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Charles G. Wilson, *Ed.S, MBA, CPA*

Bulloch County Schools
150 Williams Road, Suite A
Statesboro, GA 30458
912.212.8500
www.bullochschoools.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**Jan. 30, 2019**

Contacts: **Daria Smith, Public Relations & Marketing Intern**
drsmith@bullochschools.org
Hayley Greene, Public Relations & Marketing Specialist
hgreene@bullochschools.org

National School Counseling Week

National School Counseling Week was celebrated from Feb. 4-8, 2019, to publicly recognize professional school counselors for all they do and the impact they have on the lives of students.

NSCW is sponsored by the American School Counselor Association and recognizes school counselors who "implement comprehensive school counseling programs, a vital part of the educational process for all students as they meet the challenges of the 21st century," said Dr. Deborah Mangum, Executive Director of Student Services at Bulloch County Schools.

Charles Wilson, Superintendent of Bulloch County Schools, signed a declaration that acknowledged school counselors for helping students to "reach their full potential, explore their abilities, strengths and talents, set realistic goals for themselves and become productive members of society." This proclamation stated that "school counseling programs are considered an integral part of the educational process that enables all students to achieve success in school."

Professional school counselors are accredited, licensed instructors who bring specialized guidance and skill to working with students, staff, and parents. District counselors offer services directly to students through individual and group counseling, classroom instruction and crisis response. Indirect services supplied by counselors on behalf of students include referrals for additional aid, consultation and collaboration with parents, teachers, other educators or community organizations.

High school counselors focus heavily on career and college advisement. High school students contact their counselors for help with academics in the areas where they are struggling, inquiring about career pathways, getting information on clubs and extracurricular activities, the discussion of personal issues interfering with school and researching possible careers, military requirements or college opportunities.

“As an advocate for students, professional school counselors help guide students' academic, behavioral, career and social/emotional development and growth,” said Renee Perry, lead district counselor. “Counselors play a key role in supporting a positive school climate and ensuring students unlock their potential to be productive, well-adjusted citizens of our world.”

The district employs 26 school counselors throughout the elementary, middle and high schools in addition to an executive director of support services. A district lead counselor was hired within the past year with additional funding from the BOE to increase the number of school counselors in the district.

Counselors employed with the district attend monthly Professional Learning Community meetings, where they gather together to remain up to date on district procedures and needs, learn about community resources and receive training to enhance their assistance to students. Chick-Fil-A provided breakfast at the most recent PLC to demonstrate their appreciation of school counselors as a part of the NSCW celebration.

Contact the school counselors at their local schools or refer to ASCA's website, www.schoolcounselor.org, with specific questions or concerns about school counseling programs.

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