

To: Members of the Board of Education  
From: Victoria Holbrook, Counselor, Geneva Community High School  
Re: Summary of Counseling and Advising Activities First Semester 2011-2012  
Date: January 31, 2012

The National Standards for school counseling programs are what the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) believes to be essential elements of a quality and effective school counseling program. The standards are public statements of what students should know and be able to do as a result of participating in a school counseling program. Following the ASCA model, the Geneva High School Counseling and Advising Department centers student based activities in the areas of Academic Development, Career/College Development and Personal/Social Development. In addition to utilizing the National Standards and the ASCA model, the Illinois Social and Emotional Standards were used as guidelines to developing activities utilized to help students with Personal/Social Development. The following is a summary of these activities organized by the appropriate domain. In many cases, the activities apply to more than one realm and overlap may occur. At the end of the document is a listing of Professional Development the members of the department participated in this semester.

## **Academic Development**

**Freshman Interviews:** Counselors conducted one on one visits with freshman who were failing classes or having attendance issues on their caseload. During the visit, counselors asked students about his/her interests, involvement in extra-curricular activities, and post-secondary career goals. They also offered suggestions on academic success and study tips. Counselors shared information about resources available to students in the Counseling and Advising Office as well as reviewing graduation requirements and courses recommendations for college bound students.

**Course Withdrawals:** Students can withdraw from a course within the first six weeks of the semester and obtain a study hall. Students must obtain a withdrawal form from the Counseling and Advising Office, secure the necessary signatures and return the form to the Counseling Office for approval and schedule change. A total of 158 withdrawals were processed this semester.

**Level Changes:** Students may choose a higher or lower level of a course within the first three weeks of a semester. Students generally meet with his/her counselor to obtain a form and then obtain appropriate signatures. The schedule is changed when the level change is approved.

**Waivers:** The Counseling and Advising Support Staff processed applications of students who applied for study hall waivers. A total of 63 were entered into the computer for this semester.

**New Students:** Families new to the district or students re-enrolling met with a counselor to choose classes for the school year. Geneva High School Counselors, Registrar and Support Staff enrolled 84 new students during the first semester.

**Summer Hours:** Mrs. Cathy Pool, counselor, saw many students and families over the summer. Many students were new or re-enrolling but many appointments dealt with scheduling questions, college planning or social/emotional issues. In addition to seeing students and families, a large volume of phone calls were returned dealing mostly with scheduling questions or concerns. Support staff was able to handle some of these calls.

**Back to School Night:** Counselors were available in the GHS Commons to answer questions and help run student schedules for parents who needed them.

**Early Graduation Conferences:** The counselors met with seniors and their parents to complete an Early Graduation Application. A total of 25 seniors choose to graduate early.

**Tutoring:** The Counseling and Advising Office provides an updated outside tutoring list for families who want subject area tutoring.

**Eighth Grade Registration:** Counselors spoke to 8<sup>th</sup> grade students at Geneva Middle School North and South about the registration process for the upcoming school year. Students received Program of Study booklets as well as course selection sheets.

**Private School Registration:** Mrs. Victoria Holbrook, counselor, went to St. Peter's Catholic School to talk to their 8<sup>th</sup> graders about course selection at Geneva High School. Additionally, placement tests were administered by the respective schools for appropriate placement in Math, English I Honors, Modern World Honors, and Foreign Language. The private school teachers were instrumental in recommending the appropriate Science class for these students.

**Eighth Grade Parent Night:** Ms Cathy Pool and Ms. Julie Mueller, Counselors presented information to parents about Counseling and Advising services available to high school students.

**Honors and AP Parent Night:** Over 200 parents attended a meeting to discuss the AP and Honors Curriculum at Geneva High School. The Department Chairs, Mary Jane Johnson, Director of Counseling and Advising spoke at this event and Victoria Holbrook, counselor was also in attendance.

**Registration Process:** All students registered for next year's classes online November 15-November 27, 2011. Each current junior student was seen individually by the counselors to review his/her course selections during the weeks of November 28-December 16, 2011.

Postcards were sent to student's homes with a specific appointment time determined by each counselor. Additionally, a master list of appointments was posted on the Counseling and Advising windows for student reference. Students who missed his/her appointments were seen on makeup days. All 505 students were seen by the six counselors.

**Schedule Conflicts:** The counselors resolved scheduling conflicts for all grade levels. Alternate course requests were used when possible, but a number of students had to be seen to make changes in his/her schedule.

**Reading Screening:** Nancy Beal, School Psychologist, screened all juniors in their English classes for any reading fluency needs. This involved 505 students. If needs were identified, follow up interventions were recommended. Nancy Beal, psychologist, Candace Martin-Phelan, Social Worker, and Mary Jane Johnson, Director of Counseling and Advising are working with Megan Young, reading specialist, to secure reading interventions for students in grades 9-12.

**Correspondence Courses:** Students needing additional coursework to graduate or supplement their high school curriculum are offered courses through the American School of Correspondence, Brigham Young University School of Correspondence, or Illinois Virtual High School. The counselors assist students in choosing appropriate courses and facilitate the registration process when necessary.

**Homebound/Hospital Liaison:** Counselors work with homebound tutors and/or hospital tutors to secure homework assignments for students who are ill or hospitalized for an extended period of time. Work is shared between the private tutor and the classroom teacher and appropriate documentation is secured for attendance purposes. This service allows students to remain current in classes while unable to attend school.

**Problem Solving Team:** The counselors, social workers, psychologists, deans and nurses are members of the Problem Solving Team (PST). This team meets every Tuesday afternoon for several hours discussing students who may be struggling with academic, social/emotional, or behavioral issues at Geneva High School. The counselors check the weekly eligibility report and bring students to the meeting who are failing or in danger of failing courses. The counselors are responsible for completing paperwork in advance of the meeting that requires test data, previous grade information, current teacher input and any other factors the team needs to be aware of. The team brainstorms ideas to help the student become more successful and will on occasion suggest a supported study hall, study seminar or a case study to determine the need for additional educational services.

## Career/College Development

**Naviance:** The Counseling and Advising Department launched a new web-based computer software program called Naviance Succeed this school year. This program is a counseling tool that allows students and parents to research colleges and careers. In addition, this program allows counselors to communicate vital information to students via e-mail. This program allows the Counseling and Advising Office to track and analyze data about Geneva High School graduates and their college choices and give current GHS students access to that information so they can predict the likelihood of admission at specific colleges. Mary Jane Johnson, Director of Counseling and Advising and Julie Mueller, Counselor facilitated implementation of this program. Many hours were spent over the summer and early Fall loading documents and data into this program for student use. Additionally, all students grades 9-12 were trained on how to use this program and are encouraged to utilize it to download many documents and secure important information.

**Practice ACT:** Juniors were offered the opportunity to take a practice ACT on the all school testing day, October 12, 2011. Over 400 students took this test that was provided by Kaplan Test Preparation Company. While some proctors were provided by Kaplan, most were Geneva High School teachers. All proctors were trained according to strict ACT guidelines to ensure a secure and conducive testing environment. Answer sheets were scored and returned to GHS for distribution to Geneva High School juniors. Support staff copied each student's score report and filed them in the appropriate student file. A comprehensive report of all student scores was shared with Geneva High School.

**PSAT/NMSQT:** On October 12, 2011 students were given the option of taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test instead of the Practice ACT. Students who score in the top 1% nationally on the PSAT may qualify as National Merit Scholarship semi-finalists and finalists. This scholarship is not funded by the National Merit Corporation but some companies and colleges may offer scholarship money to National Merit Finalists. Over 70 students took this exam.

**Special Testing:** Students with diagnosed disabilities can take the ACT, SAT, or PSAT with accommodations. A separate application needs to be submitted by the school for students requesting test accommodations. Accommodations may include additional time for testing, a taped version of the test, having the test read, or having a proctor scribe test answers onto the student's answer sheet. Special testing usually involves one on one testing and can be done either on a Saturday administration or during the school day.

**ACT Preparation Information:** A list representing the organizations that have contacted GHS Counseling and Advising Office about providing ACT Preparation Programs is advertised on the GHS website, in the Viking Vessel, on the daily announcements, posted on 304 Connects, is on Naviance and is available in hard copy format in the Counseling and Advising Office. There are currently twelve agencies represented on the list. A complete listing can be viewed on the Counseling and Advising Webpage at [www.geneva304.org](http://www.geneva304.org) or on the student's Naviance Page.

**National Merit Semi-Finalist Applications:** Students who score in the top one percent nationally on the PSAT/NMSQT are invited by the National Merit Corporation to apply for a National Merit Scholarship. The scholarship application includes a student essay as well as a counselor recommendation and verification of courses taken and grades earned. This information must be entered online and submitted to the National Merit Corporation. Each counselor is responsible for the application for her students. This year, Geneva High School had four National Merit Semi-Finalists: James Bartusek, Courtney Kein, Mia Schrilla and Christopher Warren.

**College Representative Visits:** College admissions representatives visit Geneva High School throughout the school year. The colleges visiting are listed on the high school webpage at [www.geneva304.org](http://www.geneva304.org) and are advertised on the daily announcements. Students are encouraged to sign up to visit with the representatives of schools they may be interested in attending via Naviance. College representatives fill out a college information form that is updated yearly and filed in a notebook next to the student sign up page for each college visit. A total of 97 colleges visited GHS this semester. Additionally, visits hosted by colleges in the Chicago area are advertised on the daily announcements as well as on our webpage and Naviance.

**College Applications:** Processing college applications is an activity that involves all six counselors, the registrar and the secretaries. During this semester, a total of 1850 transcripts were copied, certified, sealed and mailed. Most of these transcripts were sent with college applications.

**Military Cafeteria Visits:** Several branches of the Armed Forces have an information booth for students during lunch hours in the cafeteria. The Marines scheduled monthly visits throughout most of the semester.

**College Application Mania:** Seniors were invited to attend College Application Mania the morning of October 12, 2011. This event occurred in the library and gave students the opportunity to work on college applications. English teachers as well as counselors were available to help students with college essays and answer any questions related to the college application process.

**College Information Night:** Over 200 juniors and their parents attended College Information Night on October 27, 2011. The evening was designed to provide information about the college search and selection process. Emphasis was also placed on encouraging students to take appropriate coursework and represent themselves positively on college applications. This year's presenter was Carin Smith from Lawrence University in Appleton, WI. A question and answer period followed the formal presentation that was facilitated by several of the high school counselors. All six counselors attended this event facilitated by Ms. Cindy Kovach, Counselor.

**WCC College Fair:** Waubensee Community College sponsored a college fair on October 3, 2011 which was advertised by the Counseling and Advising Office via the daily announcements posted on the webpage, [www.geneva304.org](http://www.geneva304.org) as well as on Naviance.

**CAP Program:** The Kane County Chronicle sponsors the Chronicle Achievement Program to honor area high school seniors who excel in academic effort, extracurricular activities, and/or service opportunities. Counseling and Advising Director Mary Jane Johnson coordinates this program for Geneva High School. The students are nominated by faculty members and his/her pictures and a brief write up about the student appears in the newspaper. This semester's recipients are: Stephanie Ross; Sarah Finch; John Swiderski; and Madeline Temple.

**Career Center:** Geneva High School employs a part-time counselor, Ms. Stefanie Montgomery, who helps students with career exploration. The following is a listing of her activities during this semester.

**Career Exploration Internship Class:** Ms Montgomery has served as coordinator for this semester long class which has had an enrollment of 8 students this semester. Student interns were placed in aviation, physical therapy, occupational therapy, veterinary medicine, culinary arts, barn management, organic farming, photography, education, speech/language pathology, dentistry and environmental sciences.

**Job Shadowing:** Ms. Montgomery fulfills job shadow requests for students throughout the semester. Five students participated in shadowing experience following an ER Nurse, Chemist/Physicist, veterinarian, actuary and counselor/social worker.

**Grants:** Two-grants were written and received from VALEES in the amount of \$500 each. This money will be used for the Career Fair and Job Shadow Programs.

**Individual Counseling:** Students interested in seeing the career counselor are seen individually to discuss career options. Students often take career assessments during these sessions.

**Delnor Hospital Career Expo:** Ms. Montgomery helped with set up and provided student assistance at the Delnor Hospital Health Career Fair held the evening of October 27, 2011 at the hospital. This event was publicized in the daily announcements, the Counseling Advising Webpage, and in the Viking Vessel and on Naviance. Several Geneva High School students attended this event.

**WCC Career Expo:** Ms. Montgomery took 17 students and 2 parents to the Career Exposition held at Waubensee Community College on December 2, 2011. Students were able to participate in two sessions on careers in which they had an interest.

**Spring Career Fair:** Ms. Montgomery is currently planning for a career fair to be held at Geneva High School in March of 2012. Speakers are being secured to represent all 12 Career Clusters.

**VALEES:** Ms. Montgomery is a member of this organization and attends their meetings.

## Personal/Social Development

While all realms of an effective counseling program are important, this area received a considerable amount of attention during the first semester of the 2011-2012 school year. Several new activities were developed and implemented in response to the District 304 School Board goal regarding student health and well-being. The specific board goal addressed by the Counseling and Advising Office was “to develop programming and activities to support student success based on the Illinois Social Emotional Learning Standards.”

**National Suicide Prevention Week:** Students in all classes were asked to complete an activity for Suicide Prevention Week. Students were given yellow or blue hands and were asked to name people they would go to if they needed emotional support on one side of the hand. On the other side of the hand students wrote their first name. The hands were glued onto a two banners

spelling out the words, “Here 4 U GHS” which hangs in the school cafeteria. On specified days, counselors, social workers, psychologists and many teachers wore specially made t-shirts displaying the “Here 4 U” logo in yellow on a black t-shirt.

**Anxiety Group:** An ongoing group of high school students grades 9-12 attended a group on stress and anxiety led by Ms. Candace Martin-Phelan, psychologist. Seven students participated in this group that met weekly or bi-weekly throughout the semester. Students were referred to the group by his/her counselors, teachers, or through the Problem Solving Teams.

**Special Education Groups:** Social Workers Therese White and Candace Martin-Phelan facilitate various groups for about 70 students identified with special education needs. The topics covered in these groups include social skills, social language skills, goal setting, stress/anxiety, and general counseling.

**Fueling Station:** Ms. Cathy Pool coordinates a supply of small breakfast and/or snack items that are available to identified students throughout the school day. The students who access this program may be on free and reduced lunch or may just need a little nourishment and nurturing due to difficult family situations. Items for the Fueling Station are donated by various clubs and groups at school and in the community. About 30 students participated in this program during the first semester.

**Backpacks of Support:** The Geneva Mother’s Club, the Junior League and various local businesses provided fully loaded backpacks filled with school supplies for distribution to GHS students in need. Twelve students were recipients of this gift at the beginning of this school year.

**New Student Transition Activities:** Mrs. Pool coordinated new student transition activities for students enlisting the help of Ambassador League members. Each new student had the opportunity to receive an Ambassador League partner. Over 25 students took advantage of this program. Ambassador League members did a variety of things to help welcome the newcomers. Counselors also sat at a designated table during lunch giving the new students a friendly place to eat lunch for the first week of school.

**Freshman Luncheon:** All 500 freshmen were treated to a free BBQ Luncheon during all lunch periods on September 14, 2011 in the cafeteria. This event was meant to help freshman transition to GHS and spend time together as a class. Trivia games, Bag Toss, and other icebreakers were available for students to participate in during their lunches.



**Freshman Movie:** Freshman were invited to attend a special showing of *Breaking Dawn* prior to the release time at the Randall 16 Theatre on November 18, 2011. Students received a special price on the movie ticket and concessions for this event. This activity was intended to offer an opportunity for freshman cohesion.

**Individual Counseling:** The counselors, social workers and psychologists see students as needed on an individual basis for social/emotional needs. Students may present with a variety of concerns including family stressors, interpersonal relationship issues, anxiety and stress and depression. A record number of mental health related hospitalizations and suicide assessments have been done this semester by all members of the Counseling and Advising Staff. There is an ever increasing need to intergrate social/emotional education for all students and staff. Plans are underway to expand the services already in place for social emotional needs.

## Other Involvement

**Counseling Intern:** Mary Jane Johnson, Director of Counseling and Advising supervised a counseling intern, Ms. Sandy Longworth, during this past semester.

**Professional Development:** Members of the Counseling and Advising Department attended the following workshops and/or conferences:

Northern Illinois Registrars Association	Registrar, Data Specialist
Motivating Disengaged Students	5 Counselors, 2 Social Workers, 2Psych
ACT Illinois State Conference	Director, Counseling/Advising
ACT Update Sessions	2 Counselors, 1 Intern
College Board Update	2 Counselors, 1 Intern
State Articulation Conference	3 Counselors
WI State University Articulation	3 Counselors
Developing and Implementing PLC's	6 Counselors, 2 Social Workers, 2 Psych
VALEES Meetings	1 Career Specialist
Positive Parenting with a Plan	1 Social Worker
Behavior Management Techniques	2 Social Workers
Beyond Talk Therapy	1 Social Worker
Crisis Intervention and Planning	1 Social Worker
Motivating Disengaged Students	1 Social Worker
Interventions for Grieving; Child and Adol	1 Social Worker
Gateway Interventions Site Visit	6 Counselors,2 Social Workers, 2Psych
Successful RTI Implementation	1 Psychologist
Psychiatric Medication Overview	1 Psychologist

Treatment for Anxiety Disorder	1 Psychologist
Repercussions of Bullying	1 Social Worker
Site Visit Central DuPage Hospital	1 Social Worker
Experiential Techniques for Teen Groups	1 Social Worker
Illuminating a Healthy Mind	1 Social Worker
Fair Fighting: Anger Management	1 Social Worker
DOCSSSC monthly meetings	Director, Counseling/Advising
CPI Non-violent Intervention Instructor Cert	Director, Counseling/Advising
School Refusal Program, Alexian Bros Hsptl	1 Counselor
Purdue University Presentation	2 Counselors
IL Wesleyan University Presentation	1 Counselor
Site visit to Fenton H.S. re: motivation	1 Psych; 1 Counselor
Charlotte Danielson training for evaluation	Director, Counseling/Advising
<i>Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap</i> Book Study	Director, Counseling/Advising