

LICAC '26

Celebrating 50 Years

of

***Professional Development, Collaboration, and
support of school counselors***

Friday, November 6

7:30 am – 2:15 pm

SUNY Old Westbury

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

7:30 am	Registration and Breakfast
8:15 am	Welcome
8:30 am	Keynote Speaker
9:45 am	Exhibitors and Visits with College Reps
10:45 am – 11:45 am	Session 1 Workshops (See descriptions below)
12:00 noon	Lunch
1:15 pm - 2:15 pm	Session 2 Workshops (See descriptions below)

Use the link below to Register for LICAC 2026

[LICAC 2026 Registration Form](#)

Keynote Presentation

Todd Wallace,

Program Facilitator for Bullying Prevention

The Long Island Coalition Against Bullying

"The Difference We Make"



Mr. Wallace joined the Long Island Coalition Against Bullying in 2025 as a Program Facilitator for Bullying Prevention. Mr. Wallace brings more than 30 years of experience in education, including over two decades of administrative leadership at both the middle and high school levels. Throughout his career, he has been dedicated to creating safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environments for students. Mr. Wallace began his career as a Social Studies teacher in Maryland before returning to Long Island, where he taught Social Studies at Deer Park High School. He transitioned into school administration in 2001, serving as an Assistant Principal at Deer Park High School and Hicksville Middle School. During his administrative career, Mr. Wallace conducted teacher evaluations, coordinated New York State and local testing, oversaw student

discipline and school safety initiatives, and worked closely with faculty, students, and families to address academic and social-emotional needs. He also played an active role in implementing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), and other school-wide initiatives. After concluding his tenure as Assistant Principal at Hicksville Middle School in 2025, Mr. Wallace continued his commitment to education and student well-being by joining the Long Island Coalition Against Bullying. In his role as a Program Facilitator, he delivers engaging, age-appropriate programs that help students recognize bullying, understand its impact, distinguish bullying from everyday conflict, and develop empathy and respectful communication skills. His extensive experience as an educator and school administrator provides a valuable perspective in his efforts to promote safe and inclusive school communities where all students can succeed. Mr. Wallace holds a Master of Arts in Liberal Studies from Stony Brook University and a Bachelor of Arts in Social Science from Towson University, with a concentration in Secondary Education. He holds permanent New York State certifications as a School District Administrator and Social Studies teacher for grades 7-12.

“The Difference We Make”

In this keynote presentation Mr. Wallace will address:

- Generational changes in bullying (what it used to look like, what it looks like now)
- The impact that one person can have in a child/students life
- Recognizing what is right, not just what is wrong
- The fact that you may never truly see the real impact of your work

Workshop Session 1

10:45 am – 11:45 am

Workshop 1 - Session 1 - “The Non-Credit ESL Program and Student Academic Success”

Level: High School, College and Agency

Presenter: Maria Ammar, Suffolk County Community College

Description of Workshop: This workshop will provide information about the Non-Credit ESL (English as a Second Language) Program and how it supports students with being academically prepared to study for a degree or certificate program at Suffolk County Community College.

Workshop 2 - Session 1 - “Financial Aid 101: Myth, Facts, and the Latest Updates”

Level: High School and College

Presenter: Lyndsay Johnson, SUNY- Stony Brook University

Description of Workshop: Financial Aid can often feel overwhelming for students and families, and school counselors who play a key role in helping them navigate the process. This workshop will provide counselors with clear, up-to-date information on financial aid, focusing on common myths and misconceptions that create unnecessary barriers for students. We will also review recent updates to federal and state regulations, ensuring counselors are equipped with the most current knowledge as they guide their students through the college planning process. Counselors will leave this workshop with practical talking points, resources and confidence to better support students and families in making informed financial decisions for higher education.

Workshop 3 - Session 1 - “Building Inclusive Spaces Through Trauma Informed Counseling”

Level: Middle School and High School

Presenter: Charles Fox, The Legal Aid

Description of Workshop: This workshop will focus on strategies to build inclusive and safe school/after-school spaces through trauma informed counseling. We will discuss methods to foster environments that support healing and recovery for students rather than re-traumatization. We will unpack systemic and individualized trauma and how they manifest in students; particularly the desensitization that many young people often develop pertaining to normalized traumatic experiences. We will explore how we help students navigate an ever changing landscape which works events, technology, etc., have made the world smaller, yet often leave students feeling more isolated than ever.

Workshop 4 - Session 1 - “Bridging the Gap: Mastering Transfer Admission and Shattering Community College Stigmas”

Level: High School, College, and Agency

Presenter: Maria Campanella, SUNY- Stony Brook University

Description of Workshop: Have you wondered what colleges look for in a transfer applicant, and how it differs from first-year admissions? Are some of your students preparing to attend a two-year college before going on to complete their bachelor’s degree? Do you hear some parents or students giving community colleges a bad rap? Come join this workshop discussion and learn about the ins and outs of transfer admission, pathways, support services, scholarships, and the key elements that define a transfer-friendly institution. We’ll even dismantle some common myths about community colleges and its students and equip you with the facts to be an advocate for transfer student success!

Workshop 5 - Session 1 - “Preparing Students for Tomorrow: Advising for High-Demand Careers”

Level: High School and College

Presenter: Andrea Bhella and Meghan DeMayo-Dalen, Suffolk County Community College

Description of Workshop: As the workforce continues to evolve, counselors are increasingly called upon to help students navigate educational pathways that lead to careers in high-demand industries. This workshop provides counselors with an overview of emerging and high-demand occupations and strategies to align student interests, strengths, or postsecondary goals with academic programs that meet workforce needs. We will explore college admissions and career pathways in artificial intelligence, engineering, green/technology, healthcare, and education.

Workshop 6 - Session 1 - “Eating Disorders & Trauma: Understanding the connection, Reclaiming the body”

Level: Elementary School, Middle School, High School, College and Agency

Presenter: Meg Maginn, Eating Disorders Associates

Description of Workshop: Eating disorders and disordered eating can affect students across elementary, middle school, high school, and college settings. Concerns may be influenced by many factors, including stress, anxiety, bullying, body-image pressures, family disruption, grief, identity concerns, social-media influences, adverse experiences, and trauma. Because these concerns may emerge at school through changes in mood, concentration, attendance, academic performance, social connection, food-related behaviors, exercise patterns, or physical well-being, school counselors are often in a key position to recognize warning signs early and connect students with appropriate support. This trauma-informed presentation examines the relationship among trauma, the nervous system, and eating-disorder symptoms. It emphasizes that behaviors such as restriction, binge eating, purging, compulsive exercise, meal avoidance, and intense food or body-related fears may function as attempts to cope with distress, regain a sense of control, manage overwhelming emotions, or create safety—not simply as maladaptive behavior or attention-seeking. Participants will gain practical, evidence-informed strategies for developmentally responsive screening; supportive student conversations; objective documentation; trauma-informed case conceptualization within the school counselor’s role; family communication; collaboration with school nurses and other school personnel; and timely referral to medical and specialized eating-disorder providers. The session emphasizes compassionate, non-stigmatizing care that reduces shame, promotes student safety and academic access, and helps school counselors serve as effective early identifiers, advocates, and collaborators—rather than independent diagnosticians or eating-disorder treatment providers.

Workshop 7 - Session 1 - “What is it like to be a Master Counselor in the NYSMTP?”

Level: Elementary School, Middle School, and High School

Presenter: Kristin Orig and Jenny Konop, Northport High School

Description of Workshop: This workshop is for school counselors K-12 who are considering applying to the Master Counselor Program. During the workshop, attendees will get an overview of our experiences in the program, including the professional development we have participated in, the interest groups we have been a part of and facilitated, and how we have fit the hours requirements into our personal lives. This workshop will not address the specifics of “how to apply”.

Workshop 8 - Session 1 - “Re-energize Your Comprehensive School Counseling Plan - A Special Workshop Exclusively for District Teams”(Continues into session 2)

Level: Exclusively District Team Leaders

Presenter: Dr. Kathleen Corbett, English Department, SUNY Old Westbury

Description of Workshop: This workshop is exclusively for District Team leaders and will focus on Updating and/or composing their “Comprehensive Developmental School Counseling Guidance Plans”.

(Please note that this workshop is part I of II and will continue through to the 1:15 pm workshop of the same title)

Lunch

12:00 NOON

Workshop Session 2

1:15 pm – 2:15 pm

Workshop 9 - Session 1 - “Creating a Schoolwide Mental Wellness Month: A School Counselor’s Blueprint for Engagement and impact”

Level: Elementary School, Middle School, and High School

Presenter: Jennifer Pickering, Cold Spring Harbor Jr./Sr. High School

Description of Workshop: Creating a successful schoolwide Mental Wellness Month requires more than a calendar of activities. It takes thoughtful planning, collaboration, promotion, and meaningful buy-in from the entire school community. This presentation will provide school counselors with a practical blueprint for developing a comprehensive Mental Wellness Month, including a schoolwide kickoff, classroom lessons, an interactive wellness calendar, and engaging activities designed to reach students throughout the month. Participants will learn strategies for gaining support from administrators, teachers, faculty, parent groups, and community partners, while leveraging their expertise and resources to expand the program's reach and impact. From generating excitement and promoting events to building partnerships and creating opportunities for staff and student participation, attendees will leave with practical ideas, adaptable resources, and a framework they can use to bring a Mental Wellness Month to life in their own schools.

Workshop 10 - Session 2 - “An MTSS Framework for Trauma-informed Schools”

Level: Elementary School, Middle School, High School, College, and Agency

Presenter: Dr. Pepper Bonay-Martin, Wyandanch UFSD

Description of Workshop: This workshop offers educators ranging from teachers to district administrators and mental health professionals a clearly communicated systems approach to addressing barriers to learning.

Workshop 11 - Session 2 - “Resources for Addressing Chronic Absenteeism”

Level: Elementary School, Middle School and High School

Presenter: Kristin Orig, Northport High School

Description of Workshop: This workshop is for school counselors K-12 who are looking for ways to address chronic absenteeism. This workshop will provide turnkey information on resources available through Louisiana State University Social Research and Evaluation Center and the Attendance Works Attendance Playbook. Feedback about interventions that have been implemented in schools across the state as part of the Master Counselor Chronic Absenteeism Professional Interest Group will also be shared.

Workshop 12 - Session 2 - “Can ‘Follow Your Passion’ Lead Clients Away?”

Level: Middle School, High School, College and Agency

Presenter: Jason Cascone and MaryAnn Verdolino, Suffolk County Community College

Description of Workshop: "Follow your passion" sounds like good career advice...but is it? An emphasis on passion can reinforce the almost mythical notion that somewhere within each of us lies a single pre-existing career passion waiting to be discovered, and that career satisfaction depends on finding it. This workshop explores a developmental perspective in which interests, competence, meaning, identity, and even passion, can emerge through experience. Participants will examine the limitations of passion-centered career advice, consider relevant career development research and theory, and learn how familiar counseling approaches and skills can help clients and students ask better questions, reframe uncertainty, explore possibilities, and use experiences rather than certainty to move career decisions forward.

Workshop 13 - Session 2 - “When Europe Becomes a Serious College Option: What High School Counselors Need to Know”

Level: High School

Presenter: Vlad Tovbin, Get Degree Abroad

Description of Workshop: More US students are considering earning a full Bachelor's degree in Europe, but the admissions process, degree structure, costs, and academic expectations can differ significantly from the US system. This session will give high school counselors a practical overview of how European Bachelor's programs work, what types of students may be a good fit, how application and admission requirements differ across countries and universities, and what families should understand about tuition, degree length, recognition, and student life. Counselors will leave with a clearer framework for recognizing when Europe may be a serious option for a student and how to begin that conversation with families.

Workshop 14 - Session 2 - “Letters of Recommendation: How to Write Just Right”

Level: High School

Presenter: Suzanne Miller, SUNY Geneseo; and Kate Anderson, SUNY Oswego

Description of Workshop: This presentation delves into the art of composing compelling and effective letters of recommendation for high school students by counselors. As vital components of college and scholarship applications, these letters play a pivotal role in shaping the perception of a student's character, achievements, and potential. The session will explore key strategies for personalizing recommendations, emphasizing unique strengths, and addressing potential challenges, including the ways to use-and not use-Artificial Intelligence.

Workshop 15 - Session 2 - Reimagining the Next Era of School Counseling: Taking a Proactive approach to sustaining School Counselor Positions

Level: Elementary School, Middle School and High School

Presenter: Deadra Faulkner and Sandra Auguste, Westbury UFSD

Description of Workshop: Two Decades of Foundational Growth, Comprehensive Programming and Building School Counselor Leaders. This workshop will focus on moving beyond traditional perceptions of school counseling. This interactive workshop challenges participants to examine how their expertise can influence schoolwide decision-making, program development, student advocacy, career readiness, data-informed practice, technology integration, and educational systems change. Participants will explore the emerging competencies counselors will need to remain relevant and influential, including systems thinking, data storytelling, strategic advocacy, AI and technology literacy, collaboration and professional reinvention. Through reflection, discussion, and shared practices, participants will identify practices the profession should STOP, Start, and LEAD as it enters its next era. Each participant will develop a personalized commitment identifying one actionable step for increasing their professional influence and counseling program impact.

Workshop 16- Session 2 - Re-energize Your Comprehensive School Counseling Plan - A Special Workshop Exclusively for District Teams”(Continues into session 2)

Level: Exclusively District Team Leaders

Presenter: Dr. Kathleen Corbett, English Department, SUNY Old Westbury

Description of Workshop: This workshop is exclusively for District Team leaders and will focus on Updating and/or composing their “Comprehensive Developmental School Counseling Guidance Plans”. (Please note that this workshop will run continuously from the 10:45 am workshop of the same title)

LICAC Registration, Fees and Payment Instructions

- To register for LICAC, please see the fee schedule below and click on the following link to submit a registration form.

[LICAC '26 Registration Form](#)

— Conference and Professional Membership Fees

Current members (2026-27) of

WSCA, NCA, EECA

LICAC conference fee only = \$60.00

Non-Members and Renewing Members of

WSCA - \$85.00

NCA - \$90.00

EECA - \$100.00

(The above non-member fee includes the conference fee plus 2026-2027 membership fee for either WSCA, NCA or EECA)

Students & Retired Members of WSCA, NCA, EECA

LICAC Conference fee only = \$30.00

Non-member Students and Retirees \$50.00

(The above non-member fee for students and retirees includes the Conference fee plus 2026-2027 membership for either WSCA, NCA or EECA)

- *Please send check or purchase order made payable to:*

Long Island Counselors Annual Conference

**If name on check is different than conference registrant
please indicate in memo who the registration payment is for-**

– Mail payment to:

LICAC

P.O.Box 42

Sayville, NY., 11782

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For further information

please contact licacconference@gmail.com