

# COUNSELOR CONNECTIONS

September/October 2014 • NYC Department of Education — Office of Guidance and School Counseling



## **New!** OFFICE OF GUIDANCE AND SCHOOL COUNSELING *Youth Development Solutions For Student Achievement*

The new [Office of Guidance and School Counseling \(OGSC\)](#) has been created out of Chancellor Carmen Fariña's vision to establish an office specifically dedicated to supporting and promoting the work of guidance personnel across New York City, including school counselors, social workers, and Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention Specialists (SAPIS). OGSC will focus on building the capacity of school counselors to positively impact students in each domain of the American School Counselor Association framework: academic achievement, social-emotional development, and postsecondary planning. Professional resources and trainings will be provided to help school counselors and youth

development managers to develop comprehensive programs, which will support all students to become effective learners and contributing members of society. In addition, OGSC will offer the new bimonthly **Counselor Connections** newsletter to have more direct communication with all NYC counselors. The [Guidance Portal](#) has been restructured to reflect OGSC's planning.

### OGSC's initial areas of focus include:

#### **Promoting Positive Behaviors:**

School counselors help students view behavioral incidents as an opportunity for personal growth by facilitating social-emotional learning opportunities and providing behavioral interventions. This will be

the focus of OGSC's upcoming professional development day for school counselors on November 5. Further details on this event to come.

#### **Suicide prevention and intervention:**

Suicide prevention campaigns and crisis intervention remain of paramount importance for school counselors. Students and families rely on school counselors to provide critical support and referrals. Additional trainings and resources will be provided for counselors to turnkey with crisis intervention teams.

#### **Supporting new counselors:**

OGSC will offer professional development opportunities and tools for new counselors to help them become acclimated and develop expertise.

# Chancellor's Message

Dear Colleagues,

I am excited to begin my first full school year as Chancellor, and to welcome you back with a new Office of Guidance and School Counseling. As a former teacher, principal, and superintendent, I know how critical your efforts are to our students' academic, social, and emotional development and their progress toward college and careers.

Through our new office and *Counselor Connections* we will recognize and celebrate your contributions and provide you with the resources and training you need to help young New Yorkers thrive. This truly is a watershed moment for our counselors and school communities.

As our ambitious agenda gets underway, please join me in congratulating Lois Herrera, the Senior Executive Director of guidance and school counseling, who will be championing you at Tweed and supporting you in the field. As some of you know, Lois has more than 28 years of experience in the City's public school system. What you may not know

is that this summer Lois had the opportunity to participate in the White House's [College Opportunity Agenda](#), part of First Lady Michelle Obama's [Reach Higher initiative](#) to help all students enter college and the work force. Lois will be working closely with you and our Office of Postsecondary Readiness to advance the Department's college readiness priorities.

On a personal note, this June I was delighted to participate in the 28th Annual Guidance Counselor Recognition Day Award ceremony. Among the honorees was my former elementary School Counselor Sheila Brown, who served at P.S. 6, the Lillie D. Blake School, when I was principal. Sheila was always a tremendous support for the entire P.S. 6 community, including students, families, administrators, and faculty.

I look forward to meeting many of you on August 26 at our welcome back breakfast for school counselors and social workers. We will be exploring counseling strategies for meeting the

[Four Pillars](#), the DOE's vision for creating a world-class education system in which every student graduates from high school prepared for college, a career, and a future as a productive, critically-thinking adult.

In line with our vision, please use the days before students return to analyze your role in developing and implementing school-wide initiatives in key areas, including promoting positive behavior, Respect For All, and suicide prevention and intervention.

I wish you all the best as we begin the 2014-15 school year, and I want to thank you for all that you do on behalf of our children, families, and educators.

Best,

Carmen



## Fall 2014 Parent-Teacher Conference Schedule

Grade Level	Afternoon Dates	Evening Dates
Elementary	Thurs., Nov. 13	Tue., Sept. 16 Wed., Nov. 12
Intermediate Schools	Thurs., Nov. 20	Thurs., Sept. 18 Wed., Nov. 19
High Schools	Fri., Nov. 7	Wed., Sept. 17 Wed., Nov. 5
District 75	Tues., Nov. 18	Mon., Nov 17

“All this will not be finished in the first one hundred days. Nor will it be finished in the first one thousand days.... But let us begin.”

-John F. Kennedy, Inaugural Address, 1961





## Message from the Senior Executive Director

**Dear Counselors,**

Welcome back for an exciting new school year! I am thrilled to also welcome you to the first

edition of *Counselor Connections*. We hope that this bi-monthly newsletter will keep you connected to important policies, resources, and opportunities that directly impact you and the work that you do. Between editions of the newsletter, be sure to visit the [Guidance Portal](#) for additional resources and professional development offerings. We hope that by offering these two channels, you will feel connected to the larger counseling community here in the New York City Department of Education.

I am especially happy to welcome you back as we enter a new era for counselors nationally, statewide and here in NYC. In support of the President's goal of increased college graduation rates by 2020, Michelle Obama recently launched her Reach Higher Campaign. The First Lady spoke about this initiative at the annual conference of the American School Counselor Association earlier this summer. ([Read her speech](#) or [watch the video](#).) At the crux of Reach Higher is a call to increase the number of school counselors in American schools so that more students can have high quality and personalized post-secondary planning. It is truly exciting for counselors to be valued and the focus of a national campaign!

Similarly, there has also been significant focus within New York State. In April, the New York State Education

Department, in collaboration with our professional counselor organizations, held a summit for school counselors to explore counselor preparation at the college level, on-going professional development needs, and standards based counseling. As a result of the summit, key recommendations were presented to the Board of Regents. We expect this to be part of a renewed focus on the professional needs of school counselors and an ongoing dialogue statewide.

In tandem with this increased national and statewide focus, we have also garnered positive attention here in NYC. Within her first 100 days, Chancellor Fariña launched the Office of Guidance and School Counseling. The Chancellor recognizes the importance of the work of counselors in supporting the academic, personal-social, and career development needs of all students. I am honored to head this new office and to support the work of our *school counselors, social workers, and SAPIS*. We hope to interact with you personally in the coming days with a number of professional development opportunities. Remember to check on the Guidance Portal for upcoming events and feel free to reach out to us with questions, ideas, and feedback.

Best wishes for a wonderful new school year!

**Lois Herrera**  
Executive Director

## Did you know?

**September**  
is National Suicide  
Prevention Month

*Plan a suicide prevention campaign for the beginning of the school year with your school's crisis intervention team.*

**September 15 — October 15**  
is National Hispanic  
Heritage Month

*Work with school administration, humanities teachers, parent associations, and school leadership teams to plan cultural celebrations and other student activities.*

**October**  
is National Bullying  
Prevention Month

*Begin Respect For All activities in the fall, and plan ahead for culminating RFA activities and events in February.*

## FOR NEW SCHOOL COUNSELORS

*A full day of professional development for newly appointed school counselors will be offered on:*

**Monday, September 29**

**8:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.**

**UFT headquarters**

**Shanker Hall**

**52 Broadway, New York, NY**

The training is designed for new guidance counselors within their first three years of practice. The registration link is available ([here](#)). Participants are required to register with their DOE email address.

## ATTN: SAPIS COUNSELORS

This fall, the *NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services* will be conducting a statewide Youth Development Survey of students in grades 7 to 12. Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention Specialists (SAPIS) will be conducting the survey in selected New York City schools. The NYC Department of Education participated in the last statewide Youth Development Survey in 2008, with approximately 35,000 NYC students surveyed.

The survey measures risk and protective factors, and the prevalence of alcohol, tobacco, substance use, gambling, and other problem behaviors. This will provide our prevention program with valuable data on citywide, borough, and district levels. The survey results will enable SAPIS to identify the risk and protective factors in each district that have the strongest influence on problem behaviors, and to implement evidence-based programs and strategies to reduce the effect of risk factors and to strengthen the effect of protective factors.

Selected schools will conduct the survey in October. Results will be available in the spring of 2015. We are excited to be a part of this important effort to provide our students with the most effective prevention services, which are data-driven and evidence-based.

## STAY INFORMED!

Please visit the [Guidance Portal](#):  
[schools.nyc.gov/Teachers/guidance](http://schools.nyc.gov/Teachers/guidance)  
for comprehensive school counseling resources.

## OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

The **OVERCOMING OBSTACLES LIFE SKILL CURRICULUM PROGRAM** builds the capacity of middle school and high school educators to help students develop skills they will need to succeed including communication, decision making and goal setting.

With prior approval from their principal, school personnel may pre-register for one or more Overcoming Obstacles *Special Topics* workshops by emailing Margarita Suero-Duran at [msuerod@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:msuerod@schools.nyc.gov). Please indicate: session date; participant name and title, DOE email, phone number, school name and DBN number, grade levels served, principal's name, and principal's email address. Seating is limited, and registration will be confirmed in the order received. We thank our host schools for their gracious hospitality!

- **Tools for Conflict Resolution** on Wednesday October 1 from 9 a.m.—11:30 a.m. at M.S. 443, 330 18 Street, Brooklyn, NY.
- **Fostering Student Leadership Through Service Learning** on Wednesday, November 19 from 9 a.m.—11:30 a.m. at the High School of Arts and Technology, MLK, Jr. campus, 122 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY.

## CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

Chancellor's Regulation [A750 - Child Abuse Prevention](#) requires each principal to designate a staff member from the school's Child Abuse Prevention and Intervention Team to serve as a liaison. The designated liaison shall assist in facilitating inter-agency communication and the sharing of information between the school and local Child Protective Services and foster care agencies.

The designee must receive intensive training in the identification and reporting of suspected child abuse and maltreatment and the Department of Education's reporting protocols. The designee shall attend the annual Designated Liaisons Training facilitated by the DOE Citywide Coordinator for Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Program to obtain the most current child abuse reporting protocols, updates, and best practices.

The designee and the school's Child Abuse Prevention and Intervention Team should facilitate mandated reporting by providing training, materials, and guidance on child abuse prevention and intervention to all school staff. The schedule of Designated Liaison Training is available ([here](#)).



For questions or comments, please email: [guidance@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:guidance@schools.nyc.gov)

# Elementary School Counselors, Social Workers, and SAPIS, Welcome Back!

Do you feel that sense of hope as you begin the school year? The possibility that all things will be better than they were last year? Our students feel it too, even the ones who gave you the hardest time, who never seemed to “get it,” and who did all they could to resist your help. As Maya Angelou said, “When they know better, they’ll do better.” However, we may think to ourselves, “I keep telling him, showing her, guiding them... they should know better by now!”

Our first task is to continue to inspire our students, and even our school staff and colleagues. We must remember that the kids who most need our expertise and compassion are those who are either the quietest or the loudest, and frequently seem to be those who have the least ability to hear us.

Along with the support of our colleagues, our Youth Development Managers, and now the Office of Guidance and School Counseling, school counselors can greatly impact school climate in order to foster student achievement, as well as social-emotional development. Furthermore, school counselors help students to develop the life skills necessary for optimum wellbeing and success. As leaders, advocates, collaborators, and systemic change agents (ASCA), there are a few specific items for elementary counselors to keep in mind as the school year gets underway.

## Leaders:

- ▶ Provide a staff presentation on mandated reporting, suicide prevention, and your school’s Respect For All campaign.
- ▶ Greet students personally at morning entry to offer encouragement to students with a his-

tory of chronic absences, as well as to be aware of immediate issues (i.e., emotional concerns, inadequate outer garments).

- ▶ Have child friendly office space with toys, books, crayons, paper, posters, and if possible, a calming cool-down area with stuffed animals, koosh balls, and maybe even a rocking chair.

## Advocates:

- ▶ Develop follow-up counseling plans for suspended students.
- ▶ Coordinate intervention strategies for the SAVE room.
- ▶ Provide ongoing support to students who have expressed suicidal ideations.
- ▶ Provide ongoing support to students involved with the Administration for Children’s Services.
- ▶ Provide ongoing support to students in temporary housing to assess basic needs, as well as academic and social-emotional concerns.
- ▶ Reinforce the school Respect For All campaign in all school-community interactions and support students of all diversities.

## Collaborators:

- ▶ Attend professional development opportunities to strengthen knowledge and skills.
- ▶ Assist teachers in designing behavior management plans for individual students and classrooms.
- ▶ Serve on the school attendance committee, crisis intervention team, pupil personnel team, and Response to Intervention (RtI) team.
- ▶ Collaborate with pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers to assist students with temporary school phobia and transition issues.

## Systemic Change Agents:

- ▶ Identify kindergarten students who have not had pre-k opportunities and provide small group support for adaptation and transition.
- ▶ Identify school-based norms which may benefit from needs assessment and result in infusing social-emotional intervention, policies, or practices.
- ▶ Use data to identify need for system-wide changes with a focus on achievement and behavioral data.
- ▶ Introduce and spearhead social-emotional learning curriculums, programs and activities.

As elementary school counselors, we have the opportunity to positively impact our students’ academic performance and personal-social development, as well as to begin important conversations pertaining to college and career planning. Students do not generally wake up intent on resisting learning. They innately desire to be successful. They yearn to be liked and are eager to “do better.” Our job is to help identify any barriers to that growth and achievement and to inspire hope while using the utmost professionalism in our guidance, advocacy, and counseling.

While Maya Angelou instructed that “when they know better, they will do better,” she also reminded us of the importance of seeing others in their individual circumstances and recognizing the power of our influence toward positive change. So as you begin this new school year, embrace and utilize your professional skills, reach out for assistance when needed, and “try to be a rainbow in someone else’s cloud.”

**Calling all Middle School & High School Guidance Team Members to participate in Project #ReachHigher**

The White House wants America to have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world by 2020. On July 1, 2014, First Lady Michelle Obama served as the keynote speaker at the American School Counselor Association’s annual conference in Orlando, Florida. [Read her speech](#) or [watch the video](#). According to Ms. Obama, this national goal, Project #ReachHigher, frequently depends on the hard work and determination of America’s school counselors. Her remarks hit a chord with school counselors everywhere in acknowledging the profession’s direct impact on America’s youth, as well as the need to reduce counselor-student ratios.

The First Lady also shared stories from across the country, which spoke to the collective experiences of school counselors everywhere.

To promote the goal that all students who graduate in 2020 and beyond will have the skills needed to succeed in college, #ReachHigher by setting and sharing your SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely) goals for this school year.

For example, if your goal is to have more students in a particular grade pass all of their classes, you may want to:

- ▶ Develop the vision of your comprehensive guidance plan. How will your counseling practices be aligned with school wide goals to increase student achievement? Refer to your school’s Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP) and consult with your school’s administration in planning.
- ▶ Collect data points such as a STARS Student Failure Report to determine the number and percentage of students failing core classes.
- ▶ Set specific targets (i.e., a 10-15% reduction in net difference in terms of percentage of students failing core or all classes) .
- ▶ Implement specific interventions. For example, meet weekly with students who have been identified by their teachers as at risk. Weekly meetings can include developing SMART goals and study skills. Sessions can also be used to ensure student homework assignments are completed. Daily check-in/ check-out sheets can be used for students who are missing assignments.
- ▶ Determine when and how you will evaluate the success of your intervention(s) (i.e., analyze data from the STARS Student Failure Report each marking period).

**How to #ReachHigher:**

Determine a specific SMART goal for the next academic year, including a data point you would like to impact with your school counseling program. Your goal might be about impacting grades, GPAs, college awareness, or course enrollment patterns, etc.

*SMART goals are:*

- ▶ *Specific:* What is it that you want to accomplish? Answer the 5 W’s (Who? What? Where? When? Why?)
- ▶ *Measurable:* How will you know when the goal is accomplished?
- ▶ *Attainable:* Is the goal realistic?
- ▶ *Relevant:* Does the goal meet a need?
- ▶ *Time-bound:* What is the deadline for meeting this goal?

Begin your goal with the phrase, “I will #ReachHigher to…” Here are several examples:

I will #ReachHigher to increase the percentage of students passing all of their classes.

I will #ReachHigher to decrease the number of suspensions.

I will #ReachHigher to help 7th graders to increase their knowledge about postsecondary options.

I will #ReachHigher to increase the percentage of 11th and 12th graders enrolled in college credit-bearing courses.

Please share your Project #ReachHigher goal with Zuri Jackson-Woods at [ZWoods@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:ZWoods@schools.nyc.gov).

*“Too often, you are the only adults in their lives who aren’t there to grade them or judge them or punish them, and that’s why they seek you out when they have nowhere else to turn.”*

- First Lady Michelle Obama



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Off. Class: \_\_\_\_\_

# GOAL SETTING

Please list 1 short-term goal, 1 long-term goal, and 1 personal goal. Remember that your goals and their steps should be SMART (*specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely*)!

1. My short-term goal is to: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Steps: I. \_\_\_\_\_

II. \_\_\_\_\_

III. \_\_\_\_\_

2. My long-term goal is to: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Steps: I. \_\_\_\_\_

II. \_\_\_\_\_

III. \_\_\_\_\_

3. My personal goal is to: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Steps: I. \_\_\_\_\_

II. \_\_\_\_\_

III. \_\_\_\_\_

*This activity meets American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Standards for Students:*

**A:B2 Plan to Achieve Goals** (A:B2.1 Establish challenging academic goals in elementary, middle/junior high and high school.)

# ALL SCHOOLS HIGHLIGHTS

## Suggestions for Pupil Personnel Services

### **Attendance Committee:**

- ◇ Download and review an ATS [RPYA](#) report to plan interventions for students who were chronically absent 20 days or more in the previous school year.
- ◇ Conduct first Attendance Committee meetings to plan activities to reduce chronic absenteeism for individual students, as well as for systemic, school wide efforts.

### **Guidance Lessons:**

- ◇ Plan and facilitate guidance lessons on the three domains of the American School Counselor Association model:
  - ▶ Academic planning (i.e., goal setting; decision making; motivation; developing and applying effective studying, test preparation, test taking, time management, and organizational and note-taking strategies).
  - ▶ Personal-social development (i.e., Respect For All; Overcoming Obstacles; stress management; getting along with others; respecting self and others; peer pressure; conflict resolution; and suicide prevention).
  - ▶ Career and post-secondary planning (i.e., career interest inventories; decision making and goal setting; personal educational plans; career fairs; and college tours).

### **Group Counseling:**

- ◇ Facilitate thematic group counseling for at-risk students (i.e., students failing a specified number of classes; recidivist in disciplinary action; or who were chronically absent in the previous school year).

### **Fall 2014 Parent-Teacher Conferences:**

- ◇ Provide a list of Parent Association meeting dates, the parent-teacher conference schedule ([here](#)), and a report card distribution schedule at the first Parent Association meeting.
- ◇ Prepare handouts to discuss promotion and graduation requirements; attendance; tutoring and academic interventions; college and career plans; personal-social development; extracurricular opportunities; and referrals to community-based organizations, as needed.

### **Pupil Personnel Team (PPT):**

- ◇ Distribute Pupil Personnel Team student assistance referral forms to the faculty and/or discuss PPT referrals at a faculty meeting.
- ◇ Conduct the first PPT meetings for the school year featuring student case conferences.

### **Mandated Reporting/ Suicide Prevention and Intervention:**

- ◇ Review Chancellor's Regulations [A750 - Child Abuse Prevention](#) and [A-755 - Suicide Prevention/Intervention](#).
- ◇ Facilitate a faculty presentation on mandated reporting, suicide prevention/intervention, as well as the ladder of referral.
- ◇ Attend a [Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Designated Liaison Training](#), which begins September 2014.

# MIDDLE SCHOOLS HIGHLIGHTS

## Suggestions for Pupil Personnel Services

### **Planning and Administration:**

- ◇ Familiarize all students with school counseling services. This effort could be accomplished through classroom guidance lessons, small-group role play, school wide informational displays, student announcements, or newsletter articles that demystify and introduce school counseling as a comprehensive, developmental service for all.
- ◇ Familiarize all families with school counseling services. Send letters home welcoming students and families, and introducing them to counseling services provided. Record a welcome message on school messenger.
- ◇ Review data and identify students who may need guidance services; students in foster or group homes; English Language Learner students; students in temporary housing; newly admitted students; holdovers; and previously suspended students.
- ◇ Identify targeted students who exhibit “at-risk behaviors” or who might be experiencing adjustment and/or transition issues.

### **Collaboration:**

- ◇ Provide guidance lessons in collaboration with classroom teachers, staff, and/or other stakeholders around topics such as motivation, goal setting, decision making, high school articulation, career and college planning, respecting self and others, peer pressure, conflict resolution, stress management, etc. Existing curricula such as Respect For All and Overcoming Obstacles may also be part of the classroom instruction/guidance.
- ◇ Collaborate with school staff on planning and implementation of advisories and other student engagement opportunities.

### **Parent Engagement/Community Relations:**

- ◇ Offer a series of orientation sessions and parent workshops on various topics. Possible workshop topics: high school admissions process; academic expectations; organization; curriculum; study skills; communication; confidence; and self-esteem; physical, social-emotional concerns (i.e., bullying, peer pressure); the effects of social media on mental health; and stress management.
- ◇ Familiarize parents with websites that will keep them abreast of their child’s academic progress and provide academic support for their youngsters. (i.e., Engrade, ARIS Parent Link, Spelling City, etc.)
- ◇ Share the [Middle School Academic Policy Reference Guide](#) with parents.
- ◇ Prepare a bulletin board highlighting various aspects of guidance and counseling services (i.e., career guidance; multicultural and multiethnic understandings; positive self-esteem; and decision making). Display important dates, deadlines, and upcoming events.

### **High School Admissions:**

- ◇ Develop a school committee to plan articulation program and events including a high school night.
- ◇ Conduct classroom visits to inform students of the high school application process. New [admissions apps](#) are also available to help students.
- ◇ Promote the Citywide High School Fair (September 20 and 21 from 10 a.m.—3 p.m. at Brooklyn Technical High School) and the Borough High School Fairs (October 18 and 19).

### **Career Development:**

- ◇ Plan for National Career Development Month (November). Include activities such as poster/poetry contest, career day, film festival, speakers.
- ◇ Use career inventories, interest inventories, values clarification exercises, and other career assessment tools to aid in articulation and career exploration.

# HIGH SCHOOLS HIGHLIGHTS

## Suggestions for Pupil Personnel Services

### Admissions/Articulation:

- ◇ Plan for over-the-counter students and their families by preparing admissions packets. Include a student handbook and an activities directory in each packet.
- ◇ Distribute emergency blue cards. Use the collected emergency blue cards to update family contact information in ATS.
- ◇ Distribute [military recruitment opt-out letters](#) and [condom availability program](#) letters.
- ◇ Host an articulation breakfast for local intermediate school counselors and parent coordinators, as well as an open house for intermediate school students and their families.
- ◇ Designate faculty and student representatives to represent your school at the Citywide High School Fair (September 20 and 21 from 10 a.m.—3 p.m. at Brooklyn Technical High School) and at the Borough High School Fairs (October 18 and 19). Prepare student art, academic displays, videos, and slideshows which will convey the mission statement of your school.
- ◇ Assist first year 9th graders and their families with the high school admissions application as needed if the student and family are interested in transferring to another high school for tenth grade.
- ◇ Advise 9th grade students and families interested in attending a specialized high school about the *Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHSAT)*. The *Specialized High School Student Handbook* is available [here](#).

### Academic Planning:

- ◇ Review school-based policies and procedures for academic program change requests, as well as processing new over-the-counter students with faculty and guidance personnel as needed.
- ◇ Review the most recent edition of the [High School](#) Academic Policy Reference Guides to stay current on State and City policies.
- ◇ Facilitate guidance lessons on graduation requirements along with a transcript review. High schools should have received a box of “grad cards” in June for new students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade in the 2014–15 school year; additional copies, historical versions for other cohorts, and translations of all cards are available [here](#). These cards and [the diploma worksheet](#) are helpful tools to use in conversations with students and their families. The STARS [credit and exam distribution screen](#) is also available for monitoring student progress.

### Orientations:

- ◇ Organize orientation assemblies by grade. Provide an overview on topics including diploma requirements; attendance; suicide prevention/intervention; Respect For All; and guidance conferences.
- ◇ Present these topics at a parent orientation.

### College Planning and PSATs:

- ◇ Coordinate testing schedule for the citywide PSAT/NMSQT, which will be administered to 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students on Wednesday, *October 15*. Plan college awareness programs for 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students while 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students are testing.
- ◇ Schedule school trips to visit CUNY, SUNY, and local private college campuses.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE OFFICE OF ACADEMIC POLICY AND SYSTEMS

In New York City, academic policies set by the City and State govern the way schools structure academic programs in grades K–12, promote students to the next grade level, and graduate students who are prepared for college and careers. The NYCDOE’s [academic policy resources](#) Intranet page, maintained by the NYCDOE’s Office of Academic Policy and Systems (OAPS), contains resources that school counselors can use to gain clarity concerning the academic planning process. Please review the most recent editions of the [High School](#) and [Middle School](#) Academic Policy Reference Guides to stay current on State and City policies.

An updated academic policy [slideshow presentation](#) is also available. After reviewing the slides, test your knowledge with these high school academic policy questions:

1. Can a student be kept in school if he or she has met all the requirements for graduation *except* physical education (PE)?
2. Can a student without an Individualized Education Program (IEP) earn the Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) commencement credential as an endorsement to a diploma?

3. If a global history course meets for 225 minutes per week (more than the required 180 minutes per week), can 1.25 credits be awarded for the course?
4. Can students who have internships be awarded high school credit for those jobs?
5. If a student of mine leaves school to attend a course at a local community college one day per week, under what circumstances can this count toward his required 5.5 hours of instructional time per day?

**Answers:** [1.] Yes. Students may be held back from graduating if all they are missing is PE. See page 4 of High School (HS) guide for exception that applies only to students who are graduating early; i.e. in fewer than 4 years. [2.] No. See [CDOS FAQ](#), question 1. [3.] No. See page 21 of [HS academic policy reference guide](#). [4.] Yes, if the internship experience is structured to meet other requirements; see p. 20 of HS guide and [Off-site Courses FAQ](#). [5.] Yes. When the course is coded as such in STARS and meets other basic requirements, it can count toward the 5.5 hours of instruction; see [College Courses FAQ](#).

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE OFFICE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

**Academic Programs for ELLs:** New York City provides bilingual programs (Transitional Bilingual Education and Dual Language) and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. Guidance counselors are encouraged to review students’ previous ELL program models to ensure continuity of services. Please refer to the complete list of Bilingual Programs city-wide: [List of Bilingual Programs](#)

**Professional Development:** The Office of ELLs (OELL) provides professional development opportunities for teachers, guidance counselors, parent coordinators, social workers, and administrators working with English Language Learners. To sign up for weekly Professional Development Notifications (EBlast), email your contact information to [OELL@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:OELL@schools.nyc.gov).

**Hispanic Youth Leadership Institute (HYLA):** HYLA provides a forum for student delegates to cultivate leadership skills and gain an understanding of the legislative process. The program

is open to 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students of Latino descent. Applications will be available in September. Please contact Miguel Cordero at [MCordero@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:MCordero@schools.nyc.gov) for more information.

**College Admissions Exam for ELLs:** High achieving ELLs or former-ELLs seeking admission to selective private universities may consider taking the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). The TOEFL may be used to supplement an ELL or F-ELL student’s SAT scores to qualify for a selective college. Visit the [ETS.Org/TOEFL](http://ETS.Org/TOEFL) for more information.

**College and Career Readiness Pilot Program:** Through the college and career readiness pilot, OELL hopes to increase ELLs’ self-efficacy in the college application process, attitudes towards accessibility of postsecondary options, and awareness of college and career options. Schools interested in participating in this pilot program may contact Deyci Rodriguez, Director of High School Programs, at

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY READINESS

The mission of the Office of Postsecondary Readiness (OPSR) is to ensure that all students are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and competencies to graduate high school and successfully pursue a rigorous postsecondary pathway that meets their interests and needs. As counselors, you have a deep impact on students' postsecondary aspirations and attainment. College counseling, supporting and teaching students about college options, financial aid, and the proper sequence of courses to take are critical to helping students get to and through postsecondary education.

On July 28, the White House's [Reach Higher Initiative](#) gathered over 100 experts in college counseling at the [Harvard Graduate School of Education](#) to discuss ways to strengthen the quantity and quality of college counseling, especially for low-income and first-generation students, and the need to help students apply for and enroll in

college. Several panelists and presenters called for greater investment in school counseling by improving training and support for counselors.

In order to develop the capacity of all high schools to provide college counseling, OPSR is offering free [Effective Postsecondary Planning training](#). We encourage you to [register](#) for either the summer or fall cohorts. In addition to taking advantage of the training, we would also like to encourage you to become involved with the New York State Association for College Admissions Counseling ([NYSACAC](#)) and the College Access Consortium of New York ([CACNY](#)). These two professional organizations offer great mentoring, training, and networking opportunities. Both of these organizations develop and provide services, programs, and opportunities for members so that they can assist students to prepare for and succeed in postsecondary education. We hope you get involved!



### FEATURED PROFESSIONAL ARTICLE

*Spotlighted by Margarita Suero-Duran, Ed.D.*

Shallcross, L. (2010, July 25). [Confronting the threat of suicide](#). *Counseling Today*.

Did you know that **only 25 percent of adolescents** have reported that they would tell an adult if they knew a peer was considering suicide? This statistic points to the importance of **teaching students to speak up**.

It is also essential that **all adults** in contact with young people in a school **understand their respective roles** and become thoroughly prepared by knowing:

***What to look for.***

***What to say and not to say to a student whom they are concerned about.***

***How to make a referral.***

To read more about these and other practices to confront the threat of suicide, access the full article ([here](#)).

Also refer to [Chancellor's Regulation A-755 Suicide Prevention/Intervention](#) and crisis support resources available at the [Principals' Portal](#) and the [Guidance Portal](#).

## Share Your Guidance Success Story

**Do you have a guidance success story that you would like to share with your colleagues at the Guidance Portal?**

*Please email your submissions to [guidance@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:guidance@schools.nyc.gov).*

A success story could feature:

- An individual student who made a significant turnaround or who was helped to achieve his or her fullest potential through the efforts of a school-based counselor.
- A school wide guidance intervention that impacted student attendance, behavior, and/or course marks (the A, B, Cs).
- An impactful group counseling activity or guidance lesson that students enjoyed.

*School-based counselors, social workers, and SAPIS whose submissions are published will be invited to a special lunch with Lois Herrera, Senior Executive Director of the Office of Guidance and School Counseling, at the end of the school year.*