



MONTANA SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION
Making a Difference



Volume 2, Issue 2

February 2005

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Attention School Counselors

Do Not Miss This Great Opportunity!

Please mark your calendars NOW for the upcoming MSCA Spring Training Institute at the Holiday Inn, Bozeman on April 14th & 15th.

MONTANA SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION, IN COLLABORATION WITH
MONTANA GEAR UP, PRESENTS:

School Counselors: Training for Tomorrow

2005 Spring Training Institute

April 14-15, 2005

Bozeman, MT

Holiday Inn
 5 Baxter Lane
 406-587-4561
 1-800-366-5101

Special guest, Kenny Smith, Vice President of the American School Counselor Association, Western Region, will be delivering opening remarks as well as presenting a training session.

The 2005 Spring Training Institute has been designed to meet your practical, hands-on needs as a school counselor. Emphasis will be placed on *training sessions* rather than brief, informational presentations. This new format will prove both useful and exciting to all school counselors from across the state and region!

The Institute will provide a variety of valuable and effective training sessions representing all domains of our profession.

Some scheduled trainings include:

- **Peer mediation** programs
- Interventions with students exposed to **trauma**
- **BRIDGES**-educational and career planning with students
- Helping students navigate **female socialization/aggression**
- Helping students navigate **male socialization/aggression**
- Using **Adventure** initiatives as part of your guidance curriculum
- Exploring **Careers/Life Skills** with students
- **Peer mentoring** programs
- **ASCA** (defining our role)
- **Play** therapy interventions with students

Time has also been scheduled for **level sharing** (Elem., MS, HS, K-12) and an **open panel discussion** with the MSCA Board. See you in April!

GRADE LEVEL UPDATES

Elementary School Counseling in the 21st Century

Do We Measure Up? The field of education continues to be questioned and accountability seems to be at the top of the list. School Counselors are not immune. Across the state and now after attending the National School Counseling Conference in Reno, Nevada this past summer, I have heard that school counselors are struggling to effectively manage their jobs and time. Peers have shared their frustration with being assigned non-counseling duties. Some frustration is due to lack of organization. Many of us are simply overloaded with large caseloads, scheduled guidance classes and now testing schedules on top of that. **HELP!**

Contact and networking with your peers can be productive towards learning new ways to manage your program and that's exactly what it is, your program, especially in smaller school districts where you may be feeling like the lone ranger. There are several ways to give new breath to yourself at this time of

year. Stay current with your district and school policies and unions or local associations. Read your MSCA newsletter. Be aware of the State school laws pertaining to your specific area and outlying areas in your field. Periodically review the MSCA website and OPI to review changes or additions to the State Adopted School Counselor Model for School Counselors. Entertain the idea of joining the American School Counseling Association and being involved by participating in a national conference. Research a specific area of deficit for you and become that expert you seek. Ask others for support who are currently perceived as being successful in the field.

Coping with feelings of inadequacy is nothing new to anyone who is employed in the professional fields of serving others. The difference can be how we perceive ourselves and what action we take to truly "make a difference." Do we talk the talk and walk the walk? I hope so. Our local Montana School Counselor Association really does want to make a difference for you. Our **Spring Institute April 14 and 15th in Bozeman, Montana** is geared towards supporting you with more meaty information in half day sessions addressed at exploring the

options available to you, supporting your program from the inside out to make those differences. We are also offering several topics on play therapy, aggression, trauma, adventure based counseling, mentoring, and career outreach. We will have time to visit with our peers and share ideas and concerns in addition to addressing the board at forum. This gathering will offer invaluable tools and networking opportunities. I hope you will take the time to nurture yourself by informing your administrator that you would like to attend this institute to effect more positive growth in your school. Many years ago I learned that intent is great, but actions speak louder than words. Taking action in a professional way can be one of the strongest things you can do to support and advocate for your own program. If you have any questions pertaining to the elementary level school counseling program, please feel free to contact me at 406-628-3452. See you in April!
- Kristy Savaria

A View From the Middle: The Middle Level Experience

There is a commercial that I remember from my teenage years. The spokesperson would ask, "Parents, it is 10:00 p.m. Do you know where your child is?" My parents would have been honestly able to answer, "Yes, our daughter is upstairs in her room. We know where she is." They probably would have felt safe in knowing that I was not out on the streets. I was home. I was protected. Their job was done.

Oh, I might have been home in my bedroom or watching television, but my mind was elsewhere. School dominated my thoughts. But it wasn't the academic world that I became obsessed with, but the social world. My world was built around the right clothes, the right body shape, the right hairstyle (forget wanting to go to school on a bad hair day), and the right guy. Everything had to be right and nothing was. I was satisfied with nothing and dissatisfied with everything. I was also the kid on the outside looking in. I was never apart of the "popular" world. Middle school was the time I experienced my first kiss, my first boyfriend, and my first eating disorder. I wanted in desperately, but I never fully made it.

I envied the girls who seemed to have it all. They had the boys, the clothes,

the hair, the looks, and the body. They had everything that I wanted. There was no way that they could have my insecurities or be frightened of the same things I was frightened of. And forget pressure. What pressure could they possibly be under? They seemed to know all the answers and make all the rules. They had it together. Or so I thought.

And my parents... Hah! They knew nothing about what I was going through. That was what I told myself. They didn't understand me. Around the age of 12, my parents became the enemy. Every question they asked was met with a sullen response, a roll of the eyes, a deep labored sigh. What could they know about being a teenager? They never went through stuff this hard.

Fast forward. I am an adult now. My viewpoint is a bit different. In my job as a middle school counselor, I am still on the outside looking in. Only now, the picture is much more fully developed. I have finally gained access into that world that I always wanted to be a part of. The shocking part is that the reality of that view is at times frightening. The issues that our middle school students are facing on a daily basis and the choices that they have to make surrounding those issues are very real. These students are often trying to navigate the same choices that we as adults are navigating, but from the developmental perspective of a child/adolescent, not really yet fitting into either world.

I think that this is where much of the passion for my job comes from. As a middle

school counselor, I do my best to act as a guide to students who are attempting to find their way from childhood into the world of adolescence. I do this through a full program of services that reaches out to students through the classrooms, the school counseling office, individual and group settings, large and small group guidance, etc. Wherever the students are, that is where I try to be---available. Available with whatever and whoever it is that I need to be at that moment to get the message through---cheerleader, coach, drill sergeant, parent, school counselor...whatever.

This population that we work with is a tough one; some say the hardest. I don't know about that, but I do know that it can sometimes be the most intimidating (deep labored sigh and smile).

I invite any middle school counselors out there to share their perspectives with me. What makes you passionate about your job? What do you find fulfilling and challenging about working with this age group? Let's connect with one another. I would like to start a list serve for middle school counselors. If you are a middle school counselor, please send me your e-mail addresses. You can always reach me at jonesj@florence.k12.mt.us
- Joy Jones

To Be A High School Counselor....

Happy New Year! I hope the New Year is bringing you new energy and insights, and that you are feeling rested from the holiday break. In the high school, January, February, and March are rather painful to say the least. January starts out with preparing for semester tests and graduation requirements, college applications, financial aid nights, and scholarship deadlines - on top of dealing with deep emotional issues. The holidays through February seem to be the most difficult for my students and their families; situations that come to my mind include: extreme financial hardship, abuse and neglect, drug and alcohol, teen pregnancy... just to name a few.

To combat some of the stress and difficulty students were facing, my school offered a Teacher Advisory Program for all students. The goal was to give students that one signifi-

cant relationship focused on giving students more positive interaction and connection. We met for 20—25 minutes weekly until the end of the semester. Before the holidays, each of the advisories came up with a community service project and competed in a food drive for our community. The results were amazing! We raised over two tons of food for our needy families. Having the students come outside of their immediate situations and think about helping the community as a whole was a powerful motivator. Each advisory elected a representative to the Principals Advisory Board which gave the students a voice to deal with issues students face at our school. The incredible response that came from the students with their energy to work on the problems amazed the entire staff. Empowering students academically, personally, and socially is the fuel to get me through those tough days.

As my district's Test Coordinator, I look toward February and March with trepidation. My staff is fearfully working on preparation for the MontCas Phase 2. My district magically made AYP across all grade levels for the first time this year. Those of us who are working in economically challenged areas (that is all of Montana) know the pressure and fear of losing any more funding. Please bring any success stories, test preparation, or testing strategies to our level sharing time at the Spring Training Institute in Bozeman this April 14 and 15.

I wish for you to have lots of energy to handle the many challenges we face daily. Thanks for being their for Montana's kids! Please contact me if I may be of assistance to you.

cstefanatz@mission.blackfoot.net

- Carrie Stefanatz

Point to Ponder

What are the Top 5 Self Referral Issues for students at the following grade levels:


- Elementary
- Middle
- High

If you would like to respond this question, please send your response to your Grade Level VP. Once answers are compiled, they will be posted to the Distribution List and a request will go out for Best Practice Activities geared toward these Top 5 Self-Referral issues to be shared at our Spring Training Institute.

Elementary VP: Kristy Savaria [kristy_savaria@laurel.k12.mt.us]

Middle VP: As yet unfilled. Please send responses to: Joy Jones [jonesj@Florence.k12.mt.us]

High VP: Carrie Stefanatz [cstefanatz@mission.blackfoot.net]



The foundation of every state is the education of its youth.

- Diogenes
Laertius

Legal and Ethical Issues

Professional school counselors contend with some of the most challenging ethical and legal issues addressing counselors in any field. Remley and Hermann discussed our potential issues in their latest edition of Ethical and Legal Issues in School Counseling. They identify these challenges this way. First, we deal with not only dual relationships in many situations but also multiple roles that can lead to conflicting priorities. Secondly, our primary clients are minors whose legal rights belong with their parents or guardians. We also deal with an amazing array of complex problems and difficult issues while we encourage and support students in learning to meet their potential. Then there is also "brief therapy"...probably three minutes in many cases for school counselors.

As an organization, we cannot stress enough, the need for every school counselor to seek out knowledge. Remley and Hermann, at the 2004 ASCA Annual Convention, stressed that the most critical thing a counselor should do to manage his or her most difficult situations is to consult, consult, consult. You should also check your ASCA Code of Ethics and the ACA Code of Ethics, read the ASCA position statements, read books and articles that will provide you a basis of action that is supportable.

However, even though we stress learning what ethical standards you are expected to uphold, your number one focus, according to Remley and Hermann, should always be to provide quality counseling services for your students. Your focus should not be to just protect yourself from complaints or lawsuits.

One of our commitments as your Board of Directors is to support you in this endeavor and provide on-going resources for you. Watch for more ideas.

Letter From the President

Professional Identity - Finding Direction

Can I choose door number 3 Johnny?

Recently, I attended the first of many meetings in the process of planning the MEA-MFT Fall Conference. The MEA-MFT conference is scheduled for October 20-21, 2005 in Missoula, MT at Sentinel High School. I attended this meeting in the capacity of Conference Chair for my curriculum group, MSCA. As I sat in the meeting and listened to the plans for the upcoming MEA-MFT Fall Conference, I found myself wondering, "What is MSCA going to do for the 2005 Fall Conference? Are we going to hold our Fall Conference with MEA-MFT, or are we going to pursue a different avenue and look at realigning ourselves with the Montana Counseling Association (MCA)?" I don't know the answer to this question yet.

Sometimes to move forward, one must first look back...

This past fall, MSCA, in response to overwhelming member feedback, held its first ever fall conference with MEA-MFT. This was a totally new experience for our association. We were very much on new ground. We had no idea what to expect, but felt certain that we would find this new collaboration a successful union. Our hopes were high. Our conference chair put in countless hours of work in preparation for this conference. We had keynote speakers addressing each one of the domains promoted by our state and national associations. We had a variety of sectionals on a variety of topics geared toward elementary, middle and high school settings. We had a strong conference agenda. MEA-MFT was thrilled to have us in attendance, and went out of their way to make us welcome. The only problem was, hardly anybody came. To put this kind of work and effort and time into a conference to have 60 people come was very discouraging. While those who attended liked the format and the conference very well, our presenters were frustrated to present to rooms with sometimes as few as 2-3 people.

Back to the drawing board...

During the Fall Conference with MEA-MFT, the MSCA board discussed at length the decision regarding whether to try again this coming fall with MEA-MFT, or to look at different options. The one thing that we were agreed upon was that we would like to try to offer two major, quality professional development opportunities for our members each school year. Whatever decision we chose to make regarding Fall Conference Planning, we wanted it to be in the best interest of our association and meet the professional development needs of our members.

Enter MCA from stage right.

Following the MEA-MFT conference, MSCA began planning its Spring Training Institute. Plans were already underway, speakers being lined up, and a location and date tentatively set when the phone rang from MCA. The President of MCA called me to invite MSCA to join with MCA in hosting their Spring Conference. After much weeping and gnashing of teeth and an e-mail sent out to the membership with feedback requested on this issue, we decided to stay with our original plan of hosting the 3rd annual MSCA Spring Training Institute. Member feedback again overwhelmingly suggested that: "while a future relationship with MCA would be worth exploring, members had no desire to join with MCA during the Spring Conference time. The spring conference had become the hallmark of the MSCA association." (These comments have been summarized from the responses that came in.)

More weeping and gnashing of teeth...

Sometime after the decision to continue moving forward with the MSCA Spring Training Institute, a discussion began regarding who MSCA needed to be aligned with. We were seen by some to be separating ourselves from MCA. (MSCA is a division of MCA. This is stated in our bylaws and has not been changed.) This supposed separation caused no small level of anxiety to quite a few people. By not joining with MCA during their conference time, holding our own separate conferences and not accepting the opportunity to collaborate with MCA this spring, we have been seen to be pulling away from MCA. In my own mind, I have not intended to "separate" or "break away" from MCA. However, I have wanted the MSCA to gather strength in its own right, supporting the needs of school counselors. Our needs sometimes differ greatly from that of counselors and therapists in the community setting.

The Million Dollar Question...

So, where will MSCA be holding its fall conference and with whom? To me this question is about far more than, "Where will MSCA hold its fall conference?" This question is all about, "Where does our professional identity lie as school counselors? Are we educators or counselors or both? Who do we align with? What world, MCA or MEA-MFT, do we seek a collaborative relationship with?" If the answer is that we seek a collaborative relationship with both MCA and MEA-MFT, then how do we work together with both?

We are school counselors. The nature of our job allows for us to work as school counselors in an educational setting. Based on our state and national model, we support students' academic, career, and personal/social needs. We provide a complete comprehensive program of services to our schools. We do individual and group counseling, small and large group guidance, individual appraisal, program development, parent education, community collaboration, prevention planning, crisis management, etc. I could go on and on. We are counselors. We are educators. We live between both worlds.

Which way do we go Vern, which way do we go?

At the meeting with MEA-MFT, several curriculum groups approached me regarding a desire to collaborate at this fall's conference. Montana Association of School Social Workers (MASSW), Montana Council for Exceptional Children (MCEC), and Montana Association of School Nurses (MASN) all wanted to find a way to work together---realizing that we work on many of the same issues. I found myself telling them that MSCA was still deciding whether we would be meeting with MEA-MFT this next fall or not. Soon, I will be meeting with the President of MCA. Both she and I feel strongly that we need to find a way to build relationships between our two associations. The "how" is the question.

At the MSCA board meeting this next weekend, February 12th, in Bozeman, MT, the decision regarding where to hold our fall conference will again be discussed. The decision, when made, will be made on what we believe to be in the best interest of our membership. At the MSCA 2005 Spring Training Institute, the MSCA Board will be hosting a panel discussion. We invite members to give input on the following question, "What kind of relationship do you as school counselors want MSCA to have with MCA and MEA-MFT? Where do you think our professional identity lies?"

- Joy Jones

The 2005 Montana Counseling Association Annual Conference
A Community of Healing: Integrative Practices in Trauma Response
April 21-22, 2005

Best Western Great Northern Hotel, Helena, Montana

The MCA Annual Conference will offer 13.75 CEU credits from NBCC, Montana Department of Labor and Industry, and Montana Office of Public Instruction. This event focuses on well as consider best practices in the treatment of childhood trauma such as Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Child Sexual Abuse (CBT-CSA), and Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT). The conference will welcome nationally distinguished keynote speakers, state government officials, University researchers, and local clinicians. Such collaboration will enhance our delivery of integrative practices and ensure that our most vulnerable populations receive the best services available in times of crisis.

This conference is a collaboration work with **The Division of Educational Research and Service (DERS) at The University of Montana and St. Vincent Healthcare** in Billings, Montana. DERS will contribute expertise from its Montana Center for the Investigation and Treatment of Childhood Trauma Project. This multi-year project is part of the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) **National Child Traumatic Stress Network**. The project joins DERS with childhood mental health experts at Duke University, the University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA), RAND Corporation, Los Angeles Unified School District, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Similarly, St. Vincent Healthcare will contribute expertise in mental health issues specific to the health care community - particularly first responders. Through funding from the U.S. Department of Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), St. Vincent has begun collaboration with numerous agencies across Montana, including the Department of Public Health and Human Services, to provide training programs using the all hazards approach to disasters as well as placing an emphasis on the interagency response required in the event of bioterrorism.

Keynotes speakers include: **Richard Yep**, Executive Director of The American Counseling Association; **Lucy Berliner, MSW**, Director, **Harborview Center for Sexual Assault and Traumatic Stress** and Clinical Associate Professor at the University of Washington School of Social Work and Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences; **Beth Stamm Hundall, PhD**, Director of the **Institute of Rural Health, Idaho State University** and the Center for Rural, Tribal and Frontier Traumatic Stress Interventions; **Anthony Ng, MD**, Director of **Reich, Ng, and Associates, LLC**; Chair of the American Psychiatric Association Committee on Psychiatric Dimensions of Disaster; and **Bonnie Selzler, PhD, RN**, Senior Associate, Educational Services Inc.

For more information including the schedule and registration, visit www.montanacounseling.org or contact Mika Watanabe-Taylor, MCA President, at (406) 243-6535 or mikawt@mso.umt.edu

SAVE THE DATE
For the ASCA 2005 Annual Conference
School Counseling: A MODEL of Success
In Disney's Contemporary Resort
Orlando, Florida
Sunday, June 26 – Wednesday, June 29



Keynote speakers will feature:

- Freeman Hrabowski: Education for the 21st Century
- Kay Toliver: All Student's Can Learn
- Po Bronson: Finding Your Passion

Featured Speaker:

Rosalind Wiseman: Rewriting the Rites of Passage

What are the Lessons that young people learn from experiences with cliques, teasing and other common rites of adolescent passage? Focus on the consequences of these rites of passage.

"New this year! Research Track. As more and more school counselors are realizing the importance of implementing data driven programs, ASCA has pulled together a whole track of research-related sessions."

Registration information can be found at www.schoolcounselor.org. Pre-conference Workshops begin Sunday, June 26th and require additional cost. Regular registration is for Monday, June 27th-Wednesday, June 29th.

Conference Registration:

	Super Saver (by 3/1)	Advance (by 5/1)	Regular (after 5/1)
ASCA Member	\$295	\$320	\$345
Nonmembers	\$445	\$470	\$495
Student Members	\$220	\$245	\$270
Retired Members	\$220	\$245	\$270
Principals	\$195	\$195	\$195
One-Day	\$150	\$150	\$150

Hotel Information:

- Disney's Contemporary Resort
- Telephone: (407) 824-1000
- Fax: (407) 824-3539
- Reservations: (407) 824-3869
- Room Rates: \$145/night Mention ASCA to get this room rate

Let's coordinate our efforts in order to attend this fabulous conference.. By rooming together, cost is significantly reduced. If you plan to attend, or would like to attend, please e-mail me your information. I can keep track of opportunities to room with another Montana attendee. Send information to Joy Jones: jonesj@florence.k12.mt.us.

"School Counselors: Becoming Partners in State Policy"

There is growing acknowledgment that education is inextricably linked to economic prosperity both for the individual and for the State. In order for Montana to thrive, it is imperative that we increase the academic attainment of our students and citizens at every level. Several major initiatives and discussion have been taking place at the state level related to this issue. In almost every conversation, the key role of school counselors in addressing issues facing the state arises. No one is more central to the goal of increasing student achievement than school counselors who are in a unique position to make sure that all students have access to the resources they need. School counselors are at the heart of a school's mission, yet for too long they have often been left out of the school reform debate and excluded from leadership discussions within their buildings and districts. Involvement of MSCA leadership in the following efforts is helping to ensure that this is no longer the case at the state level.

Counseling Leadership Initiative. This important policy group was convened nearly two years ago by the Deputy Commissioner for Higher Education and Deputy Superintendent for Public Instruction, largely in response to the Oct. 2002 Pathways to College Roundtable which brought together 50 educators to discuss barriers to postsecondary access for Montana students, especially low-income and first-generation students. One of the main recommendations emerging from this meeting was the need for more counselors in order to provide increased career and postsecondary guidance and information earlier in students' academic careers.

The purpose of the Counseling Leadership Initiative is to bring together key organizations, agencies and stakeholders with an interest in improving and supporting school counselors and school counseling programs. Initial members asked to serve include MSCA, OPI, the Board of Public Education, the MT School Administrators Association, the MT School Board Association, and the Montana University System including Counselor Education programs, and representative school counselors and administrators from around the state. There have been three preliminary planning meetings to define and begin the work of this important group. At the most recent meeting in January it was agreed to hold a working retreat on March 3 to develop a definitive purpose statement, objectives and supporting action plan to move the work of this important group forward. This document will be shared with MSCA and other stakeholder groups for review and feedback, hopefully by the spring conference.

The Counseling Leadership Initiative has been placed under the auspices of the Board of Education's P-20 committee. You may or may not have yet heard of this committee or the P-20 movement in general. Montana's constitution provides that the Board of Regents and the Board of Public Education meet together twice each year as the combined Board of Education. Recently, the BOE formed four working committees to operationalize their work. The P-20 committee works on issues related to building a more seamless system of education that supports increased achievement for students at each level. Currently, the P-20 committee is overseeing projects such as the Dual Enrollment and Assessment Alignment Task Forces. Clearly, school counselors are, or should be, integrally involved in, or at least aware of, these discussions. The Counseling Leadership Initiative will facilitate inclusion of school counselor input in the evolving work of the P-20 committee.

Shared Leadership for a Stronger Montana Economy This initiative began in September 2003 when the Board of Regents committed to find new ways for the Montana University System to take a more direct leadership role in the state's economic development. There have been several phases in this process which have engaged a broad range of Montana leaders, citizens and educators in developing and prioritizing specific initiatives to accomplish this goal. Work teams formed last April and worked on six topic areas related to this issue. In July the Regents and the Interim Legislative Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education Policy and Budget recommended three topics to move forward. These included: 1) Removing Barriers to Access to Education, 2) Workforce Development and 3) Distance Learning. Steering committees and Advisory groups of educators to each of the three committees were formed in October 2004.

The *Access to Education* Steering Committee focused on the need for Montana to have an increased number of citizens complete some type of training after high school in order to have strong economic development. Although Montana's high school graduation rate is high, we have low college-going rates and completion rates compared to the rest of the nation, especially for low-income students.

A series of four intensive meetings were held between November and early January. Because much of the conversations at the first two meetings related to high school counselors, MSCA High School Representative Carrie Stefanatz was asked to attend the December 9th Billings meeting. Joy Jones and Barb Holden attended the January 7th meeting in Helena. As a result, the voice of MSCA and school counselors was reflected in the recommendations of each of the Access to Education subcommittees which focused on Data, Need-based Aid and Empowerment/Outreach and Communications. Each of these committees made recommendations for the next steps including:

- Significantly increase the amount of need-based aid available to Montana students.
- Identify, compile, analyze and share key data and information related to student access and success throughout the educational pipeline, Develop a comprehensive, statewide empowerment and outreach network and a supporting Access to Education Coordinating/Advisory Council

The Access to Education committee is continuing to work on this critical topic area. MSCA and school counselors will play a critical role in the development of next steps and specific strategies. In short, you as school counselors are increasingly being recognized as an integral part of any effort to improve Montana's educational and economic future. Rest assured that school counseling in Montana is being included and well represented by its leadership in these important conversations and initiatives. Watch for further updates in upcoming newsletters and at the spring conference.

MSCA Board Position Nominees

Krisy Savaria **President-Elect Nominee**

Kristy Savaria began working in the counseling field just after high school in 1977. Kristy graduated from EMC with her B.S. in Rehabilitation and Related Services. She completed her Masters and her School Counseling State Certification Endorsement from MSU-Billings. Kristy has been actively engaged in education and family and youth issues since the late 1970's. She worked as a crisis counselor and group facilitator for **Gateway House**, the local Shelter for Battered Women and Children. During that timeframe, she also worked for the **County Youth Services Center** and **Tumbleweed Runaway Agency** as a Family Intake Counselor. Kristy began working with **Billings School District #2** as a Home School Coordinator, Substitute Teacher, and Counselor. She completed her clinical with the **Mental Health Center** working with the dually diagnosed mentally ill and the older adult populations co-facilitating dementia groups in the local nursing homes. Soon thereafter Kristy became Director of Social Services at **Valley Health Care Center**. Kristy began her school counseling career at **Independent Elementary School**. She continued with work at both **Elysian and Canyon Creek (K-8) Elementary Schools**. She was nominated and elected the President of the **MEA-MFT** at Elysian where she supported positive communication and networking to assist the students and teachers. Currently Kristy is a full time K-5 School Counselor at **Fred Graff and South Elementary Schools** in Laurel, Montana. She has held this position for two years. Kristy is **Elementary Level Vice President for the MSCA**. Kristy enjoys volunteer activities with her local **Junior League Association** and **Eaglemount**. She was recently selected to be the Billings, Montana Delegate to attend a leadership training in Las Vegas, Nevada. She is a **State Certified Foster Parent** volunteering for **Youth Dynamics Incorporated**. In addition to all of these qualifications, Kristy is a single mother of three, with two grandchildren, all of whom she adores. She loves children and supporting organizations that work toward positive relationship building and growth. She seeks your vote for President Elect for the State of Montana.

Linda Konesky **K-12 Vice President nominee**

Educational Background

In 1972, I received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Elementary Education from Montana State University in Bozeman. I received a Special Education minor from the University of Great Falls in 1986. In 1990, I received my Masters of Education in Career Guidance and Counseling from MSU-Northern. I have attended a number of workshops, conferences and classes dealing with a variety of subjects including the use of technology, career counseling tools, learning styles and dealing with children's personal issues.

Professional Employment

My professional career began in Great Falls teaching second grade for 4 years in an open space classroom in a team teaching situation. I followed that up with a year at Centerville Public School teaching fifth grade. After a few years of "time off" raising children, I returned to the teaching ranks as a Special Education teacher, also at Centerville. For 7 years, I taught learning disabled and other handicapped students K-12. From 1990 to the present time, I have been the K-12 Guidance Counselor at Centerville School. This position includes Title IX coordinator; AP coordinator; School to Work coordinator; test coordinator (Iowas, CRT, PLAN, P-SAT, ASVAB); student record management including scheduling, report cards, honor roll and transcripts; and writing and administering Carl Perkins and Safe & Drug Free Schools grants.

Academic or Professional Honors

I have had the privilege to receive the Dufresne Award, which is recognition for an outstanding high school teacher in 1984, 1996, and 2003.

Professional, Community or Civic Contributions

Currently, I hold membership in MSCA and ASCA. On the local level, I am a member of Centerville Booster Club, Centerville PTA and Centerville Education Association. I have held offices in each and have served on numerous committees, including the negotiations team for CEA. I am on the executive board of MHSWP (our health insurance pool). I have been the school's Tech Prep Leadership Team representative since we began the program as a pilot school in 1990. Last year, I was a volunteer member of a Citizen's Review Board, which met monthly to review foster care placements in the Great Falls area. Unfortunately, this board was dissolved because of lack of funding by the legislature. I also participate in the Golden Triangle Curriculum Consortium, which is in the process of updating the counseling curriculum guidelines. Here at the high school, I am Close-Up advisor and senior class advisor.

Elaine Schoyen **Middle School Vice President Nominee**

I am currently a middle school counselor & have been such for 8 years. Prior to that I taught in the middle school for 8 years and the elementary for about 14 years. I received a BS in Education from Stephen F. Austin University and my MS Guidance/Counseling from Northern Montana College. Currently, I am a state board member for Montana Mental Health Association.

Voting

MSCA Members will vote on the above nominees for each of the board positions. Please email Joy Jones at jonesj@florence.k12.mt.us and vote **SUPPORT, DO NOT SUPPORT, or ABSTAIN** for each of the nominees. Votes may also be mailed to Florence Carlton Schools; C/O Joy Jones; 5602 Old Hwy 93; Florence, MT 59833.