Purple Up for Month of the Military Child

With members of the National Guard and Reserves residing all over our state, children of military service men and women are not limited just to the counties with military bases. Military children are in nearly every county. The month of April provides an opportunity to recognize and honor the service of our youngest heroes, military children. Established by former Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger in 1986, the designation of April as the Month of the Military Child acknowledges the significant role military youth play in our communities. They are resilient and take pride in their service to our Country. They deserve our appreciation and support.

In 2011, the “Purple Up! for Military Kids” initiative quickly gained momentum and is now celebrated nation-wide. Children in schools, businesses, and the community stakeholders are encouraged to wear purple on a specific day in April in honor of military kids. Why purple? Purple is the color that symbolizes all branches of the military, as it is a combination of Army green, Marine Red, and Coast Guard, Air Force, and Navy blue.

It is usually April 15 of each year, but since it falls on a holiday, schools can choose any day to “Purple Up”. Wearing the color purple is an easy, visible way to show support and thank military youth for their strength and sacrifices. The goal of “Purple Up!” is for military youth to actually SEE the support in their school and the community! Below are some additional resources to celebrate Month of the Military Child:

- Purple Up! Resources - Logo, Flyer, Poster
- 18 Ways to Celebrate Month of the Military Child
- Month of the Military Child – Toolkit for Educators

To learn more about ways to serve and support the military families in your schools, you can contact the NC Regional Military Liaisons closest to your district:

Cathy Hurley, Cumberland County, cathyhurley@ccs.k12.nc.us
Jamie Livengood, Wayne County, jamielivengood@wcps.org
Valerie Nasser, Craven County, Valerie.Nasser@cravenk12.org
Brittany Norman, Onslow County, Brittany.norman@onslow.k12.nc.us

Thank you to our NC Regional Military Liaisons for contributing this information for the newsletter.

Purple Up! for military kids

Happy Easter
Wishing you a wonderful spring break!
School Counselor April MTSS Update

MTSS is designed to be a team approach to supporting student and school success, shared appropriately across the school staff. The NCDPI Integrated Academic and Behavior System (IABS) Division is supporting school counselors with their understanding of MTSS through monthly updates in the NCDPI School Counseling listserv newsletter. Below is the update for this month.

Multi-Tiered System of Support: Change May Be Necessary—

Building a multi-tiered system of support often requires change within a school. As counselors, you have important skills which prepare you to deal with individual reactions to change. District teams engaged in the online MTSS course are reminded of a few change models. One of these models is a simple and flexible model outlined by Chip & Dan Heath. These are the three basic principles for leading change from the book Switch:

1. Give Direction
2. Motivate
3. Shape the Path

In this 2:02 video clip, Dan Heath, co-author of Switch, describes the behavior change process using Jonathan Haidt’s analogy of an elephant, a rider and a path. A commonly held belief is that human behavior is the result of rational decision-making based on available information. A closer look into the science of behavior reveals the powerful role our emotions play in our decision-making process. For more information on dealing with people who are apprehensive about changing, check out some video vignettes from the National Implementation Research Network.

Thank you for your support and contributions to establishing a MTSS in your school setting. You can find additional information on the MTSS Wiki. If you have any questions, please contact Amy Jablonski, Director at amy.jablonski@dpi.nc.gov

School Mental Health Policy Approved by the State Board of Education

The April listserv e-newsletter was delayed a few days so that you could receive the latest update on the status of the proposed school-based mental health policy. On Thursday, April 6, the North Carolina State Board of Education approved the revised school mental health policy.

The purpose of this policy is to help ensure that public school students in North Carolina have equitable access to a full continuum of high-quality and well-coordinated socio-emotional/behavioral health services. The policy proposal was brought to the State Board by the North Carolina School Mental Health Initiative, a multi-disciplinary inter-agency partnership with broad representation from public educators, community-based mental health clinicians, lawyers, advocates, university faculty and parents. Many of you may recall participating in a survey last year regarding mental health needs of students and barriers to accessing services. Those survey responses were used to help inform and develop this policy.

The following are a few key points from the policy:

- Each Local Education Agency (LEA)/charter school shall develop and implement a plan for assessing and improving upon the effectiveness of existing supports for the mental health and substance use needs of its student population (including prevention, early intervention and referral).
- LEAs/charter schools are encouraged to include the following strategies:
  - Integrating social and emotional learning strategies across the curriculum and within the entire school environment, including, but not limited to the integration of the NC Guidance Essential Standards and the Healthful Living Essential Standards.
  - Incorporating evaluation of understanding and use of social and emotional wellbeing learning strategies in classroom/school management into the annual performance appraisal of teachers and administrators.
  - Improving staffing ratios for licensed specialized instructional support personnel such as school counselors, school nurses, school psychologists, and school social workers, to improve student access to school health professionals.
- DPI to provide support (guidance, technical assistance, materials, professional development assistance).
- LEAs to make plans for needed staff professional development.

Click here to view the executive summary and entire policy (linked under Attachment).
Reach Higher College Signing Day Friday, May 5th

From the Reach Higher Office:
College Signing Day is a chance to rally around students and support and celebrate their choice in making a commitment to higher education. While you’re encouraged to celebrate the first week of May, you can host an event at whatever date and time best fits your schedule. Last year, we celebrated over 1,250 College Signing Day events in ALL 50 states and even had some international events. This year, we want to activate even more schools and communities to shine a spotlight on those students who have committed to pursue a higher education. We hope you’re up for the challenge!

Check out Reach Higher’s new website at Better Make Room and download the College Signing Day toolkit with helpful information on how to host your College Signing Day event. You will also learn how DonorsChoose.org may fund your event. Don’t forget to sign up at bettermakeroom.org to let the Reach Higher office know when and where you’re hosting your event! Lastly, be on the lookout for information about joining one of Reach Higher’s College Signing Day webinars to receive tips and to ask questions. If you can’t join a webinar, you can find a link to a recording of one of the webinars with school counselors on the Reach Higher website.

Furthermore, thanks to DonorsChoose.org and the College Football Playoffs Foundation, Reach Higher will provide 200 lucky event hosts a $500 grant towards your College Signing Day event! The money can be used to buy supplies from a list of over 20 vendors. Register your event on the Reach Higher website in order to be eligible to win one of these $500 grants!

Be sure to follow @ReachHigher and @BetterMakeRoom for more updates, and don’t forget to use #ReachHigher, #BetterMakeRoom and #CollegeSigningDay in your social media posts!

You are invited to post your College Signing Day photos to the NCDPI School Counseling Facebook page.

#COLLEGE_SIGNINGDAY
#BETTERMAKEROOM #SIGNINGSELFIE
Applications Are Now Open for the 2017 NCDPI Student Leadership Institute!
June 28-July 1, 2017

Register your team to be a part of an exciting opportunity to build strong character, develop leadership skills and engage in service-learning experiences! This is a competitive application process with limited slots. The application deadline is Friday, March 24, 2017 by 5:00 pm. To find out more information and complete an application, visit the Character Matters NC site.

Free Resources from the Dove Self Esteem Project (DSEP)
Dove has a mission to ensure the next generation grows up enjoying a positive relationship with the way they look—helping girls to raise their self-esteem and realize their full potential. In 2004, they turned this commitment into the Dove Self-Esteem Project. Working with leading experts, who come from fields including psychology, health, and body image, they have created a program of world-class resources, many of which have been scientifically proven to significantly develop and increase body confidence and self-esteem in young people. These free resources are designed to help you engage and support young people aged 7 to 17 on issues relating to self-esteem and body confidence and include articles, action plans, conversation starters, activities, videos, workshops, etc. Most school resources are aimed primarily at 11 to 14 year olds.

Is Your School Exemplifying Good Character?

Share your examples of character, leadership, and service by sending photos, videos, articles, websites, etc. to Justyn.Knox@dpi.nc.gov with a brief explanation of an activity or project that exemplifies good character. Selected exemplars will be placed on the Character Matters website.

Elementary Career Exploration Resources
Looking for elementary resources for career exploration and development? CFNC.org has 40 lesson plans and more in their elementary PAWS in Jobland materials. These lesson plans are not only reflective of NC Guidance Essential Standards, they also identify other curricula links such as art, technology, English, Math, etc. There is also an accompanying computer game.

Suzannah Blackwell Memorial Scholarship for English Learners/ESL
The 2017 Suzannah Blackwell Memorial Scholarship is now open for applications. The goal of this scholarship is to support EL’s, who would like to further their education after high school. Applicants must be exceptional English Learners, current SC or NC High School Seniors and must be planning to attend an accredited US university in the 2017-2018 school year.

Click here for more information.

IRS Offers Help to Students and Families to Get Tax Information for Student Financial Aid Applications
Students must have information their families’ tax return in order to file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) or apply for an income-driven repayment plan. The IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT) used to access your tax information for the FAFSA and income-driven repayment (IDR) plan applications is currently unavailable.

This does not limit an individual’s ability to apply for aid or an IDR plan. Applicants can manually provide their tax return information. The online FAFSA and IDR applications remain operational, and applicants can continue filing the FAFSA or applying for an IDR plan as they normally would using their 2015 tax return information.

Click here for more information.
Professional Development Opportunities

Note that most of the professional development activities listed below are not organized by the NCDPI school counseling consultant; therefore, questions should be directed to the contacts at the links provided.

Southeastern School Behavioral Health Conference — April 27-28, 2017, Myrtle Beach, SC
Speakers and sessions to promote student academic and personal success by reducing barriers to learning and supporting the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of youth and families. Click here for more information.

ASCA School Counselor Conference — July 8-11, 2016, Denver, Colorado
National conference specifically for school counseling with keynote sessions, informative breakout sessions, in-depth looks at hot topics in the school counseling profession and networking opportunities. Click here for more information.

If you have an item that you would like to share, please email the information to cynthia.floyd@dpi.nc.gov. Submissions should include the name and brief description of the opportunity with either a link or contact information for interested parties to obtain additional information. We are unable to include flyers, attachments, or for-profit information. The submission should be limited to 100 words or less. Items received after the monthly newsletter has been distributed will not be sent via a separate email on the listserv. NCDPI reserves the right to not include submissions deemed inappropriate for this newsletter.
ASCA’s Helping Students in Troubling Times

Some school districts have been inquiring about resources to assist in supporting students who are concerned about deportation due to their or their families’ immigration status. The American School Counselor Association has developed a web page with multiple resources related to this topic. The top of this web page includes specific strategy suggestions while the rest of the web page provides links to resources that may be helpful in addressing such challenges as student anxiety, school climate, tolerance, etc. Note that these are all suggested resources and school counselors should determine what would be most helpful at your schools based on student needs and local policies.

Resources

NC State Board of Education  
http://stateboard.ncpublicschools.gov/

NC Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI)  
http://www.ncpublicschools.org/

NCDPI School Counseling Web Pages  
http://www.ncpublicschools.org/studentsupport/counseling/

NCDPI School Counseling Wiki Pages  
http://schoolcounseling.ncdpi.wikispaces.net/

NCDPI School Counseling FaceBook Page  
https://www.facebook.com/ncdpi.schoolcounseling

NCDPI School Counselor Evaluation Documents  
http://ncean.ncdpi.wikispaces.net/Support+Staff

NCDPI Guidance Essential Standards  
http://www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/guidance/

NCDPI School Counseling PLC Google + Community  
https://plus.google.com/u/0/communities/106752114909041161445

NC Graduation Requirements  
http://www.ncpublicschools.org/gradrequirements/

NC Student Information System (PowerSchool)  
http://www.ncsis.org/

NCDPI Online Professional Development  
https://rt3nc.org/

NC Center for Safer Schools  
https://www.ncdps.gov/index2.cfm?a=000003,002476,002689

College Foundation of NC  
http://www.cfnc.org/

NC School Counselor Association  
http://ncschoolcounselor.org/

American School Counselor Association  
http://www.schoolcounselor.org/

NC Counseling Association  
http://nccounselingassociation.org/

Center for School Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation  
http://www.umass.edu/schoolcounseling/

ACT  
http://www.act.org/

College Board  
https://www.collegeboard.org/

Donors Chose  
http://www.donorschoose.org/

Elementary School Counselor  
http://www.elementaryschoolcounselor.org/

Middle School Counselor  
http://www.themiddleschoolcounselor.com/

School Counselor.Com  
http://www.schoolcounselor.com/

Best in School Counseling: Our Favorite Web Sites  
http://www.ncpublicschools.org/studentsupport/egroup/

The Counseling Geek  
http://www.thecounselinggeek.com/

National Consortium for School Counseling and Postsecondary Success  
http://www.ncscps.org/

Aunt Bertha (social services search engine)  
https://www.auntbertha.com/

The school counseling consultant at the NC Department of Public Instruction makes every effort to provide relevant, timely information to stakeholders, collected from numerous state and national sources. The inclusion of items in this update does not imply the endorsement or verification of accuracy by this agency.