**Overview of the Early Childhood and Primary K-1 School Counseling Program**

* The School Counseling Program is comprehensive in nature – striving to meet the needs of ALL students through their academic, personal/social, and career development.
* The School Counseling Program is proactive and preventative – helping students develop critical skills to achieve academic, social, and behavioral success.
* The School Counseling Program assists and supports students in becoming life-long learners, honorable leaders, and productive citizens.

**What services does a School Counselor provide?**

* **Individual Counseling:** The School Counselor may provide individual counseling for students who are having difficulties dealing with emotions, relationships (both at school and at home), academic/developmental tasks, etc. and need more one-on-one help.
* Counseling in the school setting is intended to be short-term to help students identify specific problems/feelings, causes, coping skills, and develop goals to take appropriate action. Those students who are involved in individual counseling are seen at least once a week or more often, depending on the need of the student, for approximately 6 to 8 weeks.
* School Counselors are NOT able to provide clinical counseling services in the school setting.
* **Small Group Counseling:** We provide small group counseling for students who may benefit from lessons in the areas of: anger management, impulsivity, self-esteem, friendship and/or social skills, and students needing support due to deployed family members.
* Group Counseling is intended to be short-term. Small groups will meet around 6 – 8 times, once a week, for a 20 – 35 minute duration.
* **Classroom Counseling Lessons:** School Counselors provide detailed counseling lessons in our weekly Guidance Class time. The lessons cover the areas of academic development, personal/social development, and career development. Our K-1 learning targets for the year are listed on the website.
* **Consultations:**  We consult with teachers, administration, staff, parents/guardians, and community agencies regarding strategies to better help students achieve success in all areas of their life, more specifically in the areas of academics, personal/social growth, and emotional/behavioral development. We serve as an advocate for the student in all consultation situations.
* **Resource/Referral:** We provide resources to students, teachers, and parents/guardians on how to better help and equip their student/child in various situations and settings. We also act as a referral agent. We provide referral sources to students and parents/guardians on dealing with suicidal ideations, violence, abuse, mental health issues, and family difficulties.
* Referral sources can be mental health agencies and/or community services.
* We are mandated reporters and we are obligated to report any suspicion of child abuse and neglect cases.

**What else does a School Counselor do?**

* Bus issues: Any concerns about our K -1 students regarding their bus transportation and any conflicts or behavior concerns.
* Professional Development: We are always striving to be better at our jobs and to stay current on best practices for serving and supporting our students. We try to stay actively involved in organizations that support our profession (American School Counselor Association, Missouri School Counselor’s Association) by attending conferences, in-district trainings, and regular council meetings.
* Collaboration on Teams: We are contributing members to teams such as:
* SUCCESS Team Facilitators
* RTI Team
* PBIS Team Coaches
* At-Risk Team
* Bright Futures Council
* Backpack Program
* Crisis Team
* Additional Roles and Responsibilities:
* Security drills
* Attendance Letters and Truancy Reports
* Parent Contact on food account balances

**How does a student see the School Counselor?**

* Students can see the School Counselor through any of the following ways:
	+ Administrative Referral
	+ Referral by a friend
	+ Request by the School Counselor
	+ Teacher/Student referral
	+ Parent referral
	+ Student self-referral

**Confidentiality**

* School Counselors develop confidential relationships with students, parents/guardians, and staff. This means that information gathered through meetings with students and parents/guardians will be shared on a strictly “need-to-know” basis only.
* We work to maintain the privacy of students and their families. When information needs to be shared, we assess who needs to know and what information needs to be known to best help students and their families.
* We tell students that, “What you say in here, stays in here. Except if harm is happening and we need to share what you tell us for safety reasons.”