snapshot of current technology initiatives.

- **WSCA SCENE** is a networking site where school counselors share and collaborate. This site is part of the larger American School Counselor Association’s ASCA SCENE. In the past year, the number of school counselors registered on this Web site has soared. In addition to WSCA updates, discussion topics range from ASCA Board candidacy to Navigation 101 implementation. Join the WSCA SCENE at https://schoolcounselor.groupsite.com/group/wsca.

- **Webinars** are affordable, convenient and valid for continuing education credits. Last year webinar topics included Navigation 101 and EZAnalyze. Watch this newsletter and www.wa-schoolcounselor.org for upcoming webinars.

- **WSCA Annual Conference:** This year’s WSCA/OSCA Joint Annual Conference, Feb. 17 - 19, 2011, covers technology topics such as data analysis and understanding Skyward. Register at www.wa-schoolcounselor.org.

- **WSIPC Collaboration:** The Washington School Information Processing Cooperative provides information services to over 280 school districts in the state. WSIPC Enhanced Skyward Point-and-Click (WESPaC) software suite is the tool most school counselors use on a daily basis in WSCA districts. WSIPC, in partnership with WSCA, is developing an online professional-learning community to provide support and development for school counselors. Look for more information about this opportunity this fall at www.wsipc.org.

With increasing workloads and diminishing resources, school counselors need to collaborate, make data-driven decisions, and implement and improve programs.

- **Dropout Prevention:** Building on the success of the Dropout Prevention Summit WSCA cosponsored last year with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, WSCA is working with the Building Bridges Workgroup. The focus of this work, according to OSPI, is “…to develop recommendations regarding the improvement of state data systems and state-required district reporting requirements that support the development of district-level K-12 dropout prevention, intervention and reengagement systems.” Visit www.k12.wa.us/buildingbridges/default.aspx for more information.

- **WSCA Web site:** WSCA members can access advocacy resources, ethics guidelines, training information, professional development opportunities, membership details, conference news, WSCA Insights issues, links to the WSCA SCENE networking site and more. Go to www.wa-schoolcounselor.org.

Send an e-mail, or post a comment on the WSCA SCENE to communicate about the technology resources you find most effective, which resources need improvement and new technology resources you would like to see.

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