

ISCA *Insight*

The Newsletter of the Illinois School Counselor Association

Message From the President



Today was a teacher institute day at my high school. I don't have to tell you

how relevant it was to me and to what I do there, you all probably know where I could go with that. Instead, I would like to discuss the cheese metaphor that was over-used in our opening staff development presentation.

Cheese...it stinks, can be nutritious when eaten in moderation, and mice like it a lot. Some cheese, especially the older and stinkier stuff, is rare and can be quite prized by cheese connoisseurs. It also, recently, has become a symbol of change in the new best selling business management treatise, "Who Moved My Cheese." If your district is like most, you have been exposed to this cute, 90-minute metaphor for the change process in the hopes that you too will jump on the band wagon and not hem or haw your way through the maze of changes in public education that we inevitably face each school improvement day. If you haven't been lucky enough to hear the story of Hem and Haw and Sniffer and Scurry yet, well

email me and I'll tell it to you—with the hackneyed "handwriting on the wall" clichés and all.

What I want to know is, what does the cheese stand for specifically? I mean, it is pretty clear the cheese has moved and the cheese eaters are upset and would like to find it again, hence the metaphor for coping with the change process. But what is the cheese to us? Is it our job—because that seems to change every time a new law is passed and our principals don't know who to put in charge of compliance so they leave it to the "ever capable, never busy" counselors. Is it our professional integrity—because that seems to be evolving with the national trend toward mental wellness/character and prevention-based programming yet is, in some places, not evolving fast enough as evidenced by the numbers of school counselors who are still just glorified customer service agents who deal mostly with schedule changes.

What is the cheese you have lost and are longing to find again? What can ISCA do to help you navigate the maze and find new, fresher, better cheese?

I finished out my institute day today by reading the newest "School Counselor" from ASCA. It was a great, self-directed and relevant issue (the articles are particularly good for high school counselors who deal with the college bound student). While I wish that I didn't have to be alone on my institute day, as President of ISCA I know I am supported by all the efforts of my colleagues who are working to find their cheese in the maze of public education today. I hope everyone reading this feels that support too.

Special Paper Issue of the INSIGHT

This is a special paper of the ISCA INSIGHT being sent out both in "hard copy" and e-mail to all members of the Illinois School Counselor Association. Future issues for the remainder of the year, by default, will be sent by e-mail only. However, if you would prefer to continue receiving paper copies of the INSIGHT, please call ISCA Communications Coordinator Shelly Rolf at (630) 262-1142 and let her know.

The State of the Association

Illinois School Counselor Association

2003/2004 Annual Report to the
ICA Governing Council

President: Dr. Scott Wickman

President Elect: Anne Kuntz

President Elect-Elect: Amy Thompson

SUMMARY OF YEAR'S ACTIVITIES:

"The Year of Communication"

- Nominated Dr. Toni Tollerud, Past President of ISCA, for Nobel Peace Prize
- President and President Elect attended the ASCA Leadership Development Institute in Pennsylvania
- President, President Elect and President Elect-Elect attended the ASCA National Convention and Delegate Assembly in St. Louis
- President and President Elect attended and ACA National Convention
- Created a new mission statement
- Created a new office of President Elect-Elect to better facilitate the leadership transition
- Hired a communications coordinator
- Hired a web master to develop a new ISCA website
- Started a membership wide list-serve to open communication across the state
- Transitioned our quarterly newsletter into electronic-only format
- Circulated "Insight Bytes", a list-serve news update, bi-weekly
- All officers of ISCA attended the ICA Fall Conference
- Held annual membership meeting with over 100 attendees from the entire state
- Hosted a membership recruitment reception at Fall Conference in cooperation with Illinois Counselor Educators and Supervisors
- Hosted two pre-conference workshops at the ICA Fall Conference by Dr. John Littrell

- Hosted the ISCA Spring Conference for the first time in several years with over 100 attendees and a keynote by Dr. Toni Tollerud
- Recognized four people with state awards for Elementary School Counselor of the Year, Middle School, Secondary School and Advocate of the Year
- Created ISCA Past President's committee nicknamed the YODAs
- Sponsored Listening to Youth workshops across the state which trained more than 200 school counselors to run violence prevention groups in their schools
- ISCA leadership held positions on the Partners for Peace board in Illinois
- Applied for a federal tax ID number

ISCA leadership board met quarterly, while ISCA executive board met monthly

ADVOCACY/PUBLIC POLICY ACTIVITIES

- ISCA Officer, Dr. Hugh Crethar, was chair person for the ACA Public Policy and Legislation Committee
- Maintained membership in Coalition for Illinois Counseling Organizations, a lobbying organization in Springfield
- Successfully passed legislation redefining certification requirements for school counselors in Illinois and opening avenues for alternative certification and paid internships
- Successfully passed Children's Mental Health Act which calls for social/emotional learning standards and a focus on prevention activities in the schools

SUMMARY OF FUTURE PLANS AND GOALS FOR THE ORGANIZATION:

- Evaluate the ASCA National Model and adapt it to the Illinois Developmental Model, bringing the latter up-to-date
- Creating a message board on the website
- Strengthen partnership with Chicago Public School Counselors and the Chicago branch of Illinois Counseling Association
- Host or sponsor professional development seminars for school counselors
- Review and revise ISCA bylaws

State of the Association (continued)

- Create an ISCA policy manual
- Connect with strategic partners such as Ill ASBO or Principals Association
- Past President will create an ISCA archive
- Investigate the possibility of legislation mandating school counselors in every school
- Complete the transition into policy governance structure

Work to unite the school counselor “cells” that are operating across the whole state

SUMMARY OF ISSUES/NEEDS CONFRONTING SCHOOL COUNSELING IN ILLINOIS:

- Elementary school counselors become more rare in Illinois schools
- Schools in rural Illinois have caseloads that are much too high or no counselors at all due to a lack of candidates
- Certified school counselors are being replaced by bachelor level and/or non-mental health specialists (i.e. social workers or teachers)
- School counselors are united in small groups across the differing regions of the state, but not united together under the ISCA umbrella

ISCA wants to facilitate the use of the comprehensive, developmental model in more schools across the state

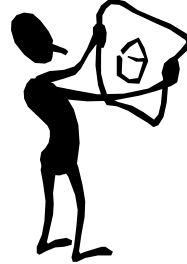
-Anne Kuntz, President

Bylaw Change:

Revised Mission Statement

As discussed at our 2003 annual meeting, we will be voting on acceptance of the proposed revised mission statement for ISCA at the 2004 annual meeting on November 5 at the Lisle Hilton. The proposed mission statement reads "To provide leadership, advocacy, and collaboration for Illinois school counselors that results in systemic change to enhance the success of all students in their academic, career, and personal/social development." This revised statement is believed to be more consistent with ISCA's strategic goals and the identity of 21st century school counselors.

Acknowledge and advance the changing role of the professional school counselor by changing the Illinois school code.



2. Adjust and then communicate and advance the Illinois Developmental Model so that the profession is working at its highest level.

3. Promote the value and efficacy of the professional school counselor as an essential part of all schools.

4. Implement a governance model that empowers local members and focuses the work of the association on action.

5. Facilitate mentoring, networking, information and resources, which empower members to perform at the highest professional level.

Communications Corner

As we embark upon the 2004-2005 academic school year, I wanted to take a little time to write about the importance of self-care and encourage you to take time out for yourself.

It is my hope that during the summer you were able to catch up on some well-deserved rest and relaxation. But, if you are at all like me, a short time into the new school year and the stress begins to mount. As professional school counselors, we know the importance of self-care and the physical and emotional dangers of encountering too much stress. When we fail to take care of ourselves, our sleep can become disrupted, we may begin to experience somatic disturbance, find ourselves overeating, or experience depression (HSPO, V1, 2004). In order for us to be available to help others, it is imperative that we take good care of ourselves.

So, as we begin this academic year, I encourage all of you to take time to do what helps you relax; whether it is exercising, reading, writing, taking a yoga class, or meditation, give yourself the gift of self-care. You're too important not to take care of!

-Shelly Rolf, Communications Coordinator

How to Write a Questionnaire to Obtain Data From Your Students

Scenario 1: Your Principal wants you to determine if you and your fellow counselors are meeting the needs of your students. What will you do?

Scenario 2: You have just been told that, due to budgetary concerns, your position as school counselor is likely to be cut at the end of the year. You know that your work makes a difference. How do you prove it in order to fight for your job?

Scenario 3: Your counseling department has decided it is time to increase the PR so that faculty, parents, and community members know what you do to help students. Where do you start?

It is time to start the process of obtaining data from your students. As professional school counselors know, program evaluation is a vital part of developing and improving your school's Counseling Program. Both the American School Counselor Association and the Illinois School Counselor Association have evaluation as a key component of their developmental models. However, the actual application of such ideas can seem daunting. To evaluate your program and to demonstrate the value of it, use the following tips to take a step in the right direction:

I. Make Simple Statements. The well-known saying goes, "Rome wasn't built in a day." Why begin developing a questionnaire with the whole kingdom in mind? Start with the foundation and take it from there. How to do this? Keep the statements simple so there is little room for varied interpretations.

Examples:

- I feel comfortable at school.
- I know the rules at school.
- I know my way around the building.
- I know where all the resource areas in the school are.
- I know about all the clubs & sports here.

II. Keep it Short. Limit the questionnaire to 10-15 statements MAXIMUM. We all know that students can be the greatest skeptics if asked to give too much input. Student eyes begin to roll as soon as the survey looks long or complex so short is a great way to get their "buy in".



III. Provide Statements that directly relate to your program. If your school has advisories or other curriculum-based means of delivering services, develop the statements based on what your program provides. In an ideal world, you would have statements for the three domains covered by school counseling programs: personal/social, academic/educational, career/vocational. **Examples:**

- If I am struggling in a class, I know who to go to.
- If I am struggling in a relationship, I know who to go to.
- I understand my learning style and can use this to help me.
- I have set academic goals for this year.
- I have set personal goals for this year.
- I have set career goals for this year.

Once you have utilized these three steps, you should have a good questionnaire. Of course, this does not tell you how to "crunch" the information or analyze it – maybe I will save that for the next INSIGHT. Have a great fall and see you in November!

-Amy Thompson, President Elect

ANNOUNCEMENTS...ANNOUNCEMENTS...ANNOUNCEMENTS

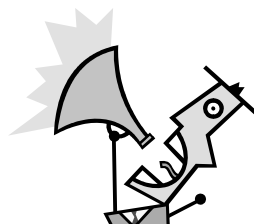
ICA FALL CONFERENCE NOVEMBER 4-6

Plan to attend the Illinois Counseling Association Fall Conference from November 4-6 at the Lisle Hilton. On November 4, ISCA is co-sponsoring two pre-conference workshops, one on the role of school counselors in the NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND act and one on counseling supervision. On November 5, ISCA will hold its annual all member meeting from 4:15 to 5:15. In addition, there are NUMEROUS presentations on Friday and Saturday related to school counseling, as well as food, awards, and LOADS of networking opportunities. Good information + good people + good food (and beverages) = a GREAT time!

http://www.ilcounseling.org/conf_announcement.htm

ISCA HAS A MESSAGE BOARD!

Remember when this listserv began and there was a flurry of activity, followed by people concerned that they were getting too many messages? Now there's a place where Illinois School Counselors can post, post, post, and it won't affect anyone's mailbox. It's the **ISCA MESSAGE BOARD** at <http://iscaboard.proboards3.com/> You can also access the board through our website at www.ilschoolcounselor.org



2004 ASCA Delegate Assembly: The Role of the Professional School Counselor

This summer, at the national convention in Reno NV, the American School Counselor Association voted on revisions to update our statement on the "Role of the Professional School Counselor". As President of ISCA, I hold a vote on the delegation and so was present for the discussion. The following sentence is an example of one of the changes that was debated.

"The school guidance curriculum is infused throughout the school's overall curriculum and is systematically presented by professional school counselors and other school staff in K-12 classroom and group activities."

The particular language that was debated is "other school staff". What separates us as Professional School Counselors from other school staff? Or are we all the same?

These are the thoughts that came to my mind as the ASCA National Delegation debated the language above. School teachers teach a subject. It is usually their passion and they have training in that area in addition to the broad training in teaching and education that we all receive. School counselors don't teach a subject we teach a school—that is our passion. Our specific training is in the development of the whole student and the whole school climate. We receive

the same broad training in teaching and education that is required of all school faculty, but our specific training is in: mental wellness/prevention; child/adolescent development; and program development/management. In other words, our specific training is in school counseling. This is our specialty unlike any other faculty.

If we don't separate ourselves somehow from the role of teacher, then what reason is there for us to have a master's degree? What reason is there to even have a counselor? If we are not somehow separate from the role of teacher, then what is stopping our administrators from paying teachers to "be the counselor" during their prep times. I can see it now, a calendar with teachers assigned to "counseling duty" each month. It would be just like lunch room supervision, with a teacher sitting in the guidance office grading papers waiting for students to come in and ask for some counseling.

Because we are specifically trained to collaborate and consult with the classroom teachers, then it is an understatement to say that the counseling curriculum is "presented by professional school counselors and other school staff". This makes it sound like other school staff can do what we are doing. We all know that our training is different and so our roles should be different. So, it was decided by the National Delegation to change the wording of our role statement to read:

"The school guidance curriculum is infused throughout the school's overall curriculum and is systematically presented by professional school counselors in collaboration with other professional educators in K-12 classroom and group activities."

The word change is subtle, but it carries a significant implication. School counselors are professional educators AND professional counselors. Our training is much more extensive because it is so broad. We are the ones charged with considering the whole child not just the math student. We are the ones who help parents learn how to talk to their child about their struggles in math. We are the ones helping teachers and principals to understand the complexities of a developing child/adolescent so that they know the most effective way to help them improve their math scores. School counselors are not like other school staff.

To read the updated version of the *Role of the Professional School Counselor* from ASCA, you can visit www.schoolcounselor.org or check out the link on ISCA's website www.ilschoolcounselor.org.

-Anne Kuntz, President

MORE ANNOUNCEMENTS...MORE ANNOUNCEMENTS

HAVE YOU SUBSCRIBED TO THE ISCA LISTSERVE? IT'S FUN AND EASY!

To SUBSCRIBE:

Send imailsrv@ilschoolcounselor.org a message from the account you wish to subscribe.

Leave the subject line blank. In the BODY of the message, type subscribe ISCAList Your Name

To UNSUBSCRIBE:

Send imailsrv@ilschoolcounselor.org a message from the account you wish to unsubscribe.

Leave the subject line blank. In the BODY of the message, type unsubscribe ISCAList

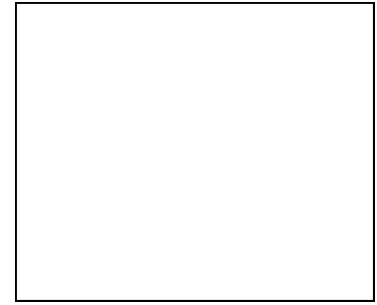
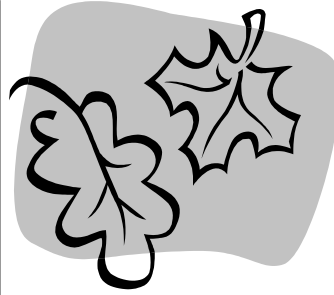
To receive messages in DIGEST mode:

Send an email to imailsrv@ilschoolcounselor.org from the account you are already subscribed from.

Leave the subject line blank. In the BODY of the message, type set ISCAList digest. the ISCA.

Find ISCAList helpful? Pass it along to friends and thanks for reading!

Illinois School Counselor
Association
c/o Amy Thompson
York Community High School
355 W. St. Charles Road
Elmhurst, IL 60126



Need Anything?

Contact information is available at the
Illinois School Counselor Association
website: www.ilschoolcounselor.org



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOVEMBER 4-6	ICA Conference	Lisle, IL
SATURDAY, JAN. 22	ISCA Leadership Meeting	York H.S. (Elmhurst)
JANUARY 31—FEB. 2	Careers Conference	Madison, WI
SATURDAY, APRIL 23	ISCA Leadership Meeting	Southeast H.S. (Springfield)
FRIDAY, MAY 13	ISCA Spring Conference	TBA



ISCA CANDIDATES FOR OFFICES: 2004-05

The following candidates are the nominees for the available positions in ISCA this year. Ballots will be available at our annual meeting during the ICA Conference. If you can not attend that meeting, you may request a paper ballot from Shelly Rolf at (630) 262-1142 or by e-mailing her at shellylyn@earthlink.net

Middle Level Vice President	Rick Shaw, Ph.D
Secondary Level Vice President	Paula Hilderbrand
President Elect-Elect	Roseanne Oppmann