

# SCHEDULE OF SECTIONAL MEETINGS

WSCA Conference 2025-2026

Thursday, November 6, 2025

## SECTIONAL 1 – 7:45 – 8:45 a.m.

**1. Battling Inattention: Tiered Tips and Development for Understanding Executive Functioning**  
(Elementary; Beginner; Social/Emotional)

Location: **Africa 10**

"These kids just can't pay attention" is a common phrase heard throughout K-12 education, but particularly elementary school. But how many attention concerns are due to an attention deficit? How often are we mislabeling students as inattentive when practical strategies for sustained focus are left untouched? This sectional will combine behavioral and neurological concepts to describe why students struggle to "pay attention."

Presenter(s): David Linsmeyer, MS, School Counselor, Saint Croix Central Elementary; Becca Paulson, MS, School Psychologist, Saint Croix Central Elementary

**2. Relationships Start with a Story: Counselors Helping Teachers Look Beyond the Struggle**  
(Elementary|Middle|High; Beginner; Leadership/Advocacy)

Location: **Africa 20**

Behind every behavior is a story waiting to be heard. Explore partnering with teachers to shift from "What's wrong with this student?" to "What's going on?" Through real-world examples and practical tools, learn to guide teachers in seeing the whole child beyond challenges. Discover how communication, cultural awareness, and emotional insight transform classroom moments into connection opportunities, strengthening relationships through counselor support.

Presenter(s): Kate Willems, MS, MA, School Counselor, St. Robert School

**3. Developing School Grief Support**  
(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Social/Emotional)

Location: **Africa 30**

In Wisconsin 1 in 13 children will experience the death of a parent or a sibling before the age 18 (Jag Institute, 2024). West De Pere School District in partnership with Unity Grief and Education Center offers ongoing grief services for students, staff, and families. Learn about the many benefits of offering multi-leveled grief support services within a school district.

Presenter(s): Chad Federman, MSE, High School Counselor, West De Pere School District; Michelle Miller, MSE, LPS, Grief Counselor, Unity Grief & Education Center; Mardi Johnson, MSE, Elementary School Counselor, West De Pere School District

**4. ASCA Model 5.0 is Here!**  
(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Leadership/Advocacy)

Location: **Africa 40**

Staying current and up-to-date with our practice is an ongoing endeavor. Come find out what's new in the recently released 5th edition of the ASCA Model. Hear what changes have been made, as well as what remains the same.

Presenter(s): Steve Schneider, NBCT, ACSC, ASCA Certified Counselor, Retired School Counselor

**5. A School Wide Approach to SEL and Character Education in Middle School**

*(Middle; Professional; Social/Emotional)*

Location: **Africa 50**

Meyer Middle School, a recognized state and national school of character, will share a school-wide approach to SEL and Character Education. Character Ed emphasizes core traits, while SEL focuses on developing positive traits through specific SEL skills. This presentation will share SEL program ideas, including a SEL course, awareness weeks, and small groups. Participants will learn about a comprehensive Character Ed program that includes character traits, character themes, and advisory lessons.

Presenter(s): Sam Dusek, MS, School Counselor, School District of River Falls; Gary Campbell, MS, School Counselor, School District of River Falls; Jordan Seifert, MS, School Counselor, School District of River Falls; Mark Chapin, PhD, Middle School Principal, School District of River Falls

**6. The Cup: An Engaging Conversation Starter To Help Students Take Control Of Their Happiness**

*(Middle|High; Professional; Social/Emotional)*

Location: **Africa 60**

Do you wish you had a multi tool to engage your students and make them an active participant in their own mental health? In 19 years of using Glasser's Choice Theory concepts, I have used this "The Cup" conversation to engage students, parents, and teachers to move towards owning their happiness. In this sectional, I demonstrate this "tool" as something you can use in practice now, regardless of which counseling theory you use to help students.

Presenter(s): Joe Wiesner, MSE, School Counselor, Lincoln High School

**7. Direct Admit Wisconsin**

*(High; General; Academic/Career/Postsecondary)*

Location: **Africa 70**

Learn more about the Universities of Wisconsin Direct Admit Wisconsin program, which launched in the Fall 2024. UW Universities participating in DAW proactively admit participating Wisconsin high school students based on already determined admission criteria. In this session, you will learn about the requirements of DAW and how your high school can participate in 2026. This session is geared for high schools who are not currently participating in the program.

Presenter(s): Corina Diaz-Suazo, J.D., Strategic Enrollment and Transfer Specialist, Universities of Wisconsin Administration

**8. Powerful Pathways: Wisconsin Tools to Connect Career Experiences, Financial Planning & College Success**

*(High; General; Academic/Career/Postsecondary)*

Location: **Africa 80**

School counselors, come discover two Wisconsin-based resources designed to help your students succeed. Money Path from SecureFutures connects every career-based learning experience, from job shadows to apprenticeships, with real-life financial outcomes. Then, DebtSmarts.org takes the next step, guiding students through FAFSA completion, scholarship opportunities, and debt-prevention strategies. Together, these powerful tools give students the clarity, confidence, and financial know-how they need to prepare for life after high school, no matter their chosen pathway.

Presenter(s): Jennifer Andreas, Senior Money Path Manager, SecureFutures; Carole Trone, Executive Director, DebtSmarts (Wisconsin Coalition on Student Debt)

**9. The Real Deal: Creating Authentic ACP opportunities for your Staff and Students.**

*(High; Beginner; Academic/Career/Postsecondary)*

Location: **Guava**

Are you fully aware of what future possibilities actually exist for students after graduation? We 'talk the talk' but how do we actually walk the walk? Cultivate a plan to immerse your staff within your local community to support career pathways and explore how to implement school-wide ACP opportunities that allow all students to experience authentic career readiness.

Presenter(s): Susan Verhagen, MS, Counselor and Student Services Department Chair, Oconomowoc High School; Kyla Stefan, MS, Coordinator of Career Programming, Oconomowoc Area School District

**10. Leveling Up Social Skills: Using Role-Playing Games in School Counseling**

*(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Social/Emotional)*

Location: **Portia**

Discover how role-playing games (RPGs) like Dungeons & Dragons can help students build essential skills such as communication, teamwork, empathy, and active listening. This session will show school counselors how RPGs can support students in asking open-ended questions, observing social cues, and practicing eye contact all while engaging in fun, collaborative storytelling. Learn how to integrate this creative tool into your counseling practice to enhance students' social-emotional growth.

Presenter(s): Max Moderski, Elementary School Counselor, North Crawford School District

**11. Internships and Youth Apprenticeships: Keeping it simple**

*(High; Beginner; Academic/Career/Postsecondary)*

Location: **Tamarind**

What does your school offer for workbased learning opportunities? What are your processes and procedures? Who oversees your school-to-work program? How are student learners assessed? If you're unsure, let's talk. This session will cover the basics of a school-to-work program, employer collaboration, the differences between Youth Apprenticeships (YA) and internships, and how to keep the process simple and practical for everyone involved.

Presenter(s): Russ Hermann, MS, CTE Instructor and School to Work Coordinator, Slinger High School; Phil Ourada, MSE, Principal, Slinger High School

**12. Up to Me - The Art of Telling Your Story in a Stigmatizing Society**

*(Elementary|Middle|High; Professional; Equity)*

Location: **Wisteria**

Want to help adolescents feel comfortable in sharing their mental health story? Up to Me is a presentation that gives insight into how adolescents/youth decide who they share their story to and how they share their story. Understanding that stigma plays a role in mental health and society, adolescents have a choice to determine what story they share and the goal for why they are sharing.

Presenter(s): Brittney Fair, MSW, APSW, Training Lead, Rogers Behavioral Health

**13. A Newcomer's Guide to the WSCA Conference**

*(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Leadership/Advocacy)*

Location: **Africa 90**

Join us for a special welcome orientation designed for first-time attendees, ensuring you make the most of your time with us. This session will provide an in-depth look at the conference agenda, highlight the session schedule, and offer strategies for effective networking. You'll also learn how to navigate the event app, connect with experienced mentors, and find your way around the venue. This is the perfect opportunity to meet fellow newcomers and start building your professional network.

Presenter(s): WSCA Leaders

**OPENING SESSION**  
**9:00 – 10:15 a.m.**  
**Keynote Speaker – Fareedah Shaheed**  
**Africa East**

**SECTIONAL 2 – 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.**  
**SECTIONAL 2 INTENSIVE – 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**14. Effectively Integrating Solution Focused Counseling into Your School Counseling Work**  
*(Elementary|Middle|High; Professional; Social/Emotional; INTENSIVE)*

Location: **Africa 10**

Would you like to know how to move beyond the miracle question? This workshop will assist you in expanding your knowledge of Solution Focused Counseling and how to integrate it into school counseling. We will discuss current practices and review the foundations of SFC while focusing on how to effectively utilize SFC in schools.

Presenter(s): Mark Gillen, Ph.D., NCC, LPC, Professor Emeritus, UW-River Falls

**15. We Have Needs Too! (Finding Our Courage Together)**  
*(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Social/Emotional)*

Location: **Africa 20**

Approximately ten percent of our schools' students have gifted and talented needs - academically and in social and emotional development. Additionally, many are twice exceptional, demonstrating both learning differences and gifted behaviors. School counselors, like many educators, are not often trained in meeting these unique needs. In this workshop we'll explore ways for school counselors to be integral courageous partners in serving these delightful and often quirky kids.

Presenter(s): Jacquelyn Drummer, MS, Advisor, Wisconsin Association for Talented and Gifted

**16. Self-Care through Cultural Lenses: Integrating Wellness in school counseling programs**  
*(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Leadership/Advocacy)*

Location: **Africa 30**

Through this interactive sectional, participants will compare self-care practices across cultural contexts, exploring how values shape wellness strategies. Case studies and practical examples will illustrate how cultural identity influences self-care and how counselors can integrate a culturally responsive understanding of self-care into their schools. Join an inclusive discussion on diverse cultural perspectives to ultimately foster more effective and sustainable wellness practices in schools.

Presenter(s): Jennifer Betters Bubon, MS, MSE, Ph.D., LPC, Professor and Department Chair, University of Wisconsin Whitewater; Mastewal Seyeneh, MS, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater; Olamojiba Bamgbsoe, MS, Ph.D.,

LPC, Associate Professor and Program Coordinator, University of Wisconsin Whitewater; Maria Guerrero Gonzalez, Master's Student, University of Wisconsin Whitewater

**17. Wellness Days in Schools: Fostering Self-Care and Mental Health Strategies Through Community Collaboration**

*(Elementary|Middle|High; Professional; Social/Emotional)*

Location: **Africa 40**

This session explores how schools can implement Wellness Days, full-day events dedicated to mental health, self-care, and emotional resilience. Learn how to design structured Wellness Days, engage students with meaningful activities, and partner with community organizations to enhance student support. Discover strategies for promoting empathy, mindfulness, and coping skills within the school environment.

Presenter(s): Amanda Eake, MSE, Elementary School Counselor, Ripon Area School District; Nicole Mashock, MA, Behavior Interventionist, Ripon Area School District

**18. Blueprint for Success: Navigating Apprenticeships and Trades Careers with Your Students**

*(High; Beginner; Academic/Career/Postsecondary)*

Location: **Africa 50**

Interested in advising students on apprenticeships and trades careers? Join the Wisconsin Building Trades and Wisconsin's nationally-recognized workforce intermediary WRTP | BIG STEP to learn about the family-sustaining wages, benefits, and opportunities in union construction careers. As WRTP | BIG STEP expands statewide in 2025, the organization is available to help counselors connect students with training, testing, and comprehensive services to reduce barriers for those entering the trades.

Presenter(s): Emily Pritzkow, Executive Director, Wisconsin Building Trades Council; Laura Bell, Statewide Director, WRTP | BIG STEP

**19. Racial Literacy - Did You Know That? I Didn't...**

*(Middle|High; General; Equity; INTENSIVE)*

Location: **Africa 60**

Race is a social construct, made up, but its consequences are very real. Our students, their families and our colleagues of color deal with this reality every day. We as counselors and a nation need to become racially literate. In this session we will discuss the history of anti-Black racism, the thru lines and lingering legacy in this country. Former students will also share their experiences/insights to help us move towards a more informed approach to multi-racial counseling.

Presenter(s): Kim Gary, MS, LPC, Retired School Counselor, Retired

**20. What Does A Model ACP/E4E Plan Look Like? A Showcase From Six Districts.**

*(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Academic/Career/Postsecondary)*

Location: **Africa 70**

Public school districts must provide academic and career planning (ACP) services to students in grades 6 to 12 as a part of the Education for Employment (E4E) statute. Discover how six school districts successfully developed exemplary ACP/E4E Plans. Hear the highlights of their plans and strategies for effective school board presentations. Learn practical approaches to create a comprehensive ACP/E4E Plan that meets Wisconsin's administrative requirements and prepares students for their future!

Presenter(s): Karin Smith, MS, Education Consultant, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction; Krista Neave, MA, NCC, LPC, High School Counselor, Howards Grove High School; Brenda Hoffman, , FCS & BIT Teacher, Gresham Community School; Julia M.

Backaus, School Counselor, School District of Neillsville; Kelly Ryder, Director of Curriculum and Programs, Hayward Community School District; Caitlin Knoll MSE, NBCT, Senior Project Coordinator, Superior High School; Kimberly Leannais, MS, Assistant Principal, 9th Grade, Oak Creek High School; Ricci Huber, MS Business Educator and CTE Coordinator, Oak Creek High School

**21. Zone Defense: A Proactive Way to Implement Zones of Regulation in Middle School**

*(Middle; Beginner; Social/Emotional)*

Location: **Africa 80**

Adolescence is a time of big changes, and we as counselors have a front row seat to the major shifts at play in the minds of middle schoolers. At such a complex age, sometimes the simplest interventions are the most effective. JRG in Kimberly has implemented school-wide education and reinforcement around the "Zones of Regulation" to find a common language among students, counselors, and teachers in a productive way...and there's data to prove it!

Presenter(s): Brad Demmin, MA, Middle School Counselor, JR Gerritts Middle School - Kimberly Area School District; Andrea Diamond, MSE, Middle School Counselor, JR Gerritts Middle School - Kimberly Area School District

**22. Planning A School Year of Social Emotional Learning: Using Themes to Focus Developmental Guidance**

*(Elementary; Beginner; Social/Emotional)*

Location: **Guava**

There is a variety of structured curriculums that offer scripts, activities, and are often tied tightly to standards and mindsets that drive our school counseling practice. This sectional is not going to tell you to find a program and follow it verbatim. During our time together we will look at using data to identify your students' specific needs and develop themed programming using common language and skills. The focus will be on mapping out Tier 1 Universal Interventions.

Presenter(s): Sarah Eder, MSED, Elementary School Counselor, Hurley School District

**23. I Finally Know What I'm Doing As a School Counselor, Now What?**

*(Elementary|Middle|High; Professional; Leadership/Advocacy)*

Location: **Portia**

You are now an experienced school counselor, so, what's next? Join a panel discussion to explore the next steps in your professional journey. Looking for like-minded colleagues who truly "get you"? Ready to expand your leadership beyond your school community? Want to dream big and shape the future of school counseling? This session is your opportunity to connect, grow, and take your impact to the next level. Don't miss out!

Presenter(s): Amy Karsten, MS, School Counselor, Sun Prairie East High School

**24. Human Sex Trafficking Awareness Training**

*(Middle|High; General; Social/Emotional; INTENSIVE)*

Location: **Tamarind**

5-stones, Fox Valley, Appleton Wisconsin will define Human/Sex Trafficking and key elements to this insidious industry impacting students, adults and communities. Attendees will meet with key players: Victim/Survivor, Trafficker and Friend through 3 videos, observing behavior/relationships. Learn about key risk factors, review social media impact on today's youth along with drugs, pornography, and sexting. The program will provide an abbreviated session on Sextortion and its impact on students 14-17 years old.

Presenter(s): Kristine Pierce, Presenter / Trainer, 5-stones Fox Valley, Appleton Wisconsin; Debby Suchyta, Presentation Advisor, 5-stones Fox Valley, Appleton Wisconsin

- 25. Children's WI: Creating Caring and Calm Classrooms-Supporting kids' emotional and mental health with mindfulness resources**  
(Elementary|Middle; Professional; Social/Emotional)

Location: **Wisteria**

In this presentation, educators will explore online mindfulness and mental health resources available at no cost from Children's Wisconsin! Skills taught in our online lessons include: recognizing feelings and emotions and learning how to deal with them, empathy and compassion, healthy relationships, common mental health disorders and concerns, and how to get help when needed.

Presenter(s): Clay Anton, M. Ed, E-Learning Specialist, Children's Wisconsin

- 26. Cultivating a Workforce for Our Changing Communities**  
(High; Beginner; Academic/Career/Postsecondary)

Location: **Africa 90**

Opportunities abound with technical education at one of Wisconsin's 16 technical colleges. Learn how technical colleges are at the forefront of providing hands-on skills, certifications, degrees, and transfer opportunities that match the demand of our area communities. We will discuss specialized programming and apprenticeships, programs that are unique in the state, partnered programs between other WTCS colleges, and provide hands-on simulation activities.

Presenter(s): Rhonda Austin, Admissions Specialist, Northwoods Technical College

## **LUNCH & LEARN – 11:40 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

- 27. A Collaborative Approach to Social-Emotional Wellness for High Achieving Students**  
(Middle|High; General; Social/Emotional; 20 MIN – 11:40 am – 12:00 pm)

Location: **Africa 20**

Differentiation does not just mean altering levels of academic work based on student achievement. Many high achieving students struggle with extreme anxiety, self-doubt, and a lack of growth mindset. Intentional adult modeling and diction choices influences students to adopt healthy self-talk and mental health practices. Collaboration and co-teaching between classroom educators and school counselors is crucial for educating students about how their social-emotional wellness impacts academics.

Presenter(s): Jessica Daugherty, MS, MA, Professional Educator, Randolph School District

- 28. How the ROX Program for Girls Increased Their Sense of Belonging in School**  
(Middle|High; Beginner; Social/Emotional; 20 MIN – 11:40 am – 12:00 pm)

Location: **Africa 30**

Join two counselors from the School District of River Falls as they cover how the ROX small group curriculum has had an impact on the wellbeing of their girls. The ROX Program equips girls in grades 5-12 with the essential life skills they need to succeed in relationships, academics, and life through an evidence-based small group curriculum that has been validated with over 40,000 girls.

Presenter(s): Geri Muller, MSE, School Counselor, School District of River Falls; Sam Dusek, MSE, School Counselor, School District of River Falls

- 29. Wisconsin Standard e & ASCA Model 5.0**

*(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Leadership/Advocacy; 20 MIN – 11:40 am – 12:00 pm)*

Location: **Africa 50**

Learn more about the legal requirements for school counseling programs in Wisconsin, including templates that can be used by school counselors and administration/school boards.

Presenter(s): Stacy Eslick, MS, MSSW, Executive Director, WSCA; Andrea Donegan, MS, School Counseling Consultant, WI DPI

**30. Using SEL Screeners to Identify the Gaps Between Student Self-Perception and Staff Student Perception**

*(Elementary|Middle; Professional; Leadership/Advocacy; 20 MIN – 11:40 am – 12:00 pm)*

Location: **Africa 70**

Universal screeners are often used to gather the perspective of staff and the social/emotional development of students at the elementary level. Once in middle school, self-reporting by students identifies a gap between a student's sense of self and the perceptions of staff. This sectional will examine different options and tools for closing the gap between these perceptions to ensure students needs are identified and addressed.

Presenter(s): Sarah Eder, MEd, Elementary School Counselor, Hurley K12 School

**31. Re-entry with Care: Supporting Students During and After Hospitalization for Suicide Risk or a Mental Health Crisis**

*(Elementary|Middle|High; Professional; Social/Emotional; 20 MIN – 11:40 am – 12:00 pm)*

Location: **Africa 80**

This session will walk through Re-entry with Care: A Guide for Supporting Students During and After Hospitalization for Suicide Risk or a Mental Health Crisis, a new, free resource from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. The guide offers practical tools, including checklists and editable templates for re-entry and safety planning, to help school counselors and staff implement a compassionate, coordinated process. Participants will also explore best practices for fostering student well-being, strengthening collaboration, and centering student voice during this critical transition.

Presenter(s): Libby Strunz, School Mental Health Consultant, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction; Jenny Holle, MS, Regional Coordinator, Wisconsin Safe and Healthy Schools Center (WISH Center)

**32. When is Virtual the Best Fit**

*(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Social/Emotional; 20 MIN – 11:40 am – 12:00 pm)*

Location: **Guava**

Wisconsin Virtual Learning is a pioneer in virtual public education, providing classes for students from 4K to 12th grade. Traditional in-person schooling can be challenging for some students, making virtual education an excellent alternative. Join us to discover how WVL empowers virtual learners and fosters their success.

Presenter(s): Haley Pfeuffer, MSE, School Counselor, Wisconsin Virtual Learning

**SECTIONAL 3 – 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.**  
**SECTIONAL 3 INTENSIVE – 12:45 – 2:15 p.m.**

**33. The "Greatest Hits" School Counseling and Integrated Behavioral Health Strategies**  
*(Elementary|Middle; General; Social/Emotional)*

Location: **Africa 10**

Join Jenny Worley as she details her favorite strategies from 20+ years of working with various evidence based practices (F-act, CBT, MI) in schools, private practice and medical clinics. This compilation she affectionately calls "greatest hits" is what counseling students, interns and residents consistently seek her out for in multiple environments. It will include: When and how to use the strategy, language to help you start using it and what outcomes they move the child or adolescent towards.

Presenter(s): Jennifer Worley, MS, LPC, Therapist, Former School Counselor, Peace Child Coaching and Consulting

**34. Enhancing Progress with Play: Interactive Classroom and Small Group Activities**  
(Elementary; Beginner; Social/Emotional)

Location: **Africa 20**

Discover dynamic and interactive activities that boost engagement, which in return, boosts learning and connection! Participants will discover a variety of hands-on, interactive activities designed to enhance social emotional topics. Join in and receive creative and adaptable ideas to take back with you. As counselors, we've noted an increase in progress when play is intertwined into their learning and continue to move forward on building these activities into our curriculum!

Presenter(s): Jami Van Heuklom, MS, Elementary School Counselor, Clear Lake School District; Jeni Donath, MA, JK-12 School Counselor, Clayton School District

**35. Grief 101: How Grief Impacts Children and Teens, and How to Support Them in a School Setting**  
(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Social/Emotional)

Location: **Africa 30**

Grief is a universal human experience, but it can be hard to talk about and understand, especially for children and teens. This is a discussion about how grief impacts students and how to support them in a school setting. While this presentation will focus on grief from a death, we understand students grieve other losses and our content is adaptable to these experiences.

Presenter(s): Dana Basch, MSE, LPC, CT, Community Grief Specialist, Agrace Grief Support Center; Holly Krook Castañeda, Bilingual Community Grief Specialist, Agrace Grief Support Center

**36. Notice, Name, Nest, Nurture: A Framework for Supporting Students Through Grief, Trauma, and Everyday Challenges**  
(Middle|High; General; Social/Emotional)

Location: **Africa 40**

Help students navigate difficult emotions with a visual approach! This interactive session explores using continuums to support students in identifying and expressing emotions related to grief, trauma, and everyday challenges. Participants will engage with the Notice, Name, Nest, Nurture framework and gain practical strategies and resources to implement immediately, helping students recognize, validate, and regulate emotions, fostering resilience and well-being.

Presenter(s): Mary Brey, Veteran Educator and SEL Advocate, Substitute Teacher, School District of Loyal

**37. State of the State**  
(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Leadership/Advocacy)

Location: **Africa 50**

Join the WSCA Executive Director and Department of Public Instruction (DPI) School Counseling Consultant, to learn about the state of school counseling. Learn more about state and national updates

around student mental health, social emotional learning, academic and career planning, school climate and safety, ASCA model updates and other current trends in education that may pertain to school counselors. Come and see what Stacy and Andrea have to share.

Presenter(s): Stacy Eslick, MSE, MSSW, Executive Director, WSCA; Andrea Donegan, MS, School Counseling Consultant, WI DPI

**38.1. Designing Something Out of Nothing: Establishing a Comprehensive District Wide Academic and Career Planning Curriculum**

*(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Academic/Career/Postsecondary; 20 MIN – 12:45 - 1:05 pm)*

Location: **Africa 60**

Explore the design and implementation of a comprehensive academic and career planning curriculum the DeForest Area School District integrated within existing district-wide systems. Session framework includes career exploration, educational planning, and life skills development. Through discussions and hands-on learning, attendees gain strategies for designing lessons, foster critical thinking, problem-solving and collaboration with tools to track student success, progress and career goals.

Presenter(s): Rachel Steward, MSE, Teacher, Academic and Career Planning, DeForest Area School District; Emily Hendricks, MS, Academic and Career Planning Coordinator, DeForest Area School District

**38.2. Engagement Through Youth Apprenticeship**

*(High; General; Academic/Career/Postsecondary; 20 MIN – 1:20 - 1:40 pm)*

Location: **Africa 60**

Youth Apprenticeship (YA) will jump start your student's career aspirations! Learn about the basics of the Wisconsin YA Program and how it connects your ACP and career readiness goals with student engagement. This is a win-win program for students, districts, and employers alike! YA combines classroom learning with real-world work experience, develops employability and occupational skills in high-demand fields, while addressing Wisconsin's future workforce needs. YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP IS KEY!

Presenter(s): Nancy Larson, MSE, Ashland Middle & High School Counselor, Youth Apprenticeship Coordinator, Ashland High School; Olivia Dachel, Regional Youth Apprenticeship Coordinator, CESA 12

**38.3. Operating Engineer Pre-Apprenticeship Opportunities for High School Students**

*(High; General; Academic/Career/Postsecondary; 20 MIN – 1:55 - 2:15 pm)*

Location: **Africa 60**

Learn how your students can take online pre-apprenticeship classes that will provide not only high school credit but also advanced standing technical college credit and Operating Engineer Registered Apprenticeship credit. Help them get a jump start on a rewarding career!

Presenter(s): Mindy Mulryan, Workforce Development Director, Construction Business Group

**39. Developing Partnerships and Relationship Building: Re-engaging Students towards Graduation and Postsecondary Success**

*(High; Professional; Academic/Career/Postsecondary)*

Location: **Africa 70**

This insightful sectional explores partnership opportunities with Gateway to College program at Madison College. Discover how this collaboration offers students not on track to graduate or those seeking a more supportive setting a pathway from dual credit classes to postsecondary education or employment, in a more mature and nurturing environment. Gain valuable strategies to identify and

assist students who need an alternative to traditional high school, empowering them to thrive academically and personally.

Presenter(s): Renuka Gunawardena, MS, Student Support Advisor, Madison College; Jodie Pope, MS, Program Director, Gateway to College, Madison College

**40. The Power of Peers: Youth Voice and Agency (Curriculum, Policies, & Procedures)**  
*(Elementary|Middle|High; Professional; Leadership/Advocacy)*

Location: **Africa 80**

Students say tobacco/vaping education comes too late—they're right. This workshop explores peer educator programs, proven most impactful for health education. Using real stories and resources, participants learn to build youth-led initiatives centering student voice. For those believing in young people's power to lead change, this workshop is essential for early prevention success.

Presenter(s): Scott Gerbert, MBA, MPHA, Director of Outreach and Strategic Partnerships, Stanford School of Medicine - REACH Lab

**41. The Youth Wellness Hub: Accessing Resources to Spark the Courage Within!**  
*(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Equity; INTENSIVE)*

Location: **Guava**

The Youth Wellness Hub (YWH) is a FREE tool helping parents, caregivers, and professionals create customized resource guides for youth with behavioral and mental health needs. It provides access to individualized resources across social, health, insurance, and community services. We'll demonstrate the tool and discuss strategies for enhancing resource access and driving meaningful change.

Presenter(s): Elizabeth Olsen, M.Ed., Outreach and Technical Assistance Coordinator, Wisconsin Womens Health Foundation; Lauren Lotter, CHES, Well Badger Program Manager, Wisconsin Women's Health Foundation

**42. Enhancing School Counseling with AI & Technology**  
*(Elementary|Middle; Beginner; Academic/Career/Postsecondary; INTENSIVE)*

Location: **Portia**

Discover innovative ways to integrate AI and technology into school counseling! This interactive session will explore AI tools that enhance efficiency, foster collaboration, and support students. Attendees will share experiences, gain practical tech tips, and discuss AI's ethical, legal, and confidentiality considerations in counseling. Walk away with time-saving strategies and fresh ideas applicable to all levels. This will be an interactive workshop, so join us to learn, share, and innovate!

Presenter(s): Amy Karsten, MS, MA, School Counselor, Sun Prairie East High School; Sarah Albright, MA, School Counselor, Sun Prairie East High School

**43. Innovative Groups in Schools: Navigating the Challenges**  
*(Middle; General; Social/Emotional)*

Location: **Tamarind**

Want to start groups but don't know where to begin? This session offers ideas and processes for implementing and sustaining groups. Using student needs assessments, individual meetings, and staff feedback, John Adams Middle School has successfully run groups on Anxiety/Stress Management, Interpersonal Relationships, Families in Change, and Grief. Learn about successes and challenges of creating groups, gain practical resources, and discover data-driven approaches to improve and sustain ongoing group implementation.

Presenter(s): Robin Alcala Saner, MS, EdD, Middle School Counselor, John Adams Middle

School; Mary Reiter, MS, Middle School Counselor, John Adams Middle School

**44. School Counselors' Use of the Five Stages in the Roadmap for School Mental Health**  
(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Social/Emotional; INTENSIVE)

Location: **Wisteria**

Participants will deep dive into Mental Health Literacy resources and how to use the Roadmap for School Mental Health across various stages of implementing systems change.

Presenter(s): Libby Strunz, School Mental Health Consultant, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

**45. The Enhanced ACT, Methodize, and You**  
(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Academic/Career/Postsecondary)

Location: **Africa 90**

A summary of the changes to the ACT that your students will take in the spring, a demonstration of Method Learning's new course for the Enhanced ACT, and an open discussion/Q&A about the services Method Learning provides to Wisconsin's schools. Sectional may release earlier than 2:00 pm, depending on questions.

Presenter(s): Ethan Lewis, Director of Customer Satisfaction, Method Learning

**SECTIONAL 4 – 2:30 – 3:30 p.m.**  
**SECTIONAL 4 INTENSIVE – 2:15 – 3:30 p.m.**

**46. The Intersection of Suicide Prevention Laws, Ethics, and Court Cases**  
(Elementary|Middle|High; Professional; Leadership/Advocacy)

Location: **Africa 10**

This session explores state statutes, ethics, and court cases related to suicide prevention in schools. Participants will review statutory obligations, reflect on key takeaways from precedent setting court cases, and consider ethical implications. Best practices and available resources to support and inform suicide prevention statutory requirements, policy, systems-level protocols, and professional practice will be discussed and explored.

Presenter(s): Andrea Donegan, MS, School Counseling Consultant, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

**47. AI-Powered Productivity: Freeing Up Time for What Matters Most**  
(Elementary|Middle|High; Beginner; Social/Emotional)

Location: **Africa 20**

Feeling overwhelmed in your role as a school counselor? This session introduces beginner-friendly AI tools that can help school counselors save time, stay organized, and focus more on supporting students. Explore how AI can assist with lesson planning, resource curation, communication and more! Walk away with simple, effective strategies to streamline your workload and reduce stress.

Presenter(s): Abby Fernan, MSE, Director of Student Services, Prevention, and Wellness, CESA 4

**48. The Intersectionality of the LGBTQ+ Community and Mental Health**  
(Elementary|Middle|High; Intermediate; Equity; INTENSIVE)

Location: **Africa 30**

In this sectional I will go over some LGBTQ+ basics such as vocabulary. I will go over statistics for what

queer youth are experiencing in terms of mental health. Provide concrete examples of queer experiences that contribute to mental health. I will give ideas and resources on how to support queer youth as a counselor.

Presenter(s): Rae Tompson, CCS Case Manager, Catalyst for Change Inc.

**49. Best Practices Solutions for Youth Vaping Prevention and Intervention**  
(*Middle|High; General; Social/Emotional; INTENSIVE*)

Location: **Africa 40**

In Wisconsin, one in three high school students has tried vaping (2023 WI YRBS). As tobacco use evolves, schools and communities play a critical role in fostering safe, healthy environments that build student resilience. Join us as we unpack the latest trends in vaping and explore how School Counselors can make an impact on vaping through best-practice solutions, advocating for alternatives to suspension, and by helping to lead policy change.

Presenter(s): Jenny Holle, MS, Regional Coordinator, Wisconsin Safe and Healthy Schools Center (WISH Center); Alissa Darin, MS, Regional Coordinator, Wisconsin Safe and Healthy Schools Center (WISH Center)

**50. Navigating the Grey: WSCA Legal & Ethical Consultancy**  
(*Elementary|Middle|High; Professional; Leadership/Advocacy; INTENSIVE*)

Location: **Africa 50**

Are you facing increasingly complex ethical situations in your role as a school counselor? Join WSCA's legal and ethical consultancy session where you will dive deep into pressing ethical challenges through this dynamic, interactive sectional. You will also learn how you can participate in WSCA's monthly innovative virtual symposium series designed to strengthen your decision-making skills and expand your professional toolkit.

Presenter(s): Stacy Eslick, MSE, MSSW, Executive Director, WSCA

**51. Guiding Juniors to Success: Effective Junior Meeting Seminars**  
(*Middle|High; Professional; Academic/Career/Postsecondary*)

Location: **Africa 60**

Set juniors up for success with purposeful planning! This session will explore how to structure junior meeting seminars that help students reflect on their goals, strengths, involvement, GPA, and ACT goal setting while creating actionable steps for their future. Attendees will gain practical tools to engage students and families in meaningful discussions. Whether enhancing existing meetings or creating new ones, this session will help counselors better support students on their path to success.

Presenter(s): Amanda Jensen, MS, NBCT, School Counselor, Holmen High School; Kelli Korneta, MS, School Counselor, Holmen High School; Hanna Niccum, MS, School Counselor, Holmen High School; Heather Franzini, MS, NBCT, School Counselor, Holmen High School; Lindsey Seipp, MS, School Counselor, Holmen High School

**52. 1. All About AmeriCorps**  
(*High; General; Academic/Career/Postsecondary; 20 MIN – 2:15 - 2:35 pm*)

Location: **Africa 70**

Learn how AmeriCorps can be a good option for your students after high school (gap year, summer employment, transitional employment, post-college) by helping them earn an education award, gain job skills and experience in multiple fields, forge relationships, and make a difference for others. Individuals serving with AmeriCorps participate in a term of national service while earning a living stipend and an education award to use towards post-secondary education costs or student loan repayment.

Presenter(s): Kyle Clower, MA, Communications and Government Affairs Officer, Serve Wisconsin

**52.2. The Wisconsin Challenge Academy**

*(High; Beginner; Academic/Career/Postsecondary; 20 MIN – 2:40 - 3:00 pm)*

Location: **Africa 70**

The Wisconsin Challenge Academy is an alternative education program designed to reclaim the lives of at-risk youth and produce graduates with the values, skills, education, and self-discipline necessary to succeed as adults. The Academy is part of the National Guard Youth Challenge Program, a community-based program that leads, trains, and mentors 16-18 year-olds so that they may become productive citizens in America's future.

Presenter(s): Julee Katona, Outreach Coordinator, Wisconsin Challenge Academy

**52.3. Building Trust and Equity in Counseling: Supporting Every Student's Emotional Growth**

*(Middle|High; Professional; Leadership/Advocacy; 20 MIN – 3:10 - 3:30 pm)*

Location: **Africa 70**

When children that struggle with substance use disorders they can present very challenging and difficult behaviors. The initial or common response from individuals is to try and challenge or change the behavior of the child. Instead we must show the child unconditional positive regard, allow them space and time to process through emotions, and validate their feelings. Following this we can then begin to try and help the child come to new conclusions and ideas.

Presenter(s): Andrew Jacobchick, Counselor, Pathways To a Better Life LLC; Pamela Quezaire, MSE, Substance Abuse Counselor, Pathways to a Better Life LLC

**53. Breaking Barriers: The Legacy of School Integration In Wisconsin and Its Lessons for Today**

*(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Equity; INTENSIVE)*

Location: **Africa 80**

"Seventy years ago, the Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court decision declared that racial segregation in schools was unconstitutional. This session explores the impact of school desegregation in Wisconsin, highlighting the work of Llyod Barbee to integrate Milwaukee Public Schools and the challenges and successes of this process and the lasting effects on the community. The session will also share culturally responsive school counseling strategies to continue integrating schools today.

Presenter(s): Derek Francis, MA, Culturally Responsive Instructional Lead, Franchise Consulting/COMPASS Minnesota Department of Education

**54. Fostering Student Success in a K-12 Online Synchronous Platform**

*(Elementary|Middle|High; Beginner; Social/Emotional)*

Location: **Guava**

Empowering students through comprehensive support with the integration of advisory programs, SEL lessons, and flexible learning resources has allowed MNSync to holistically address the academic, emotional, and behavioral needs of students. This presentation will offer practical insights and strategies for educators and administrators seeking to enhance student engagement, reduce truancy, and support mental health in virtual learning environments.

Presenter(s): Eric McRae, MS, Instructional Coach, Rochester Public Schools - MNSync Online; Heather Duellman, MS, School Counselor, Rochester Public Schools; Sara Rich, MS, School Social Worker, Rochester Public Schools

**55. Exploring Careers Through the Lens of the Seven Habits**

*(Elementary; General; Academic/Career/Postsecondary)*

Location: **Portia**

This section is designed for individuals who are passionate about fostering career readiness and personal growth in students. We will explore how teaching through the lens of the 7 Habits can provide your students with the tools and strategies needed to set meaningful goals and navigate their career paths effectively. Participants will gain valuable insights and practical tools to help your students succeed in their career journeys.

Presenter(s): Tammy Van Ess, MS, School Counselor, Green Bay Area Public School District;  
Kaity Liddicoat, MSE, School Counselor, Green Bay Area Public School District;

**56. Feelings: Not Just for Hallmark Movies Anymore!**

*(Elementary; Professional; Social/Emotional)*

Location: **Tamarind**

Imagine if every student recognized their feelings, expressed themselves clearly, and built stronger peer and teacher relationships. That's the magic of emotional literacy! Instead of compartmentalizing it, emotional literacy as the cornerstone of one's practice provides a means to master the CASEL competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making. Explore practical tools to create an environment of empathy, connection, and growth.

Presenter(s): Sarah Hestres, MSE, School Counselor, Appleton Area School District

**57. Uniting Families and Schools through Book Club**

*(Elementary/Middle; General; Social/Emotional)*

Location: **Wisteria**

Enhance school-home connections through engaging book clubs! Explore the books "How to Talk so Little Kids Will Listen" and "Anxious Kids, Anxious Parents" to improve communication and support students. Learn to plan, organize, and lead impactful clubs, adapting strategies for diverse learners and all grade levels. Join us, win prizes, and collaborate to address your school's unique needs. This is more than a book club, it's about building stronger partnerships for your community.

Presenter(s): Kelli Massey, MS, BA, School Counselor, Oregon School District - Brooklyn Elementary School

**58. What Can the WI Air National Guard Offer You and Your Students?!**

*(High; Beginner; Academic/Career/Postsecondary)*

Location: **Africa 90**

Learn what the Wisconsin Air National Guard has to offer your students. From free tuition benefits to affordable health insurance options, to networking opportunities that will set them up to thrive in whatever career field they choose to pursue, the ANG offers it all. Help your students make the best decision for themselves by attending this seminar and learning what you can about the WI ANG. The ANG allows its service members to serve AND maintain their civilian careers/lifestyles at the same time, setting your students up for a lifetime of success!

Presenter(s): WI Air National Guard Recruiters

**NUTRITION BREAK**  
**3:30 – 4:00 p.m.**  
**Exhibit Hall, Africa West**

## SECTIONAL 5 - 4:00 - 5:00 p.m.

- 59. Elementary Alphabet Soup - ACP to E4E to SPO to Xello (with a Sprinkling of Collaboration, Family Engagement, and Marketing Too!)**  
*(Elementary; General; Academic/Career/Postsecondary)*
- Location: **Africa 10**
- Chapter PI 26 outlines the importance of preparing students for future employment, with school counselors playing a key role. This session focuses on how counselors can collaborate with library media specialists to enhance career exploration. Presenters will share strategies for engaging families, marketing programs, and achieving Student or Program Objectives (SPOs). Attendees will gain practical, adaptable approaches to support future-ready initiatives in their schools.
- Presenter(s): Laura Multer, MSE, School Counselor, Kohler Elementary School; Sara DeGroff, MSE, School Librarian, Kohler School District
- 60. Children's Books Share Shop**  
*(Elementary; General; Social/Emotional)*
- Location: **Africa 20**
- Bibliotherapy is a powerful tool in elementary school counseling, books help students understand, process, and cope with emotions, challenges, and life events. Students see themselves in stories, gain new perspectives, and develop problem-solving skills in a safe and supportive way. This is an engaging and effective way to help young learners navigate emotions and challenges. Bring your favorite children's books to this share shop and find new favorites from elementary counseling colleagues.
- Presenter(s): Amanda Kauth, MS, School Counselor, Rocky Branch Elementary; Stacy Eslick, Executive Director, WSCA
- 61. Become a Career-Connected Learning Leader**  
*(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Academic/Career/Postsecondary)*
- Location: **Africa 30**
- Discover the power of Career-Connected Learning (CCL) in education and learn how you can play a pivotal role in helping core content teachers integrate CC) into their classrooms. Gain practical strategies, hands-on activities, and real-world insights to create meaningful connections between the classroom and future careers. You will even walk away with a CCL presentation template and CCL action plan template that will get you started!
- Presenter(s): Karin Smith, MS, Education Consultant, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
- 62. More Than A Post-it Note: School Counselor's Role in Meeting the Needs of Marginalized Students Within Suburban Schools**  
*(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Equity)*
- Location: **Africa 40**
- School counselors must move beyond good intentions to address marginalized students' complex social, emotional, and academic challenges. Uniquely positioned as leaders, counselors can foster authentic dialogue, examine implicit biases, interrupt harm, and facilitate courageous conversations. This calls for actionable change—transforming intention into measurable impact through advocacy and systemic support that ensures all students succeed in school environments.
- Presenter(s): Mia Tatum-Crider, MS, School Counselor, Homestead High School, Mequon

**63. The Science of Calm: Building Regulation with Conscious Discipline & Positive Psychology”**  
(Elementary|Middle; Professional; Social/Emotional)

Location: **Africa 50**

Self-regulation is a crucial skill for students to navigate academic challenges, social interactions, and emotional well-being. Being led by regulated adults increases the likelihood of student self-regulation. This session will explore powerful, research-supported conscious discipline and positive psychology strategies that participants can use to create environments that foster emotional intelligence, resilience, and self-control for themselves and their students.

Presenter(s): Molly Welch Deal, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of School Counseling, University of Wisconsin-Stout

**64. Stress Reimagined**  
(Middle|High; Professional; Social/Emotional)

Location: **Africa 60**

Stress is often viewed as something to avoid or eliminate. However, research suggests that stress, when properly understood and managed, can actually be a source of personal growth, resilience, and enhanced performance. Explore the positive aspects of stress and how it can be leveraged to improve effectiveness, well-being, and student outcomes. Participants will gain practical strategies and mini lessons to bring back to their schools to help students embrace stress in a healthy, productive way.

Presenter(s): Kari Erickson, Ph.D., School Counselor, Greenfield High School; Holly Oleshko, MSE, School Counselor, Hartford Union High School

**65. Financial Aid Opportunities for Students at Wisconsin's Private Colleges**  
(High; Professional; Academic/Career/Postsecondary)

Location: **Africa 70**

Join this informative session to explore how financial aid works at Wisconsin's Private Colleges. The presentation will cover the various types of financial aid available, with a focus on grants, scholarships, and promise programs. Attendees will also have the opportunity to view newly produced videos highlighting financial aid options and the value of Wisconsin's Private Colleges. In addition, participants will receive ready-to-use materials that can be brought back to their schools and shared directly with students.

Presenter(s): Rebecca Larson, MBA, Executive Vice President for External Relations, Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities; Taylor Hooker, MSE, Director of Outreach and High School Partnerships, Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities

**66. Healthy Futures: Effective Alternatives to Suspension for Nicotine and Cannabis Smoking/Vaping**  
(Middle|High; Professional; Equity)

Location: **Africa 80**

Exclusionary discipline just doesn't work! The psychological harms, along with other adverse impacts done by exclusionary discipline, do not lead to positive behavior changes. In this session, the presenters will share interventions, policies, and procedures that have proven to transform schools and communities, through inclusive and restorative practices, where health and educational inequities are eliminated, and where youth voice and agency are at the center of meaningful change.

Presenter(s): Scott Gerbert, MBA, MPHA, Director of Outreach and Strategic Partnerships,

**67. When Helping Hurts: Understanding and Navigating Off-Contract Professional Strain**  
(Elementary|Middle|High; Professional; Leadership/Advocacy)

Location: **Guava**

School counseling demands often extend beyond contract hours, leaving little recovery time from trauma, crisis, and emotional labor. This session addresses Off-Contract Professional Strain (OCPS) and its link to secondary traumatic stress and burnout. Using research and professional experiences, we'll explore evidence-based strategies to process difficult situations, establish sustainable boundaries, and protect your well-being in this demanding but vital profession.

Presenter(s): Madeline Vinzant, Ed.D., Assistant Professor, Winona State University; Abby Fernan, MSE, Director of Student Services, Prevention, and Wellness, CESA 4;

**68. Innovative Programs for Supporting Youth Mental Health**  
(Elementary|Middle|High; Beginner; Social/Emotional)

Location: **Portia**

A school environment promoting youth mental health care is vital for healthy communities. This presentation covers youth mental health basics and NAMI Wisconsin's programs. Learn about four free NAMI Wisconsin K-12 programs available for schools to promote education and reduce mental health stigma. The presentation includes an overview of these student-focused programs plus NAMI's free resources for parents and school staff, providing comprehensive mental health support for entire school communities.

Presenter(s): Molly Shea, Program Coordinator, NAMI Wisconsin; Emilie Smiley, MPA, Program Director, NAMI Wisconsin

**69. Balancing Act: Tier 1 Management and Organization in Rural Schools**  
(Elementary|Middle|High; Beginner; Social/Emotional)

Location: **Tamarind**

This session explores effective strategies for managing Tier 1 instruction across all K-12 grade levels, with a focus on the unique challenges faced by rural schools. Attendees will learn practical tips for staying organized and balancing the many demands of teaching in resource-limited schools.

Presenter(s): Maiya McSorley, MSE, School Counselor, Loyal School District

**70. Conversations That Matter: Leading with Courage and Clarity**  
(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Leadership/Advocacy)

Location: **Wisteria**

Join me to explore the role of courageous conversations in fostering trust, collaboration, and growth within schools and teams. These conversations are essential for addressing challenges, building relationships, and achieving shared goals. Clear communication inspires trust, strengthens relationships and promotes transparency. By navigating courageous conversations, individuals can lead with empathy, embrace change, resolve conflicts, and build a supportive, effective environment for all.

Presenter(s): Marcia Waldron-Kuhn, Ph.D., Director of Learning Services, CESA 7

Friday, November 7, 2025

**71. WSCA Town Hall  
7:30 – 8:15 a.m.  
Africa 20**

**SECTIONAL 6 – 8:30 – 9:30 a.m.  
SECTIONAL 6 INTENSIVE – 8:00 – 9:30 a.m.**

**72. The Road to Positive Personal Climate and Culture**  
*(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Leadership/Advocacy)*

Location: **Africa 10**

Gerry continues his theme of positive personal climate and culture in his breakout sessions by using object lessons to help remember key points in improving relationships between parents, co-workers and students.

Presenter(s): Gerry Brooks, Professional Speaker and Educator, Gerry Brooks

**73. From URL to IRL: Overcoming School Anxiety and Refusal in a Post-Remote Learning World**  
*(Elementary|Middle|High; Professional; Social/Emotional)*

Location: **Africa 20**

School anxiety and refusal is not a new phenomenon, but the impact of remote learning and post-pandemic familial stressors have created unique challenges in addressing it. Truancy rates are increasing, with corresponding social, emotional, and academic deficits for children and teens. This presentation will explore the underlying causes of school anxiety and refusal and will provide strategies for school staff and parents to support children and teens in overcoming avoidance.

Presenter(s): Bridget Mitchell, LSW, Sr. Director, Child & Adolescent Programs, Compass Health Center

**74. Bridging Gaps: Navigating Mental Health, Truancy, and Special Education in Rural Schools**  
*(Middle|High; General; Leadership/Advocacy)*

Location: **Africa 30**

This sectional explores how mental health challenges impact attendance and when a 504 Plan or special education services may be appropriate. Using a DPI resource as a guide, this session will share the strategies used to support students while meeting legal requirements. Learn how to collaborate with families and community partners to create inclusive, trauma-informed interventions that promote engagement, access, and belonging in rural schools.

Presenter(s): Cara Wood, MSE, Ed.D., Assistant Professor, Viterbo University; Madeline Vinzant, MSE, Assistant Professor, Winona State University; Tracy Lipinski, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Loras College

**75. Integrating Sensory Bins and Activities in Classroom Lessons and Small Groups**  
*(Elementary; General; Social/Emotional)*

Location: **Africa 40**

With growing sensory needs and increasing academic demands, this sectional explores how to

integrate sensory bins and activities into classroom lessons and groups to enhance learning and engagement. Ideas for how to connect the sensory activities to literacy standards and SEL standards will be shared and audience members will be able to try out some examples.

Presenter(s): Miriam Brown, MS, School Counselor, Verona Area School District

**76. Behavior Impedes Learning? I've Checked Yes, Now What!**  
(Elementary|Middle|High; Professional; Equity; INTENSIVE)

Location: **Africa 50**

Participants will deepen their understanding of the question "Does the student's behavior impede their learning or that of others?" We will dig into a variety of approaches to support inclusive strategies to address behavioral needs including: interrupting bias, building healthy relationships, building proactive positive approaches, understanding the response cycle, and shifting adult mindsets.

Presenter(s): Katie Berg, MA Ed., Statewide Coordinator, Supporting Neurodiverse Students Professional Learning System

**77. The Technical College Path: Five Secrets for Student Success**  
(High; Professional; Academic/Career/Postsecondary)

Location: **Africa 60**

Many students choose to attend a technical college first and transfer to finish a bachelor's degree, saving time and money. At the university, we've seen common mistakes that complicate a student's transfer - resulting in more cost, time and frustration. We will share five secrets that help students maximize their first two years and complete their bachelors' degree on time and on budget. Counselors will leave with practical advice and helpful handouts for students bound for technical college.

Presenter(s): Judy Johnson, M.A., M.F.A., Assistant Director of Transfer and Admission, Minnesota Private College Council

**78. Mind-Body Movement for the Anxious ADHD Brain**  
(Middle|High; General; Social/Emotional; INTENSIVE)

Location: **Africa 70**

Our brains and bodies are protective, often engaging big emotions like anxiety, fear, worry, and anger that provide a buffer for experiences that overwhelm our nervous systems. For the ADHD brain, emotional triggers often feel more intense. During this session, explore the impact of anxiety on the ADHD brain and participate in mind-body practices such as breath work, tapping, regulating movement, and positive neuropsychology to help the body process, integrate, release anxiety and stress.

Presenter(s): Judy Richardson-Mahre, MA, LMFT, ADHD-CCSP, Marriage & Family Therapist, Kaleidoscope Coaching & Counseling; Kathy Flaminio, MS, Founder/CEO, movemindfully

**79. I Don't Have Any Data: and Other Lies We Tell Ourselves**  
(Elementary|Middle|High; Beginner; Leadership/Advocacy)

Location: **Africa 80**

Want to promote your program, advocate for students and share the incredible work you are doing? Join us as we share how EVERY counselor can create a Wisconsin School Counseling Program Accountability Report (WSCPAP) to show you how students benefit from a comprehensive school counseling program. We will explore selecting different types of data and how to use that data to communicate. Whether you are in graduate school or you've been in the field for 20+ years - this sectional is for you!

Presenter(s): Cindy Bourget, MS, School Counselor, Elk Mound Area School District

**80. Getting Your Entire School Community Thinking About Wellness and Mental Health**  
(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Social/Emotional; INTENSIVE)

Location: **Guava**

Wellness extends beyond workouts and healthy lunches—it develops through everyday choices made by students, staff, and families. Schools can uniquely promote holistic wellness discussions throughout their communities. Learn concrete strategies to normalize mental health conversations and integrate wellbeing into your school's culture, making wellness support an natural part of daily operations.

Presenter(s): Holly Stoner, LMFT, Co-Director, Wellness Compass Initiative

**81. From Trauma to Resilience: Supporting Student Mental Health in Schools**  
(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Social/Emotional; INTENSIVE)

Location: **Portia**

Childhood trauma shapes brain development, emotional regulation, and academic success, often manifesting as behavioral challenges. This session delves into the connection between adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and student mental health, equipping school counselors with the knowledge to recognize trauma's impact. Participants will explore trauma-informed strategies to foster resilience, promote emotional well-being, and create supportive school environments that empower students to thrive.

Presenter(s): Scott Bakkum, MS, Campus Relations Recruiter, Rogers Behavioral Health

**82. FAFSA and Financial Aid Updates**  
(High; Please select; Academic/Career/Postsecondary)

Location: **Tamarind**

Come to this session for the latest updates on the FAFSA and financial aid. We'll talk about what's changing and what's staying the same. We'll also have a brief refresher on how financial aid is awarded and what to advise families to look for when comparing offers from different schools.

Presenter(s): Katie Sprunger, Associate Director, Edgewood Central and Financial Aid, Edgewood University

**83. Exploring STEM Careers: Expanding Students' Future Possibilities**  
(Middle|High; General; Academic/Career/Postsecondary)

Location: **Wisteria**

School counselors play a key role in helping students explore careers and set goals. Learning Blade is a powerful tool that introduces students to a wide-range of STEM careers, such as engineers, healthcare professionals, and data analysts, through real-world missions. It connects academic skills to future opportunities, making STEM relevant and accessible to all students. Register for a free account at [www.LearningBlade.com/WI](http://www.LearningBlade.com/WI) to equip students with essential skills and career awareness.

Presenter(s): Colleen Ross, State Manager, Learning Blade

**SECTIONAL 7 – 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.**

**84. "Good to See You" - Attendance Matters!**  
(Elementary; Beginner; Social/Emotional)

Location: **Africa 10**

Have you ever heard the phrase, "It's just kindergarten"? Attendance truly matters, especially in the early years, when it's important to start building healthy habits and routines that proactively improve attendance. Attendance is more than simply showing up to school—it's about becoming part of the school community, forming meaningful connections with teachers and peers, and strengthening academic foundations. This presentation will explore what WUSD does to promote attendance within its schools while also fostering strong family engagement.

Presenter(s): Mindy Ganser, MS, School Counselor, Watertown Unified School District; Kelly Cunningham, MSE, School Counselor, Watertown Unified School District

**85. Techniques and Strategies for Children and Adolescents with Externalizing Behaviors Related to Mental Health**

*(Elementary|Middle|High; Professional; Social/Emotional)*

Location: **Africa 20**

This sectional will be an in-depth presentation on the development of childhood behavioral issues that are more aggressive and defiant in nature and their impact on those around them. Various treatment strategies will be discussed on ways to help improve the child's behavior, decreasing outbursts and disruptive behaviors. Approaches presented will include classroom and home interventions.

Presenter(s): Amy Kuechler, Psy D, LP, Director of Child and Adolescent Services, Rogers Behavioral Health; Andi Lewis, LPC, Clinical Supervisor of Adolescent Services, Rogers Behavioral Health

**86. MTSS in Action: Secondary School Counseling Strategies**

*(Middle|High; General; Leadership/Advocacy)*

Location: **Africa 30**

MTSS provides a framework to use data and evidence-based interventions to make system changes. How does this look at the secondary level? How do we gain building-wide buy-in? We will share how to transform school counseling programs by building the capacity of all staff to create student-centered systems, both in and out of the counseling office. You will leave with tools that can be utilized immediately to create, enhance, and support their school counseling and MTSS programs.

Presenter(s): Beth Canfield, MS, LPC, School Counselor, McFarland High School; Anne Garvey Shah, MS, Grant Program Coordinator and PhD Student, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater; Jennifer Betters-Bubon, MS, MSE, Ph.D., LPC, Professor and Department Chair, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

**87. Owning Who We Are!**

*(Middle; General; Social/Emotional)*

Location: **Africa 40**

The presentation will be very interactive and will focus on the power we give others who are outside our inner circle. The key components are the following: Ways to work with students on self-awareness and social awareness. How do we know someone's story? How do we add positive chapters to someone else's story? How do you feel like you have a right to add to someone else's story without really knowing their story?

Presenter(s): Roy Geurts, MA, School Counselor, Madison Metropolitan School District

**88. Facilitating Team Building Activities Through a Neurodivergent Lens**

*(Elementary|Middle|High; Beginner; Social/Emotional)*

Location: **Africa 50**

This session will provide strategies for facilitating team building activities that are inclusive of neurodiverse students. Participants will learn how to create structured, sensory-friendly environments and adapt activities to diverse learning needs. Through hands-on activities, discussions, and real-world examples, attendees will gain the tools needed to create an inclusive, supportive environment that empowers neurodiverse students to thrive in team settings.

Presenter(s): Shawn Becker, MS, School Counselor, West Bend School District; Katie Berg, MA, State Coordinator for Supporting Neurodiverse Students, CESA 1

**89. Purple Star School Program: Supporting Military Children - They are in your schools!**  
(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Social/Emotional)

Location: **Africa 60**

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction is launching the inaugural Purple Star School Program in the 2025–2026 school year to recognize schools demonstrating a strong commitment to military-connected students. All schools have military connected students and these students have unique needs, often moving up to six times during their PK–12 education and experiencing lengthy separations from family members. This session will review the critical role school counselors can provide, including exploring strategies to support military-connected youth while honoring military families and community members. Participants will also learn about the Purple Star School launch this fall and application process, which opens April 1, 2026.

Presenter(s): Shelley Joan Weiss, Wisconsin MIC3 Compact Commissioner; Andrea Donegan, MS, School Counseling Consultant, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction; Lisa King, School Counselor, Tomah High School

**90. Local Advocacy for School Counselors: Turning Conversations Into Change**  
(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Leadership/Advocacy)

Location: **Africa 70**

Advocacy doesn't just happen at the Capitol and is more than influencing policy; it's about shaping understanding and support for school counseling, which begins in your own school and community. Participants will learn how to engage administrators, families, and the community in meaningful dialogue about student needs and the counselor's role. Using data, stories, and professional frameworks, you'll leave with practical strategies to strengthen your voice, build partnerships, and create positive changes that directly impact students.

Presenter(s): Erin Wood, Special Projects Manager, WSCA; Rick Hudson, School Counselor, Prairie View Middle School; Sarah Eder, School Counselor, Hurley K-12

**91. Wellness Lab: A Wellness Program to Support Student Stress Management and Wellbeing**  
(Middle|High; Professional; Social/Emotional)

Location: **Africa 80**

Attendees will experience first-hand a wellness activity offered to students. Participants will then hear about how the Wellness Lab was formed, funding opportunities, challenges and successes to implementation, and ideas for future programming. Attendees are encouraged to participate actively with their feedback and ideas, and will be provided time collaborate with their school teams or individually to brainstorm ideas for implementing this program at their school.

Presenter(s): Jaime Alvis, MA, CYT-200, School Counselor, Madison West High School

**92. Universal Wellness Education**  
(Middle; General; Social/Emotional)

Location: **Guava**

Learn how a school counselor, social worker, and psychologist developed and implemented a dynamic 3-yr wellness curriculum for students at a diverse mixed grade level (6-8), full-inclusion, project-based middle school. Topics covered will include lesson examples, and conversations around collaboration, advocacy, and challenges in solidifying universal, weekly wellness education. Lessons include topics around health education, social-emotional learning, and academic and career planning (ACP).

Presenter(s): Brea Adams, MEd, School Counselor, Badger Rock Middle School; Kristen Richgels, School Psychologist; Jessica Simmons, School Social Worker

**93. What's YA Secret?**

*(High; Beginner; Academic/Career/Postsecondary)*

Location: **Portia**

In today's ever-evolving world, personalized Academic and Career Planning isn't just important — it's essential. At Random Lake High School, we've embraced this mission, and in just three years, we've grown our work-based learning program from a handful of students to now reaching 30% of our upperclassmen. This transformation proves what's possible with vision, commitment, and collaboration. Whether you're just starting out or are already experienced, let's work together to break barriers and elevate your district's success.

Presenter(s): Jacob Frias, MS, School Counselor, Random Lake High School

**94. The Real Game: Inspiring Students to Own Their Future**

*(Elementary|Middle|High; General; Academic/Career/Postsecondary)*

Location: **Tamarind**

How do we help students see the connection between their dreams and real-world choices? The Real Game, new in Xello, empowers students to imagine their future and experience the realities of life planning through engaging simulation and gameplay. With flexible implementation across grade levels, this tool sparks urgency and ownership well before graduation by helping students reflect, plan, and take meaningful action toward their goals.

Presenter(s): Vanessa Di Rocco, Customer Success Associate, Xello; Melissa Jenkins, Strategic Territory Manager, Xello

**95. Exploring Engineering Pathways: A Tech Ed On-Ramp**

*(Middle|High; General; Academic/Career/Postsecondary)*

Location: **Wisteria**

A bachelor's degree is useful but doesn't need to be the first college degree. Innovative pathways are being built between the WTCS and UW-Platteville's Engineering Partnerships. This model incorporates A.A.S degrees on the path to engineering degrees, providing many benefits to students and employers. The work of counselors plays prominently in this pathway allowing students to move efficiently from Tech Ed in high school to Tech Ed at the tech college, to Engineering at the university.

Presenter(s): Melissa Gavin, MS, Director of Distance Engineering, UW-Platteville; Jennifer Jackowski, Ph.D., Dept. Chair, Engineering & Engineering Technology, Madison College; Randy Way, Ph.D., Associate Dean, Madison College

**THE WELLNESS COMPASS INITIATIVE BRUNCH & CLOSING SESSION**  
**11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. | Africa East**  
**Keynote Speaker – Gerry Brooks**