



NEBRASKA  
SCHOOL  
COUNSELOR  
ASSOCIATION

*What Position does your Profession take, on issues you are confronted with everyday?*

*What does the research say?*

*Check-out the ASCA Position Statements at:*

*[schoolcounselor.org](http://schoolcounselor.org)  
Click on Press*

*Click on Position Statements (left menu)*

- Academic and Career Planning
- At-Risk Students
- Censorship
- Confidentiality
- Discipline
- Evaluation
- Family/ Parenting Education
- Gender Equity
- Group Counseling
- High-Stakes Testing
- HIV/AIDS
- Home Schooling

## **It's News For You**

A new newsletter with news for you! The Nebraska School Counselor Association brings this newsletter to you. It is part of the effort to renew energy and communication within our School Counseling profession in Nebraska. Throughout the state there are many new opportunities for school counselors to be leaders/advocates in their schools and for students. Please consider this a forum to submit articles, so we can learn from each other. You can submit articles to any NSCA board member. Considering costs, some future newsletters may be published online.

## **NSCA on the Rise: Strategic & Annual Work Plan in Place**

~ Doug Hauserman, NSCA President

The Nebraska School Counselor Association board held a weekend retreat in August to develop a five-year strategic plan and a work plan for this school year. The results are plans that will benefit school counselors, the school counseling profession in Nebraska, and thousands of Nebraska students and their families. The plan is currently being implemented and is already having a positive impact.

The 5-year strategic plan consists of four goals in the areas of professional development, member services, advocacy, and accountability. The NSCA strategic plan indicates our intent to provide professional development opportunities and member services to all professional school counselors in Nebraska. Over the next five years, NSCA plans to continue and increase efforts to educate policy makers and other stakeholders on the national, state, and local levels about comprehensive school counseling programs. Finally the strategic plan includes promoting greater use of accountability strategies that monitor student achievement and evaluate the impact of school counseling programs.

There are several things that you can expect to see this year from NSCA as we work on these strategic plan goals. Those are outlined in the work plan for this year. Some of the highlights you can expect to see in the area of professional development are the return of the School Counselor Academy, and a one day workshop with another professional organization such as a neighboring state school counselor association or professional organization in Nebraska with similar needs/goals. In the area of services provided we plan to develop awards that recognize outstanding counselors, administrators, and school counseling programs, further develop our website, produce a NSCA newsletter that contains practical things for use in the day to day job of a school counselor, and provide clearer communication on membership status. We plan to step up our efforts this year to build stronger relationship with other organizations such as Career Education, NSWA, GPACAC, neighboring SCA's, NESPA, NSEA etc. This is in no way an all-inclusive list of items on the work plan but merely a highlight of some of the exciting things that you can expect from NSCA. The NSCA governing board is always looking for your input and ideas. If you have some ideas that align with our strategic plan, please share those with any NSCA board member.

Perhaps the most important outcome of the NSCA governing board retreat was implementation of policy governance as a way for the board to operate. Policy governance does many things but amongst the most important are that it gives ownership of the organization to the members and it helps ensure consistency of effectiveness from year to year. Many times you see organizations rise and fall depending on the personality of the president or the board members. Policy governance ensures NSCA will be governed by policy and not by personality. That means that NSCA members can expect to see consistent positive growth of the association not only this year but every year.

## Nebraska School Counselor Academy Returns

~ Doug Hauserman, NSCA President

After a short disappearance the School Counselor Academy has returned under the organization of the Nebraska School Counselor Association (NSCA). NSCA's first school counselor academy was held in Omaha on October 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> and by all accounts was an enormous success. The following are examples of the success of NSCA's School Counselor Academy and the benefits to the profession and for NSCA:

- 277 school counselors attended the academy
- 2 nationally recognized keynote speakers
- NSCA gained over 30 first-time members through academy
- Academy evaluations overwhelmingly positive
- 44 exhibitors from 5 states
- 38 different breakout sessions
- NSCA membership increased 100% since January 2008

NSCA's liquid assets increased by more than 10 times since August as a result of the academy. That money will be used to benefit school counselors and the school counseling profession across the entire state with yet to be seen benefits to the profession.

However you choose to measure the success of NSCA's first attempt at the School Counselor Academy, it far exceeded the governing board's high expectations. The governing board is committed to continuing to ensure that school counselor needs in the area of professional development are met. We are continually looking for ways to improve offerings and better meet your needs and value your input. Please contact any NSCA governing board member with your suggestions and ideas in the area of professional development.

## Mary Birch is NSCA School Counselor of the Year

~ Doug Hauserman, NSCA President

Mary Birch was named the NSCA School Counselor of the year the 2008 Nebraska School Counselor Academy on October 17<sup>th</sup>. Mary has been a school counselor for many years at Pierce Jr./Sr. High School for many years. During this time she has been integral in designing programs that promote comprehensive, competency-based school counseling. Mary has a passion for creating programs that serve all students in all domains. Her guidance curriculum includes themes such as "Social Skills for 7<sup>th</sup> Graders," "Teen Talk" for 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders, and school-wide career development.

Mary represents what the school counseling profession is all about. She is empathetic, attentive and knowledgeable. Mary is a positive example for school counselors across our state and a great resource for the students, staff, and parents in the Pierce School District. Please take time to congratulate Mary on her recognition and significant contributions to our profession.

### NSCA Board Members

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Tracy Post, President  
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## Families in Crisis: Post-Safe Haven

~ Doug Hauserman, NSCA President

Upon the change in Nebraska's Safe Haven Law to cap the age of children that can be left at a hospital to 30 days old, the unicameral formally set up a committee to look at how to address the needs of families of older children in crisis. As I pondered what was about to take place I asked myself, "How could a policy conversation about this topic take place without involving school counselors?" After all, school counselors are the professionals that are working on the frontlines with students and families. School counselors are the ones that often times recognize that students and families are headed toward the crisis stage long before they reach that point. It is school counselors that are teaching parenting classes such as "Parenting with Love and Logic" to help prevent families from reaching the crisis stage. Finally, school counselors understand as well as or better than any group of professionals the shortage of support services and the flaws with current services for families in crisis.

These thoughts lead me to consider if NSCA should become involved in this issue. There are many reasons that we should become involved. 1) A comprehensive plan to address these issues needs to include prevention as well as response to families in crisis. School counselors are key in identifying families at risk early when interventions have the best chance for success. School counselors can and already are educating parents on parenting skills to prevent crises down the road. 2) In order for school counselors to be able to recognize families at risk early, it is necessary for all children and their families to have access to a school counselor, particularly at the elementary level. That is not always the case and this is an opportunity to push for requiring elementary schools to have a certified school counselor on staff. 3) It is an opportunity to educate stakeholders that any conversation about Nebraska's youth and/or education needs to include school counselors. Part of that education process needs to include the fact that school counselor are uniquely trained in both education and mental health making them an ideal resource for topics such as this. 4) Not getting involved leaves the door open for policies being made that are actually harmful to the school counseling profession. This has happened in some states and nearly happened in Missouri a couple years ago.

I shared these thoughts with the NSCA board and there is strong agreement on the board that we are going to get involved in this process. Both the NSCA government relations committee and the NSCA governing board will hold special meetings to address our involvement. If you have thoughts on this subjects please contact me at [dhauserman@westside66.org](mailto:dhauserman@westside66.org).

## NGA Selects Nebraska for Career & Technical Education Policy Academy

The National Governors Association Policy Academy will help states better equip students with academic and technical skills needed for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. A Policy Academy is designed to provide assistance to each state with national experts for advice on policy development, implementation and to receive on-going technical assistance with the states action plan. Nebraska's specific plan is to work on policy development to support a statewide system including the following:

- Connect CTE programs to current and future growth industries in Nebraska
- Align secondary and postsecondary CTE programs to eliminate duplication and create dual credit opportunities for secondary CTE students (statewide credit articulation/ transferability)
- Strengthen 21<sup>st</sup> Century workplace and leadership skills in the CTE curriculum and Career Technical Education Student Organization (FBLA, FCCLA, DECA, FFA, SkillsUSA)
- Intensify efforts of school counseling to provide meaningful college preparation and career guidance

It is promising news to see we have an opportunity to discuss school counseling policy with the highest level of policy makers in our state. We will be represented! For your information, further delineation of the school counseling action item is to:

1. Implement a statewide PK-20 guidance system that helps Nebraska students understand the college and career opportunities available in NE and how to pursue those opportunities.
2. Determine the capacity and professional development needs of the current school counseling system.

3. Provide information to NE students on the high skill/high wage career opportunities in our state.
4. Evaluate NebraskaCareerConnections.org and chart the future course for the website.

“This new spirit of cooperation and collaboration is important as we address the education challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century,” Gov. Heineman said. “We are preparing student for jobs that don’t yet exist. In order to be fully prepared for tomorrow’s workforce, our students need at least two years of college, whether that is a community college, a state college, or a public or private college or university. More than ever, our students need the education that empowers them with new information and the knowledae to access new information.”

## What’s Happening to the Boys?

~ Bob Bardwell, School Counselor and Director of Guidance, Monson High School, Monson, MA

If Doug Anglin, a member of the Class of 2006 at Milton High School, had his way, boys will no longer be discriminated against in school. Anglin filed a complaint in his senior year with the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights claiming that the current American school structure inherently favors girls over boys – that school expectations for behavior favor girls; that teacher expectations for classroom performance favor girls; and that boy brains are not wired to succeed in school. Can this be true?

Statistics show that girls do outnumber/outperform boys in many ways:

- The number of male undergraduates on college campuses today is 44%, compared to 58% in 1976.
- Elementary school boys are two times more likely to be diagnosed with a learning disability and two times as likely to be placed in special education classes.
- Boys aged five to twelve are 60% more likely than girls to repeat at least one grade.
- Females receive higher grades in virtually every subject and thus are more likely to be on the honor roll and receive more academic honors.
- The self esteem of boys is negatively affected when they are labeled as low-performing, poor learners or “problem” students.
- A University of Michigan study reported that the number of boys who didn’t like school rose 71 percent between 1980 and 2001.
- Boys are 33% more likely than girls to drop out of school; thus more girls than boys graduate from high school.
- High school girls are 36% more likely to take Advanced Placement or honors biology than high school boys.
- Twelfth grade girls score an average of 16 points higher than boys on standardized reading tests and 24 points on standardized writing tests.
- High school boys are 30% more likely to use cocaine than high school girls.

But why does this happen? One theory that supports the changing trend towards improved achievement for girls is that the way that teachers teach these days favors the girls. Boys are also likely to be more competitive in their learning yet the learning environment is focused on a cooperative, more collegial approach which favors girls. The fact that student-teacher ratios have increased and that physical education, sports programs and recess time within the school have been either reduced or eliminated doesn’t help the boys.

Some scientists believe that the reason boys are not wired for school success has to do with the fact that a boy’s brain develops slower than those of girls. Not only do girls develop sexual maturity about two years ahead of boys, but that the girl brain fully develops 18 months sooner than that of a boy. Girls mature more quickly and process information much faster than boys, all of which favors them academically. Scientists do caution that the environment, family background and a boy’s temperament do play a part in a boy’s development, however, not enough to negate the differences.

As boys begin to experience failure, frustration and academic road blocks, they begin to shut down. Their self esteem is negatively impacted; they begin to feel incompetent and fail to develop a sense of belonging. Gender stereotypes also contribute to this phenomenon as boys resist being labeled as smart, a brain or a nerd. The peer pressure for boys to resist demonstrating intelligence or academic success is immense. It’s just not the cool thing to do. Instead, boys are generally applauded by their peers for negative school behavior.

It is extremely important to note that many boys are very successful and manage to navigate through the educational system without any problems. Equally significant is that many girls experience the same types of barriers as do boys, but generally in smaller numbers.

The bottom line is that we need to provide learning environments and a societal norm that provide appropriate educational instruction (and thus student success) for all students. If we can reach this goal, then all students will benefit.

## Developing Assets in Middle School Students

~ Rynette L. Friesen, Middle School VP, NSCA

As we are all aware, middle school is a time of great transition and change for students. The 40 Developmental Assets developed by the Search Institute is one framework our building and Millard Public Schools are using with our students. The asset concept is simple and based on common sense: Young people need positive external supports and internal strengths to succeed in life. Most importantly, they need people to help nurture these assets. Assets not only promote positive behaviors, they also protect young people. The more assets a younger person reports having, the less likely he/she is to make harmful or unhealthy choices.

Assets 1 – 20 are grouped into a category called External Assets, because they are primarily built through relationships with other people. Assets 21 – 40 are called Internal Assets, because young people build those assets in their own lives.

This year, at Andersen Middle School, we are trying a new approach to asset building in our students. Our school day begins each day with a 17 minute Primetime. At the beginning of the school year, we placed our leadership students into four special Primetimes. The leadership students consist of our Asset student leaders, Ambassadors, Peer Mediators, and Student Council students. Our goal was to promote the 40 Developmental Assets throughout the building by utilizing our student leaders. These students have been divided into groups of two or three students and have joined an existing 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grade Primetime.

One of their biggest responsibilities will be to help lead the Tuesday 40 Developmental Asset lesson. They will also be available to read announcements, mentor students, or provide leadership. Each building in our district is working on their own wonderful ways to promote the Assets.

## Heads Up! Do School Counseling Programs Impact Student Achievement in Nebraska?

To answer that question we need your help. We want to take the time and effort see if our School Counseling programs are making a difference in student achievement in Nebraska. NSCA with the support of FutureForceNebraska-Partnerships for Innovation, will launch a statewide evaluation project in the beginning of 2009.

How can you help? School counselors and principals will be asked to complete an online survey, about the school counseling program. We need your help to be sure the 2 surveys are completed. The rest of the work will be done for you. We are working with the Center for School Counseling Outcome Research along with partner states to gather, analyze and report our data. Our goal is to launch the survey in Feb. 2009 and to have some preliminary reports available by next summer. Other states have data to correlate fully implemented school counseling programs with higher student achievement. We want to know if this holds true for Nebraska too. See the report from Missouri as an example at: [http://dese.mo.gov/divcareered/guidance\\_placement\\_research.htm](http://dese.mo.gov/divcareered/guidance_placement_research.htm)

## Technology Chair Needed for NSCA Board

NSCA is looking for a school counselor with knowledge in the area of setting up and maintain web pages to be the chair person of the technology committee. The primary responsibility of that committee to keep our website updated with information and resources. If you are interested in exploring the possibility of filling this position, please contact me at [dhauserman@westside66.org](mailto:dhauserman@westside66.org).





**Nebraska School Counselor Association Scholarship Application**

Scholarship competition for any high school senior in support of their post-secondary education.

**ELIGIBILITY**

- ✓ Must be a high school senior attending a public or private-secondary school in Nebraska.
- ✓ Must attend a post-secondary institution during the 2009-2010 school year.
- ✓ The scholarship will be paid directly to the institution.

**APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

- ✓ Write an essay that describes how a school counselor or school counseling program has assisted you to plan/decide/resolve/grow in an area of your life. Topics may come from any related k-12 experience and are not limited to only the college or career planning process. One award of \$500 will be given to a competitively selected recipient.
- ✓ (one award to each). Essays are limited to 500 words and will be reviewed for content and grammar.
- ✓ Essays should be typed and double-spaced. Do not put your name, your counselors name or the name of your school on the essay. Failure to follow these guidelines will disqualify the applicant from consideration.

- ✓ Send three (3) copies of the essay, the completed application form, and one stamped and self-addressed envelope to:  
 NSCA Scholarship, Attn: Dr. Laura Gaudet,  
 Chadron State College, Dept. of Counseling, Psychology, and Social Work  
 1000 Main Street  
 Chadron, NE. 69337

Provide only materials stated above. Applicants not providing the required documents or providing additional documents not requested will be disqualified from the award process.

**Deadline: Entries must be postmarked no later than March 31, 2009.**  
**Applicants will be notified of the outcome by May 20, 2009.**

**Please Print or Type:**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First MI

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Graduation: \_\_\_\_\_

High School Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*I understand that the essay I am hereby submitting becomes property of the Nebraska School Counselor Association (NSCA). I grant permission to NSCA to publicize my name, school, and essay.*

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature (if student is under age 18) \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Status:**

Registered Schools	152
Students at Registered Schools	12,447
Implementing Schools	71
Students at Implementing Schools	8,492
Live Schools	57
Students at Live Schools	4,689

More details on the e-Transcript Initiative, including an overview of services and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), can be obtained at the e-Transcript Initiative's website: <http://www.nde.state.ne.us/slds/etranscripts/>. Docufide project manager for this effort, Heather House can answer any additional questions you may have. She can be reached at [neetranscripts@docufide.com](mailto:neetranscripts@docufide.com) or (763) 767-4716. Other questions, call Carol Ringenberg, NDE at (402) 471-3242.

## Important Dates to Remember

February 2009 – Nebraska School Counseling Statewide Evaluation Study Begins  
 March 6 – Elementary School Counselor Conference, Louisville, NE  
 April 23 – Nebraska ACT Conference, Lincoln NE  
 June 9-11 – NCE Conference, Kearney NE



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