

## Counselor's Corner

twilliford@bethanyschools.com

**"What do you want to be when you grow up?"**

Ah, the question that educators have been asking students for decades is now more important than ever. The need to begin career exploration with children in early elementary has become crucial as college has become ever more expensive and more competitive and as vocational and technical careers have suffered a shortage of professionals in recent years. Middle schoolers should at least have a short list of careers that interest them so that they can begin the process of learning what training is required for that job, how much they might expect to earn from that job, and if that job truly matches with their interests and abilities. The process of exploring interests and abilities is something that we started in last week's FLEX lesson, but the most valuable career education comes from YOU. Children learn about jobs by listening to you talk about your job; they increase their self-awareness by having conversations with you about what you think they're good at; and they multiply their knowledge of what jobs exist by having ongoing conversations about the jobs of family members and acquaintances. Make it a point to start having regular conversations with your middle schooler about what he wants to be when he grows up. Encourage her to ask questions about future career choices. Let's help our kids navigate the world of careers with confidence and knowledge.