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College and Career Readiness

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by Dr. Brandie Oliver, President of Indiana School Counselor Association/Assistant Professor at Butler University
& Mrs. Susan Kleinman, Director of Strategic Initiatives, Butler University College of Education

In today's economy, a person needs more than a high school diploma to access a high wage career. Each of our students needs to be counseled to aim for their best option after high school, whether that is a training program, community college or a four-year university. One of the most important roles of the school counselor is to provide the tools that support each student's exploration of the career that best suits them. The school counselor connects students to the resources, tools and strategies that assist them as they transition from middle school to high school and into an increasingly wide array of postsecondary options. The crucial role of the school counselor has captured the attention of the President and the First Lady of the United States of America.

College and Career Readiness has become a hot topic in the national conversation. Early in 2014, the White House held a convening at Harvard University to discuss this important topic. Following this convening, the First Lady announced the Reach Higher Initiative that specifically focuses on the expansion of school counseling services to ensure that all students receive appropriate education and support to obtain postsecondary education (for additional information on Reach Higher please visit <http://www.whitehouse.gov/reach-higher>). In October, the White House held a second national convening at San Diego State University in which a team from Indiana was invited to attend. This team was comprised of representatives of counselor education, the Indiana Department of Education, practitioners, and the Indiana Chamber of Commerce. Our team is keenly aware of the direct link between the health of our economy and the education of our students. We also recognize that in order to succeed, initiatives for post-secondary readiness must have authentic support from our school administrators, our elected leadership, and our business community. We intend to leverage our strong relationships with the business community and our educational institutions to develop the pipeline for work-ready employees and reduce the skills gap that exists in our state. We believe the next step in improving our post-secondary advising process is to create more demand for well-trained school counselors; that demand needs to be spurred by those who stand to benefit from our improved efforts to guide students from school to career. With the changing demands of the workforce, school counselors can benefit from continued education specific to College/Career Readiness. In response to this need, the Indiana School Counselor Association (ISCA) is excited to share that Indiana Senator, Dennis Kruse (R), Chairman of the Education and Career Development Committee has proposed Senate Bill 271 creating a grant fund to provide additional training for school counselors to receive a College/Career Certificate. We believe this bill will provide a great opportunity for Indiana to take a leadership role to best serve the students in our state as well as align student interests, aptitudes and skills to real opportunities in the job market.

ISCA continues to collaborate with both the Indiana Association of School Principals and the Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents to work together to address the college and career needs of our students. It is our hope, that as school leaders you will also support this initiative. We invite you to reflect on the two questions below and welcome your input as we continue to develop CCR standards and readiness skills for Indiana students.

- How can school counselors create meaningful partnerships with administrators and superintendents to improve outcomes for guiding students to choices beyond high school?
- How do we use data to design a model of efficient and effective school counseling for pathways beyond high school?

For more information or to be involved in Indiana's CCR initiative, please contact Dr. Brandie Oliver at bmoliver@butler.edu or Mrs. Susan Kleinman at skleinma@butler.edu.

Riley Hospital Kids Caring & Sharing Update *continued*

We have made our own, less-scientific discoveries during Zach's journey with diabetes: The two years of travel were well worth it, regardless of the results. The doctors and nurses at Riley were angels during those challenging first two years. The weekly monitoring and support Zach received were invaluable. These doctors and nurses have such passion for helping these kids and trying to find a cure.

We feel blessed to have met such wonderful people at Riley. We wish the best to the research team. We are ready for the next study.

KCS fundraising helps support these cutting edge research programs. Thank you for your continued support.