



# VENTURA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOL COUNSELOR

Quarterly Newsletter

## The School Counselor's Role

School counselors play a critical role in ensuring schools provide a safe, caring environment and that students have the necessary mindsets and behaviors to advance academic achievement outcomes. School counselors work collaboratively with stakeholders to ensure equity, access and academic success of all students (ASCA, 2019).

### School counselors help all students:

- apply academic achievement strategies
- manage emotions and apply interpersonal skills
- plan for postsecondary options (higher education, military, work force)

### Appropriate duties include providing:

- individual student academic planning and goal setting
- school counseling classroom lessons based on student success standards
  - short-term counseling to students and referrals for long-term support
- collaboration with families/teachers/ administrators/ community for student success
  - advocacy for students at individual education plan meetings and other student-focused meetings
- data analysis to identify student issues, needs and challenges
- acting as a systems change agent to improve equity and access, achievement and opportunities for all students

# Counselor Advocate Spotlight

## Greg Bayless

Director of Secondary Curriculum and Instruction



Greg is always available to answer questions, problem solve and advocate for our profession. He understands the challenges that our role is faced with and plays an important part of our team. In addition, he makes himself available when we have department meetings and beyond. His sense of humor can lighten a dark and controversial topic and has helped bridge the gap that traditionally breaks administration and counselors into two separate teams. Thank you for everything that you do!

- VUSD Counseling Team

# Helpful Resources

- Ventura County 211 Helpline: Children and Family Services  
dial 211 or call 800-339-9597
- Clinicas Ventura (Medical, Dental, Mental Health, Specialty Services):  
805-647-6353
- Trevor Suicide Prevention Lifeline:  
866-488-7386
- Logrando Bienestar (Latino community support in mental and emotional health):  
805-973-5220
- CA COVID-19 Rent Relief (Westside Community Development Corporation): 805-628-3869
- VUSD Parent Fall Education Workshops; more information is available on the VUSD website

**VUSD School Counseling Website**

<https://sites.google.com/venturaedu.org/vusd-school-counselor/home>



As School Counselors, we maintain strict confidentiality in all of our interactions. All meetings held with school counselors will remain confidential unless the student gives permission to share information with related parties. However, circumstances do arise where we must disclose information to appropriate professionals. Reasons for breaking confidentiality are but not limited to: a student is in danger of harming themselves, harming another individual, or being harmed by others.



# Counselor Spotlight



**Cassandra Hopkins**  
Elementary School Counselor

I consult and collaborate with Cassandra at least twice a week and am always impressed by her quick response and thoughtful suggestions for some really challenging situations we are experiencing and working in elementary counseling. Cassandra's breadth and depth of counseling skills and resources/knowledge, as well as her willingness to go the extra 200% at the end of a tough day sometimes, make her an asset to our team and an ally to our elementary population. She also brings me goodies sometimes. 😊 We are super fortunate to have such a bright light guiding us at the district level.

- Mary Anderson  
Citrus Glen School Counselor



**Eliana Rodriguez**  
Middle School Counselor

I want to give her the biggest shout out for being my biggest resource and supporter this year! It is my first year as a school counselor here at Balboa and I couldn't have gotten through the start of the school year without her! Always positive, willing to help, and open to new ideas and collaborations. Great team player and amazing counselor!

-Jessica Garcia  
Balboa School Counselor



**Kate Raney**  
High School Counselor

Kate was a teacher alongside of me before becoming a counselor. I find it easy to talk to her and understand her as a fellow teacher, as she will always be one in my mind. She cares about students, and really knows how to connect with them, and I think her counseling degree has just served to reinforced those awesome abilities. This is one person who you can tell is living her "purpose". I am glad and lucky to work with such a professional yet personable colleague.

- Sean Reynolds  
VHS Teacher

