School Counselor Newsletter

“Without struggle, there can be no progress.”  -Frederick Douglass

The primary role of a school counselor is to support **student success**. We do this through **classroom counseling lessons** (like Advisory lessons), **individual student planning** (as in enrolling for classes), **responsive services** (like peer mediation), and **system support** (as in responding to parent concerns). We support students and families in three domains: academic development, career development, and person/social development. Below is what has been going on recently at Lange Middle School.

**Academic Development**

All students have been working on **AVID** strategies to help them be academically successful. During first semester, students and staff concentrated on **writing, inquiry and reading strategies**. Coming soon, students will be working on **organizational strategies** including: calendars, planners, agendas, binders and other organizational tools, graphic organizers, and tutorials/study groups. Families can assist in this organizational endeavor by helping students clean out their binders at home and checking them periodically. Remember that grades are written in the agendas on page 15 every Thursday. When home and school work together, it equates to success for students. 😊

**Career Development**

In January, school counselors visited the Science and Social Studies classrooms to explain enrollment to the students. Forms were filled out in classes and taken home for discussion with families. Forms were due on February 18th, but if you have an enrollment form at home, please bring it to us in Guidance. We thank you for taking the time to work with your student(s) to select classes for next year.

As we enroll students for the upcoming school year, we do stress that they choose at least one class that “stretches” or challenges them. **AVID** is a class that encourages challenge with support. It is offered at both the 7th and 8th grade levels. Interested students must apply and interview (both great preparatory activities for college and careers). Applications are available now in the Guidance office.

Upcoming 7th grade forms are blue and 8th grade forms are salmon (same colors as the enrollment forms). **Applications are due March 18th**.

Another class that requires an application and interview is the **Peer Ambassadors** class, offered to our upcoming 8th graders. Applications for this class are also available in Guidance and are due **March 25th**.

In March and April, school counselors will head to Two Mile Prairie, Alpha Heart, Derby Ridge, and Battle Elementary Schools to speak to fifth graders about the transition into middle school. There are no forms to fill out for 5th graders, but we do want to help prepare them for life in middle school. 😊
In Advisory, students have been concentrating on **career development**. These are the topics we covered in February: *interest inventories, active listening skills, skills for obtaining employment, and digital citizenship.* If you haven’t already, ask your student what career he/she is interested in pursuing and what classes he/she plans to take to reach that goal. We have attached an article, “10 Ways to Prepare Your Teen for College and Work” to this newsletter. This article has some excellent information in it that might also facilitate conversations at home. Whether your student is a teen or pre-teen, it is never too soon to start thinking about careers.

**Personal/Social Development**

**Desire to Aspire** started meeting in early February as a way to support the personal/social development of our female students. The girls who applied are working with MU students and learning how to “survive” the teen years and become leaders among their peers.

During the month of March, our **PBIS** (Positive Behavior Intervention & Support) goals will be managing technology in the hallways, abusive/inappropriate language, daily dress code, and being safe, respectful, and responsible **outside** of school. We are asking students to practice acts of kindness while on spring break. So…be looking for those kind acts at home. Students practice and families enjoy…a win-win situation! 😊

**It’s All in a Title**

In Missouri and nation-wide, the term *Guidance Counselor* has been replaced with the term *School Counselor*. The following is a summary from Shari Sevier, chair of the board of American School Counselor Association. The name change reflects the evolution of our profession. In the early 1900’s, we were vocational guidance counselors and we focused on guiding people towards career choices. Our jobs, and the systems we work in, have become more complex. Our knowledge base has become more complex as well. It is more fitting, and more in line with what we do, to be called school counselors. We no longer call teachers “school mams” because their jobs have evolved. Home Ec. Has changed to FACS; Shop has changed to Industrial Tech; Librarian has changed to Media Specialist. All of these changes are because of the way the jobs have evolved. We are **school counselors**…we have evolved WAY beyond the guidance counselor of old.

“Without struggle, there can be no progress.” -Frederick Douglass