ALABAMA SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION

Critical Issues Conference

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2026

Center for the Arts – 7:00am-3:15pm – Registration & Check-In

Palmer Hall Lobby & Center for the Arts Lobby – 7:00am-3:15pm – Exhibit Tables

Palmer Hall Auditorium – 8:00-8:15am – Welcome & Announcements / 11:45am-12:15pm – Lunch & Announcements

12:15-1:15pm – General Session: *Professional Advocacy for School Counseling* – Dr. Daniel Birdsong, Program Coordinator and Assistant Professor of Counseling, University of Montevallo; ALCA President

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

LOCATION	8:30-10:00am	10:15-11:45am	1:30-3:00pm	3:15-4:45pm
Palmer Hall Auditorium	1. *Positive Behavior Through MTSS: School Counselors Leading Tiers I and II* - Stevens, Ennis & Sallese	13. *Section 504 in Action: The School Counselors' Role in Student Support* - Stevens & Sallese	25. *Non-Traditional Pathways to Graduation: Understanding the HSDO Option* - Dees	37. *Every Day Counts: School Counselors Improving Chronic Absenteeism* - Goreed
Carmichael Library EBSCO Room (ground floor)	2. *Partnering Through Complexity: School-Family Collaboration for Students Experiencing Severe Mental Health Challenges* - McCarthy	14. *The Whole Student Approach: Securing Community Partnerships for Career Readiness, Basic Needs, and Student Success* - Chism & K. L. Jones	26. *Breaking the Silence: Recognizing, Advocating, and Providing Practical Resources for Children of Incarcerated Parents in Alabama Schools* - Stevenson	38. *Connecting People to Resources and Resources to People: A Proactive Counseling Model* - Swafford
Carmichael Library J.A. Brown Room (top floor)	3. *Correlation Between Unhealthy Dating Relationships, Mental Health & Academic Achievement* - Montgomery-Clark & Montgomery-Price	15. *Protecting Children and Families: Mandatory Reporting and Domestic Violence* - Blanks & Roper	27. *Grooming & Human Trafficking* - Chambers & Wells	39. *Relationships Before Response: How Counselors and SROs Strengthen School Safety Together* - Bonham
Davis Hall LeBaron Recital Hall	4. *From Overwhelmed to Empowered: Practical Strategies for Supporting Student Anxiety* - Sapp & King	16. *Rethinking ADHD: Plotting a New Course for More Effective Approaches* - Mitchell	28. *Living With Social Media and Screen Time: The Impacts on Today's Youth* - Mitchell & Kirkland	40. *Did You Know That ASCA Has a New National Model?* - C. Davis
Harman Hall 119	5. *From "Failure" to Financial Gain! - Turning Test Avoiders To Test Attackers Using The Belle © ACT/SAT Test Prep Methodology* - Belle	17. *Student-Athlete Sports Performance and Mental Health* - Winsett	29. *College & Career Readiness, AIMing for Accuracy* - Durr & Rowe	41. *Counseling Cafe: A Menu of AI Tools for Engagement & Productivity* - Priest
Harman Hall 220	6. *Supporting High School Students in Exploring a Career in Medicine* - Goodson	18. *From Conflict to Collaboration: Navigating Challenging Parent Interactions in School Counseling* - McCall & L. Smith	30. *Role Clarity in Action: Setting Boundaries in School Counseling* - McCall & L. Smith	42. *The Insiders Guide to ALSCA Involvement* - Upton, Birdsong, P. Davis & Rowe
Humanities Hall Auditorium (ground floor)	7. *The DSM and School Counseling: Recognizing Mental Health Concerns Without Diagnosing* - Hodnett	19. *Understanding Student Behavior Through an Attachment Lens* - Pruett	31. *When People Start People-ing: Working with Difficult People* - Matthews	43. *Let's Talk About Talking* - Matthews
Humanities Hall 106	8. *The Alphabet of Our Children* - Ching	20. *Handle With Care* - Banks & Mukaddam	32. *From Trauma To Transformation: Overcoming The Lasting Impact of ACEs and Childhood Trauma Shaping The Lives of Broken Men and Women* - W. Heard	44. *In a World Full of Rain, Be the Umbrella: The Power of Positivity* - Marshall
Humanities Hall 205	9. *Best Practice in Child and Adolescent Counseling* - Milstead	21. *School Refusal: A Collaborative Approach* - Miller Reed	33. *From Connectedness to Crisis Prevention: A School Counselor's Guide to the Peer Helpers PLUS Program* - Moore	45. *From Frameworks to Outcomes: Aligning MTSS, School Counseling, and Shared Leadership for Student Success* - S. Booker & T. Booker
Wills Hall G2 (ground floor)	10. *Conducting Suicide Prevention and Intervention Using Adlerian Constructs* - Harrington	22. *Facility Dogs in the School Setting* - Cook	34. *Seeing the Invisible: Recognizing Grief and Supporting Students Through Loss* - Kock	46. *Mission Ready: Supporting Military-Connected Students in Today's Schools* - Ray
Wills Hall 100			35. *Smarter Systems, Stronger Counseling: High School Roundtable* - Cavanaugh, Fricks & Nelson	47. *Retiring the Cape: Boundaries, Wellness, and Burnout Prevention for School Counselors* - Edwards, Knight & May
Wills Hall 200	12. *Tips and Tricks to Make the Lessons Stick - Individual, Small Group, and Whole Group Classroom Counseling* - Gilliland & Miller	24. *Learning Disabilities: Impact on Behaviors, Environmental Factors, and Strategies to Support Positive Behavior in the Classroom* - Bossie	36. *Seeing Beyond Behavior: Understanding Trauma in Students* - Packer	48. *I Got 99 Problems, But a Lesson Ain't One* - Crawford
Wills Hall 201	11. *The Girls Are Not Alright: What 17,502 Girls Say About Stress, Pressure, and School Connection* - Abernathy	23. *From Mascot to Mission: A Realistic System for Weekly Whole Group Counseling* - Hammons		

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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2026	
Center for the Arts – 7:30-2:00pm – Registration & Check-In	**Palmer Hall Lobby & Center for the Arts Lobby – 7:30am-2:00pm – Exhibit Tables**
Palmer Hall Auditorium – 8:30-8:45am – Welcome & Announcements / 12:15pm-12:45pm – Lunch & Announcements	
12:45-1:45pm – General Session: *The New Alabama School Counseling Model: From Framework to Practice* – Sean J. Stevens, ALSCA General Liaison	

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

LOCATION	9:00-10:30am	10:45am-12:15pm	2:00-3:30pm
Palmer Hall Auditorium	49. *Transitions That Matter: Supporting Students Returning From Specialized Treatment Centers* - M. Jones	60. *Building Alabama's Next Generation of School Counselors* - Stevens, Hampton & Stanton	71. *PowerSchool for School Counselors: Time-Saving Tools That Matter* - Tankersley
Carmichael Library EBSCO Room (ground floor)	50. *Soul Care - Prevention & Healing from Compassion Fatigue* - C. Smith		72. *Solution-Focused Counseling in School Settings: A Collaborative, Strength-Based Approach to Working with Students, Teachers, and Families* - Pearson
Carmichael Library J.A. Brown Room (top floor)	51. *From Adversity to Resilience: The Impact of ACEs, Neuroscience, and Attachment in School Counseling Practice* - Amberson	62. *From Communication to Collaboration: Counselor-Principal Partnerships That Work* - DeMent & Kidd	73. *Let Them Struggle (Safely): Growing Capable Students Through Challenge* - DeMent & Kidd
Davis Hall LeBaron Recital Hall	52. *Suicide and Non-suicidal Self-Injury in Youth: Update* - Wisely	63. *Suicide and Non-suicidal Self-Injury in Youth: Update* - Wisely	74. *Regulate, Relate, Respond: De-Escalation Through a Trauma-Informed Lens* - Rodgers & Stewart
Humanities Hall Auditorium	53. *Supporting At-Risk Students Through School-Based Threat Assessment and Intervention* - Fry, K. Smith & Stewart	64. *Vaping and Youth Drug Trends* - Allen	75. *BEYOND THE SCREEN: Understanding the Student in Front of You in an AI-Driven & Social Media-Driven World* - Bush
Humanities 208	54. *Calm, Confidence, and Canines: Facility Dogs and How They Impact School Success* - Limon, K. S. Jones & Myrex	65. *When Regulation Isn't Enough: Understanding Trauma Patterns and Creating Lasting Change in Students* - Reed	
Wills Hall G2	55. *Understanding Eating Disorders for School Professionals* - Abercrombie & Houston	66. *Supporting Students with Selective Mutism in School Settings* - Burke-Attebery	
Wills Hall 100	56. *Empowering Self-Regulation: Using the Zones of Regulation Curriculum to Support Student Social-Emotional Growth* - Pierson & Lewis	67. *Character Changes Everything: Empowering Counselors to Lead Lasting School Change* - Martin	76. *Character Changes Everything: Empowering Counselors to Lead Lasting School Change* - Martin
Wills Hall 120	57. *Supporting Growth While Holding Standards: Ethical Supervision of School Counseling Interns* - Babel & Hughes	68. *Individual Protective Factors That Promote Academic Resilience: The Lens of Middle School Students From Urban Settings* - W. Heard	
Wills Hall 200	58. *School Level Consideration for Processing Grief: Targeted for Educators* - Hawthorne & Whetstone	69. *When Grief Comes to School* - Z. Heard & Rodgers	
Wills Hall 201	59. *Anxiety and Depression: Opposites Attract* - Johnson	*70. Tools and Strategies to Support: From Unpacking Trauma to Providing Resources* - Hinton, Mack & Olive	

Diamond + Platinum Exhibitors

peerhelpers PLUS
A ThriveWay Program

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