

Ad Hoc Committee on Engaging Public High School Counselors

PURPOSE

The Ad Hoc Committee on Engaging Public High School Counselors was asked to develop practical recommendations for expanding NACAC membership among public high school counselors, with special attention to counselors at Title I schools. The committee considered the priorities for high school counselors to successfully guide students on their path to postsecondary education, such as increasing professional development opportunities, the value of NACAC membership for the profession, and the need for increased visibility, advocacy, and support for the profession.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The committee was comprised of public high school counselors, post-secondary admissions professionals, and representatives from community-based organizations.

Co-Chairs

Candice Mackey, Los Angeles Center for Enriched Studies (LACES) (CA)

Jennifer Nuechterlein, Hunterdon Central Regional High School (NJ)

Robert Bardwell, Tantasqua Regional Senior High School (MA)

Emily Behan, Coney Island Preparatory High School (NY)

Stephanie Brazinsky, South High School (CO)

Deanna Dixon, Smith College (MA)

Beth Gilfillan, Northeastern Illinois University (IL)

Priscilla Grijalva, Eleanor Roosevelt High School (CA)

Nancy Herndon, Hamilton Southeastern High School (IN)

Fitima Jackson, Rice University (TX)

Rod Jackson, Southern Methodist University (TX)

Mike Jaskoski, Avon High School (IN)

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Erin Kim, Granada Hills Charter High School (CA)

Margarita Landeros, Green Dot Public Schools (CA)

Jennifer Landy, Wayzata High School (MN)

Ericka Matthews-Jackson, Wayne State University (MI)

Lynda McGee, Downtown Magnets High School (CA)

Nichole Renee Mitchell, Norristown Area High School (PA)

William Pepin, North Smithfield High School (RI)

Corey Sheffield, College AIM (GA)

Randy Stamm, Hackensack High School (NJ)

NACAC Staff Liaisons

Shantel Goodman-Luckett, Chief Experience Officer

Cameron Hair, Research and Grants Associate

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create a permanent position on the NACAC staff to promote membership, visibility, education, and advocacy for public school counselors.
- Increase opportunities for professional development for public school counselors throughout the year, to include the National Conference.
- Expand and strengthen public school counselor membership in NACAC.
- Validate the importance and visibility of public school counselors through increased advocacy and NACAC outreach activities
- Create best practices to streamline and simplify the college admissions process for students.
- Understand and balance the diversity and differences in the roles of the public school counselor (e.g.) school counselor vs. college counselor; suburban vs. rural vs. urban; large population vs. smaller population; Title I school vs. wealthy or under-resourced.
- Increase awareness and programming around mental health concerns for students. Create a committee that is solely dedicated and exclusively focuses on the growing mental health challenges and concerns of students.
- Extend the duration and focus of the ad hoc committee past six months.

CONTINUES.

STATUS FOR EACH RECOMMENDATION

Create a permanent position on the NACAC staff to promote membership, visibility, education, and advocacy for public school counselors.

Due to our current fiscal limitations, NACAC is unable to pursue this recommendation for now. Public high school counselors are a critical aspect of our membership, and we are committed to serving them more effectively within the scope of available resources. We will revisit this annually and consider ways to fund such a role through grants and philanthropy.

Increase opportunities for professional development for public school counselors throughout the year, to include the National Conference.

Work is underway to develop virtual professional development and programming for 2022. We will bolster public school counselor development opportunities at conference. Additionally, NACAC's partnership with the [College Guidance Network](#) provides members with on-demand professional development and shareable content to scale the work of counselors with students and families. NACAC serves as a member of CGN's editorial board and will continue to advocate for public school counselors as new content is created and curated.

Expand and strengthen public school counselor membership in NACAC.

NACAC commits to expanding communication efforts to include recognition as a form of advocacy to public school leadership and administrators and sharing information about the value of a NACAC membership. The ongoing member needs assessment segmentation will provide insight for us to use and communicate to members and their administration.

Validate the importance and visibility of public school counselors through increased advocacy and NACAC outreach activities.

For 2022, NACAC did not increase the conference rate for public school counselors and offered discounts to school administrators. As part of NACAC's refreshed policy and advocacy platform, in partnership with Ed Counsel, public school counselors will be a central aspect of our public policy and research agenda. NACAC's Title 1 members are now coded in our system to help us track this information and connect directly to this important member segment.

Create best practices to streamline and simplify the college admissions process for students.

We are pursuing funding to explore best practices for making the admission process simpler for students as a follow up to the Lumina report. We will advocate for student- and equity-centered admission under our new advocacy platform and convene an ad hoc committee in 2022 focused on student-centered equity, particularly in the college admission process.

Understand and balance the diversity and differences in the roles of the public school counselor (e.g.) school counselor vs. college counselor; suburban vs. rural vs. urban; large population vs. smaller population; Title I school vs. wealthy or under-resourced.

We recognize the nuances within the public school counselor field and will address this through new Education and Training resources. NACAC's member needs assessment will help with member segmentation, as well as our efforts to segment our resource development and communication through digital marketing.

Increase awareness and programming around mental health concerns for students. Create a committee that is solely dedicated and exclusively focuses on the growing mental health challenges and concerns of students.

The NACAC Board of Directors approved an ad hoc committee to focus on this topic in 2022. The two chairs for the 2022 Ad Hoc Committee on Mental Health and Equity in the Transition to Postsecondary Education are Yvonne Espinoza and Sean Ohira.

Extend the duration and focus of the ad hoc committee past six months.

We recommend the committee continue this conversation as part of the SIG network.