

COUNSELORS VIEW

A publication of The East End Counselors Association

A Chapter of the New York State School Counselors Association / Long Island New York

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Rob Pertusati, Senior Associate Dean of Admissions at Stony Brook University, shares information with Westhampton Junior, Madison Tuccillo.

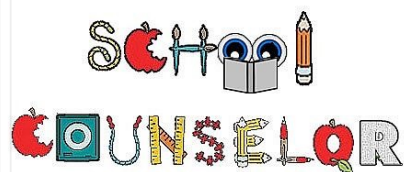
College Fair Attracts over 150 Colleges

Westhampton Beach High School hosted our annual Spring College Fair on Wednesday, April 20, from 5 pm - 7 pm. The fair, open to all students on the East End in grades 9-12, attracted over 230 students from area schools.

Students who attended the event met with admission counselors from over 150 colleges and universities. It proved a great opportunity for school counselors to network with college representatives and help students connect with representatives from the colleges they are considering. Parents, encouraged to attend the fair, accompanied their children in great numbers.

This event is sponsored each year by the East End Counselors Association. For information, contact your school counselor or email Joe Garvey, Spring College Fair Chairperson, at jgarvey@whbschools.org

This is one of two college fairs sponsored by the East End Counselors Association. Anyone interested in our Fall College Fair can contact Candace Stafford, Fall College Fair Chairperson, at cstafford@ehufsd.org



EECA Calendar 2015-2016

9/10/15

Fall General Membership Meeting and Welcome Back Celebration 4 pm Buoy One Westhampton, NY
Hosted by Long Island University C.W. Post

10/16/15

Fall College Fair
East Hampton High School
10:00-am-12:30 pm

11/20/15

LICAC
Dowling College

12/9/15

Bring an Administrator to Breakfast
HB Ward Technical Center, Riverhead 8:30 am

12/17/15

Financial Aid/NCAA Night (NCAA 6 pm, Financial Aid, 7 pm)
Riverhead High School

12/10/15

Holiday General Membership Meeting 4 pm – 7 pm
Hosted by Hobart, William & Smith College and EECA.
Westhampton Beach CC



Georgetown University is one of 6 colleges East End Counselors plan to visit next year.

East End Counselors Plan Tour Of Washington DC Universities

The East End Counselors Association will sponsor a tour of colleges in the Washington DC Metropolitan area, featuring six of Washington's nationally recognized universities, in April of next year.

Bridgehampton School Counselor Danielle Doscher is coordinating the event on behalf of the East End Counselors Association and the Undergraduate Admissions officers at American University, The Catholic University of America, Gallaudet University, Georgetown University, George Washington University and Howard University.

School counselors will spend three days visiting each campus, meeting with students, faculty, and administrators and experiencing the unique offerings of these universities.

In addition to seeing firsthand the distinctive strengths of each individual campus, counselors will learn about the various collaborative shared programs of the Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area, including Cross Registration and the Consortium Research Fellows Program.

Cost for the event is \$100 for EECA members and \$135 for non-members. This includes transportation, lodging and most meals during the trip. The tour, subsidized by EECA for school counselors, is a great opportunity to learn about these universities and assist students in their college search.

Please contact Daniele Doscher at ddoscher@bridgehampton.k12.ny.us to reserve your place on this tour.

EECA Calendar 2015-2016

3/9/16

School Avoidance Anxiety

Dr. Debra Weisbrot MD

Presenter

Location: Martha Clara
Vineyards Noon - 3 pm

4/20/16

Spring College Fair

Westhampton Beach High

School 5-7 pm

4/21/16

Administrative Professionals
Luncheon

Location: The Hyatt East End
Atlantis, Riverhead 1-3 pm

6/9/16

General Membership Meeting
and Awards Dinner

Hosted by Iona College

4 pm Dockers in East Quogue



EECA Honors Guidance Secretaries

Each year school counselors and their secretaries are invited to celebrate the outstanding work performed by Guidance secretaries. This year's event took place at The Hyatt East End Atlantis Hotel in Riverhead on April 21 and honored the work of our Guidance Secretaries and Administrative Assistants.

First to greet students and parents who visit the guidance office, our secretaries create an atmosphere of welcome; their diligence and dedication insure the success of our programs. Please contact Barbara Ackerman at back56@aol.com for more information about this annual event.

End Of The Year Meeting Honors Counselors

Our traditional end of the year meeting, hosted by Iona College, will take place on Thursday, June 9 at Dockers, 94 Dune Rd, East Quogue. At this meeting, we will honor counselors whose dedication to our profession produced unique and innovative contributions to our school guidance programs.

The Barbara Ackerman Counselor of the Year Award, named after an outstanding counselor who influenced the growth of the East End Counselors Association, is given to a counselor who best exemplifies the qualities of dedication and professionalism exhibited by Barbara. The winner of this award demonstrates outstanding service to the profession of school counseling.

The Rising Star Award recognizes outstanding service to the profession of school counseling by those who are "new" to the career.

To nominate a candidate for either of these awards, or for more information, visit our website at www.eastendcounselors.org

Counselors View

Seeks articles from our members. Please submit:

*Examples of Best Practice
in your school

*Professional papers you
have written

*Inspiring stories about
your students

Please send articles to
trabbitt51@gmail.com

Recommended Revisions to The Commissioner's Regulations

*School counseling services shall be provided to all students in grades prekindergarten through twelve by certified school counselors (current regulations only require school counselors for students in grades 7-12).

*The ratio of student to school counselors, to the extent practicable, should conform to American School Counselor Association standards or other comparable national and/or New York State recognized standards.

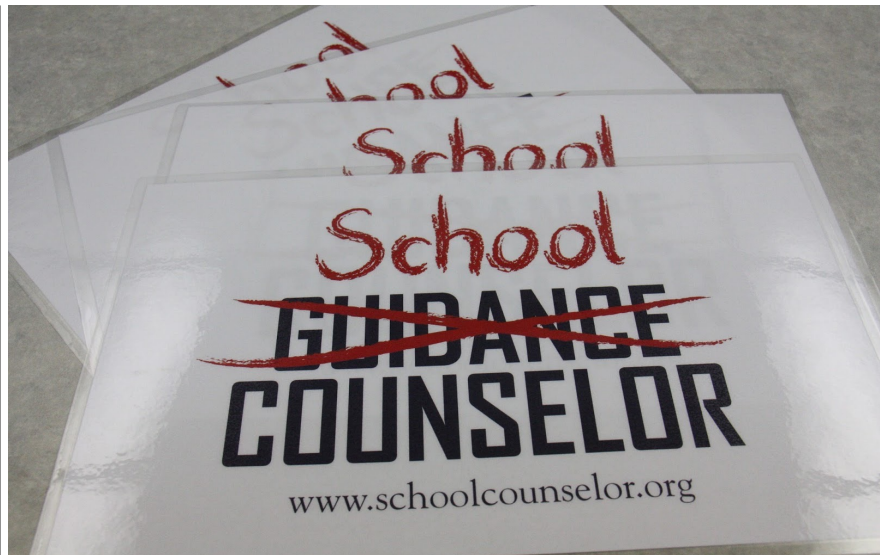
*Provide all students in P-12 public schools with annual individual progress review plans reflecting each student's educational progress and career plans conducted by certified school counselors.

*Comprehensive school counseling plans that are updated annually should be made available on the district website.

*Districts must establish a school counselor advisory council to review and advise the district on implementation issues relating to the comprehensive developmental school counseling program.

*For public school districts change the word "guidance" program to "school counseling program."

•Use the title "School Counselor" rather than "Guidance Counselor."



New State Regulations would use the term School Counselor.

New Guidance Regulations Proposed

On February 10, 2016, NYSED released a proposal that would change regulations regarding the School Counseling program, training and certification regulations. The proposal was presented across the state for public comment in March.

The proposed amendment will be presented at a joint meeting of the Higher Education and P-12 Education Committees for discussion at the September 2016 Regents meeting. It is anticipated that the proposed amendment will be adopted by the Board of Regents at its December meeting. If adopted at the December meeting, the proposed amendment will become effective on December 30, 2015.

In 2013, the Board of Regents discussed a range of issues regarding the preparation of school counselors and the work and responsibilities of school counselors. As a result, the Education Department created an advisory council which surveyed school counseling professionals. The 16 member School Counselor Advisory Council (SCAC), comprised of 8 school counselors from across New York and 8 representatives from school counselor preparation programs, made recommendations to the Education Department which resulted in the proposed revisions to Section 100.2(j) of the Commissioner's Regulations.

According to the New York State School Counseling Association, "These proposed regulations come after years of development and input. The depth of these changes and the extent to which they are informed by the ASCA National Model is considerable." You can read the regulations at: <http://www.counsel.nysed.gov/common/counsel/files/rulesandregs/52.21%20TERMS%202-14-16.pdf>

Know These Principles of Threat Assessment

1. Targeted violence is the end result of an understandable process of thinking and behavior.
2. Targeted violence stems from an interaction between the individual, the situation, the setting, and the target.
3. An investigative, skeptical, inquisitive mindset is needed.
4. Effective threat assessment is based on facts, rather than characteristics or "traits."
5. An "integrated systems approach" is best.
6. Investigate whether or not a student poses a threat, not only whether a student has made a threat.

"The basis for a study of actual aggression must be a study of the roots of aggressive intention."

Winnicott



Dr. Weisbrot speaking to East End Counselors at our Spring meeting.

Threat Assessment in Children & Teens

Dr. Weisbrot Asked Counselors

Is the Next School Shooter Sitting Before Me?

On April 9, Deborah M. Weisbrot, M.D, spoke to the East End Counselors Association on the topic of Threat Assessment in Children & Adolescents. Dr. Weisbrot described the characteristics common to people whose threats of violence should be taken most seriously. "What they have in common is a kind of magical thinking, odd beliefs like they can read other people's minds or see the future, or things happening in their dreams come true," she said.

Dr. Weisbrot is the Director of the Child & Adolescent Psychiatry Outpatient Clinic and an Associate Professor of Psychiatry at Stony Brook University Medical Center. She has published and lectured nationally on child and adolescent mood and anxiety disorders, and threat assessment in childhood and adolescence.

Dr. Weisbrot spoke of the principles of threat assessment, warning behaviors in potential "shooters", and promising research on creating threat assessment teams in schools. Prevention and timely recognition are at the heart of Dr. Weisbrot's message. "Other students have pre-offense knowledge. Messages or leaked intent may be communicated verbally, via social media or You Tube. Family members, peers or an on-line community may be the only ones who could take steps to have the potential offender evaluated and treated. School faculty and/or classmates need to be regularly encouraged to voice concerns." Dr. Weisbrot concluded her presentation by emphasizing that threat assessment teams are showing promise in enhancing prevention of these events.

Whats New For English Language Learners

***School districts are not only expected to annually identify ELL students not making adequate language and/or academic progress, they are now required to identify the academic and social/emotional supports they will provide, based on their identified needs.**

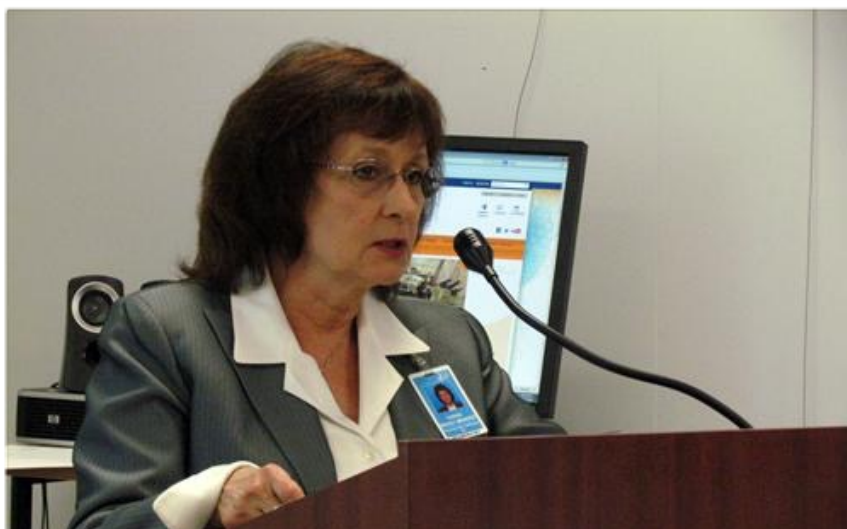
***School districts are required to implement a bilingual class based on the number of ELLs who speak the same language in the district, not in a particular building.**

***School districts must provide all teachers and administrators professional development to meet the needs of ELLs.**

***School districts may now use additional criterion to determine whether an ELL student is ready to exit ELL services, including a combination of a student's NYSESLAT score and 3-8 ELA assessment score, or ELA Regents scores.**

***Procedures requiring the Committee on Special Education to determine whether students who have, or are suspected of having, a disability should be identified as an ELL and receive bilingual or ESL programs and services.**

Courtesy of NYSUT Fact Sheet 14-20 Amendments to Commissions Regulations Part 154



Terri Brady-Mendez speaking to East End Counselors last fall.

Counselors learn about Regulations and Revised Graduation Requirements for ELLs

As part of the East End Counselors continuing dedication to staff development, Terri Brady-Mendez spoke to counselors and School Administrators in December to clarify amendments to regulations and revised graduation requirements for English Language Learners, (ELLs.)

Ms. Brady-Mendez talked about the major changes for 2015-2016 and provided useful study charts for counselors and administrators illustrating the changes in regulations and graduation requirements for ELLs.

Those changes include: modifications to the identification process involving qualified staff, parent notification, retention of identification and review of records, placement, program requirements and provision of programs, grade span and continuity, exit criteria, support and transitional services, staff development, and school district planning and reporting requirements.

Ms. Brady-Mendez assured counselors and administrators that "The staff of the Bilingual/ESL Program stands ready to assist educators in a variety of ways, all of which aim to enhance educational opportunities and achievement of the English Language Learner population."

For a copy of the complete regulations regarding English Language Learners, go to: <http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/914p12d7.pdf>

The College Essay: How to Help Students Write a Great One

By Tom Rabbitt

Years ago, when I was working as a high school guidance counselor, one of my students walked into my office worried about her college application.

Paige had high grades and decent test scores, but a dearth of extra-curricular activities. She knew her college application essay would be critical—and she was right.

She wanted to write about her love of learning. She wondered whether her close relationship to her parents could make an interesting essay. We continued discussing options—all of which were quickly dismissed. Then, her eyes lit up when she started talking about Adam, a 12-year-old boy on the autism spectrum who she was teaching to ride a horse. Bingo. Paige had a story.

Her essay went on to describe how working with Adam taught her patience and perseverance, and provided her with an important lesson about how one can learn so much more about a topic they already know well when they teach it. That realization—which Paige discussed and clarified through Adam's eyes in her essay—became the impetus for a great story, and a future vocation.

Most school counselors involved in the college application process can relate to this type of scenario. We can all remember an occasion when an idea takes hold and a student's essay shines. Of course, there are moments when the counselor will spend most of his or her time convincing a student that the college essay is important—and helping students learn how to craft a good one. Writing the college essay is arguably the best opportunity for a student to personalize her application.

Many students, however, tend to undervalue the essay's importance, while others mistakenly believe that a good essay will mitigate a poor grade point average. The truth, of course—like most issues regarding the college application process—is not universal.

College once said. "A good essay just might be what turns a maybe into a yes."

An Associate Director at Gettysburg College put it another way: "We use the essay to build the soul of the class. I have never once run down the hall to show a



A stack of applications ready to be read and moved into piles of yes, no and maybe.

The answer is usually - "It depends."

It's questionable whether large, state schools place a great deal of emphasis on the essay; I know from first-hand experience as part of the admissions process at Sarah Lawrence College that they place a great deal of value on an applicant's essay.

I believe it is fair to say that most liberal arts colleges value the essay and look at it carefully in the application process. "A good essay can help a qualified applicant stand out from the competition," the Director of Admissions at a Connecticut

colleague that a student has perfect SAT's. But a powerful essay—that gets me out of my chair."

Assuming then that a good essay can make a difference in the college application process, how can we best help students write an essay that has the potential to get the admissions counselor out of her chair? I have a few suggestions.

Nudge Students to Tell Their Own Story

As Carol Barash recommends in her book, *Write Out Loud*, "Tell the story only *you* can tell." I believe the structure of a good

How to Help Students Write a Great Essay

short story is the best structure for writing the personal essay: A student should see herself as the hero of her story, who encounters a roadblock and emerges transformed. In other words, you might prompt your student to choose to write about a situation in which she faced a challenge that transformed her.

Think of it this way: A tale of past glory is boring at a class reunion; a list of accomplishments masquerading as a story is equally forgettable.

Start with a Strong Introduction

Not surprisingly, the first few sentences of an essay are critical. It's what gets an admissions counselor to get excited about reading an essay or worried that it's going to be more of the same-old, same-old. An introduction should be concise, create intrigue, and make the reader want to hear the whole story.

Consider the following introduction written by an applicant to Sarah Lawrence College when I was an admissions counselor there, which made me put down my mug of coffee mid-sip:

"For the past two summers I have worked on a cattle ranch in Missouri under the employment of Cody and Dawnell Holmes. Cody and Dawnell are corn-fed church-going folk; I'm a tofu-fed Bay Area Jew."

The essay went on to describe how a Jewish kid from California worked on a ranch that practiced selective breeding, although its owners scornfully criticized evolution.

She told a detailed story of how she lived on the farm and came to the conclusion that she could learn from, like, and respect people with a different perspective. This "Bay Area Jew" spent time on a cattle ranch in Missouri and emerged

transformed in her willingness to embrace dualistic thinking. It was a stand-out essay that began in an impactful way.



Remember There's Power in Showing Versus Telling

Students should develop the main idea, or theme, of the essay with vivid and specific facts, events, and examples. It is better to let an idea unfold in the details rather than simply stating a point of view. Here's an example of a boring, generic sentence: *"I like to be surrounded by people with a variety of backgrounds and interests."* Now, here's one that's interesting and unique:

"During that night, I sang the theme song from Casablanca with a baseball coach who thinks he's Bogie, discussed Marxism with a little old lady, and heard more than I ever wanted to know about some woman's gall bladder operation."

To drive this point home for your students, you can help them learn how to avoid clichéd, predictable writing by using vivid and specific details. Here's another example of writing that won't wow an admissions counselor:

"I want to help people. I have gotten so much out of life through the love and guidance of my family. I feel that many individuals have not been as fortunate; therefore, I would like to

expand the lives of others."

Rather than platitudes and clichés, prompt your students to be more specific and vivid in their language, such as: "My Mom and Dad stood on plenty of sidelines 'til their shoes filled with water, or their fingers turned white, or somebody's golden retriever signed his name on their coats in the mud. That kind of commitment is what I'd like to bring to working with fourth-graders."

I am convinced that all students are capable of

telling these kind of memorable stories and, even better, the skills they learn as they dig in to write their college application essay will hopefully serve them when they go on to write papers after they're accepted and enrolled in college. In this way, we have the opportunity to not only help students with this important task, but to also be true educators, teaching them skills that will serve them well beyond the application process.

Source Note:

This article summarizes points made in the PowerPoint presentation *Writing the College Essay* presented at Greenport, East Hampton and Bayport-Blue Point high schools. Sources include: The College Application Essay by Sarah Myers McGinty, the College Board, essayedge.com, and the *New York Times*.

About the author: Tom Rabbitt is a retired English teacher, guidance counselor, and special education director who worked at Greenport High School for more than 30 years. Now, he's a consultant and presents workshops on the college admission process and financial aid at schools on Long Island and for Girls Write Now, a non-profit mentoring organization in New York City.