

Letter from the Counseling Center  
July 2020

Our Counseling Center offers you its welcome, along with a bit of explanation of the role this great place serves in our community. We have two full-time school personal-social counselors: Joel Coffman and Will Honeycutt. Trey Tucker also works part-time with the counseling center while also teaching English. Josh Deitrick, who serves as the School Chaplain (423-493-5844, [jdeitrick@mccallie.org](mailto:jdeitrick@mccallie.org)) for all grades will provide additional support to our students and their families. This office is supported by the compassionate and capable hands of Mrs. Jenny Suddath. Mrs. Suddath serves as the Administrative Assistant to the Counseling Center.

Families:

The term "counselor" at McCallie School can be a little bit confusing on the front end since there are a variety of professionals holding that particular title within our community. For example, we have full time college counselors who do a marvelous job at assisting our students in their college application process. Similarly, we have academic counselors who work closely with our boys in the academic realm ranging from providing strategies for studying more efficiently to actual tutorial assistance.

In the Counseling Center, located on the fourth floor of the Academic Building, we provide what is best termed "personal/social" counseling on both an "open-door" and an appointment basis. Our philosophy is that little problems solved early avoid larger problems down the proverbial road. By definition, adolescence is the "age of storm and stress" where even the best of boys struggle, to some degree, with a variety of teen issues. What we have found to be true in most cases is that a caring adult with a trained listening ear can prove to be immensely helpful to a young man who is struggling, regardless of the particular issue at hand.

All three of us have Masters Degrees in secondary/high school counseling. Understanding that most boys tend to shy away from those with the title of "counselor," we work hard to establish a great rapport with our students through a variety of means. For example, the Counseling Center is located in the "heart" of the academic building where boys are naturally found. Taking full advantage of the close proximity of our students, we provide bowls of candy that encourage our guys to stop by at class change to pick up a Jolly Rancher while receiving a friendly pat on the back and word of encouragement. We also make a concerted effort to get out of our offices literally to be where our boys are: at their sporting events, their musicals, plays, etc. These venues provide us with a wonderful way of connecting with our students.

Our belief is that boys need to establish a fairly close relationship with the school counselors while times are good in hopes that, when times are tough, they will feel more comfortable in seeking help from those gentlemen on the fourth floor. Besides the boys themselves seeking us out, we welcome and encourage referrals from teachers, other staff members and, of course, from parents. Mrs. Jenny Suddath is our very efficient and warm administrative assistant who will greet you either in person or by telephone. Never hesitate to telephone our offices or email us at:

Jenny Suddath (423-493-5881, [jensuddath@mccallie.org](mailto:jensuddath@mccallie.org))

Joel Coffman (423-493-5681, [jcoffman@mccallie.org](mailto:jcoffman@mccallie.org))

Will Honeycutt (423-493-5889, [whoneycutt@mccallie.org](mailto:whoneycutt@mccallie.org))

Trey Tucker ([treytucker@mccallie.org](mailto:treytucker@mccallie.org))

Josh Deitrick (423-493-5844, [jdeitrick@mccallie.org](mailto:jdeitrick@mccallie.org))

For a little further clarification, please note that this coming year, Joel Coffman will focus primarily on the freshman class and Will Honeycutt will be working primarily with the sophomore and senior classes. Trey Tucker will be focussing his energies on the junior class as well as helping to provide a presence on campus. Josh Deitrick's chaplaincy duties cover all grade levels as he continues to minister to the hearts and needs of these young men. Do know, however, that we work closely together in addressing all student needs and do not consider these grade classifications to be chiseled into stone. In short, there will be some overlap which is welcomed by all of us.

Understanding that a small percentage of boys may experience counseling concerns that go beyond the credentials of a school counselor, we have an excellent off-campus referral program in place that can place a student with an exceptionally skilled clinical professional. Those off-campus appointments are handled in the same way that any doctor's appointment would be handled. Of course, the boy's parents will be fully involved in the referral process.

Do know that we work also closely in concert with a variety of other faculty and staff members in our community with one common goal - that of encouraging each young man to become everything he has been created to be. We look forward to getting to know you and your sons and to serving you in any way we can.

Best wishes for a relaxing summer as you look forward to your new journey at McCallie this fall.

From Joel Coffman, Josh Deitrick, Will Honeycutt, Trey Tucker, and Jenny Suddath