



SCHOOL COUNSELOR CONNECTION

PARENT NEWSLETTER ✦ 2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR

Your School Counselor at George G. Blaisdell Elementary School is:

Melissa Olearchick, M.Ed. Grades PreK-2nd

I welcome your input & I am available to you at:

George G. Blaisdell Elementary School

(814) 362-6834



Mission Statement:

The mission of the George G. Blaisdell Elementary School's professional school counseling program is to provide a comprehensive, developmental counseling program that is aligned with the professional and ethical ACA and ASCA standards and addresses the academic, career, and personal / social development of every student through a partnership with school personnel, families, and community resources to provide every student opportunities to become lifelong learners and productive citizens of a global society.

Vision Statement:

The George G. Blaisdell Elementary School Counseling Program supports every student acquiring the academic, career, and personal/social skills to reach their fullest educational potential and successfully manage their lives as healthy, responsible, productive citizens who respect themselves and others; making a positive difference in our school and community.

Role of a School Counselor:

"School Counselors help students focus on academic, career, and social / emotional development so they can achieve success in school and are prepared to lead fulfilling lives as responsible members of society." –American School Counselor Association

Special Activities:

The School Counselor will sponsor and assist with a number of special activities, which promote positive mental health. Some programs include True Colors Week, School-Wide Positive Behavior Support Program, The Great Kindness Challenge, Character Education Program, National School Counseling Week, National Specialized Instructional Support Personnel Week, Olweus Bullying Prevention, Career Awareness Program, Parent Meet and Greet Night, Reading Under The Lights, Project Bundle Up, etc.

School Counselor Web Page:

Do you have resources you would like me to add to my *Resource Information Section* on my web page? Please let me know and I may add them to my web page. I am always looking to keep updated information that is helpful on my site. Please check out the School Counselor web page to find out the latest information on what students are learning in counseling lessons, lesson topics per month, school counseling standards, school counseling programs, and activities by going to the following School Counselor web address:

<https://molearchick.wixsite.com/mysite> Parents, please talk with your child about what they are learning in counseling lessons. Thank you!

Program Information:

Counseling Lessons:

Counseling Lessons will be offered throughout the entire school year for Pre-K—2nd Grades. Students are learning about different topics: social skills, manners, respect, anger management skills, character education traits, friendship skills, safety skills, strangers, trusting adults, bullying awareness, career awareness, problem-solving skills, stop-calm down-think-go model, "I—Messages," Kelso the Frog choices, and so forth. All grades are learning about mindfulness and how to practice mindfulness. Students will participate in a Mindfulness Project by drawing a picture of what he/she can do to show mindfulness. Drawings are displayed on the bulletin boards by the library for everyone to see. Students are doing a great job!



Online Counseling Lessons:

Online Counseling Lessons will be available through our district's CANVAS. In August, online learning students will start with Mindfulness and Anxiety Reduction lessons. A Completion Challenge is provided for students to show their participation in each session. I hope students enjoy each session and learn relaxation techniques. I look forward to seeing what students have done during each session.

Individual Counseling Sessions:

Parent permission is required for short-term individual counseling. Anyone may refer a student for an individual session by notifying the counselor. Please speak with me about the referral and to obtain a permission slip for your child to take home for the parent/guardian to sign. Once permission slips are signed and returned by the parent to the school, I will schedule the counseling session with the teacher. I usually meet a student for individual counseling once a week; lasting 20 minutes for approximately 6 to 8 sessions. If this may be a need, please contact Ms. Melissa Olearchick, School Counselor, to refer your child.



Small Counseling Groups:

Different group topics will be held throughout the school year. Group times and duration vary dependent upon topic and age of student. I will work with teachers in efforts to select the most convenient meeting times. When a small group is offered, information and a parent permission slip is sent home. Possible group topics include:

- Cool Heads (Anger Management)
- Grief and Loss (Death of Loved One)
- Family Changes (Students with Divorced Parents)
- Friendship Circle (Friendship Skills)
- Social Buddies (Social Skills)
- Mindfulness (Anxiety Reduction)



National School Counseling Week—February 2021:



National School Counseling Week will be celebrated in February 1—5, 2021 to focus public attention on the unique contribution of school counselors within U.S. school systems. This school year, the theme is "School Counselors: All In For All Students." National School Counseling Week, sponsored by ASCA American School Counselor Association, highlights the tremendous impact school counselors can have in helping students achieve school success and plan for a career. National School Counseling Week is always celebrated the first full week in February.

National Specialized Instructional Support Personnel Appreciation Week— November 2020:

<http://www.NASISP.org>

SISP stands for "specialized instructional support personnel." That term replaced "pupil services" when the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) was enacted and is the same group of people still known in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) as "related services."

SISP include school counselors, psychologists, and social workers, school nurses, occupational and physical therapists, speech-language pathologists and audiologists, and creative arts therapists (art, dance, and music). The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) at the U.S. Department of Education has long held that any other "related services personnel" not specifically mentioned in the IDEA but whose services are deemed necessary by a student's IEP team will be considered "related services" or SISP.

Representative Dave Loebsack (D-IA) has introduced a resolution in Congress to recognize the extraordinary work and contributions of these professionals. NASISP is working with all members of Congress to ensure adequate funding is available for ESSA and IDEA to ensure SISP are available in all schools to support all students.

School-Wide Positive Behavior Support Program:

We celebrate our **FOUR EXPECTATIONS: Be Safe, Be Nice, Be Respectful, Be Responsible.**

Each week, teachers implement COOL TOOLS lessons to their class about our Four Expectations and Leader In Me Habits. In May, we have a True Colors Week and The Great Kindness Challenge to celebrate the FOUR EXPECTATIONS and Character Education Traits.



Auto-B-Good Character Education Program:

"Auto-B-Good is the Emmy Award winning animated series that teaches great lessons in character development to children ages 4--10." <http://www.autobgood.com/home.html>

Throughout the school year at George G. Blaisdell Elementary School, the Character Education Program will encourage students to show the Character Education Trait based on a car theme. The Character Education Traits are listed below. The School Counselor will facilitate counseling lessons based on the Auto-B-Good Character Education program.

Character Education Traits:

Courage
Honesty
Sportsmanship
Kindness
Respect
Fairness
Citizenship
Responsibility
Perseverance



Career Awareness Program:

During the first week of each month, a different career, skill, and job is spot-lighted and celebrated. Students are provided career awareness coloring sheets to complete about each career. The following is a list of careers, skills, and jobs we will learn about each month:

September—Interests / "What do you like to do?"

October—Interests / "What do you like to do?" / All About Me!

October—Farmer, Veterinarian, Pet Groomer, Horse Trainer, Zoo Keeper

December—Carpenter, Architect, Construction Worker, Truck Driver, Plumber

January—Police Officer, Probation Officer, Social Worker, Firefighter

February—President, Lawyer, Mayor, Judge, Court Reporter, Paralegals, Legal Assistants

March—Dentist, Dental Hygienist, Nurse, Doctor, Paramedic, Surgeon, Speech-Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, Laboratory Technologist, Pharmacist

April—Biological Scientist, Food Scientist, Medical Scientist, Atmospheric Scientist, Chemist

May—Teacher, Teacher Assistant, Librarian, Author

Every month teachers are given a career awareness sheets to copy for their class. Students are encouraged to color the career awareness sheets and take them home to share with their parents/caregivers. Please ask your child what careers, skills, and jobs he/she is learning about at school.



Career Development Goal: In May 2021, second graders will complete a “spark” awareness sheet by writing what they are interested in doing and drawing a picture about it during a counseling lesson. All second grade classes will try to achieve above 80% and pass this goal for the Chapter 339 School Counseling Plan.

Personal / Social Development Goal:

Second grade students will learn about the nine Kelso Frog Choices of how to solve their small problems on their own. The goal is for 80% of the post-survey results of Second Grade students within all Second Grade classrooms will use Kelso problem-solving choice(s) to solve their small problems on their own as determined by students' verbal or written post-survey questionnaire responses. Students will complete a pre- and post-survey. This goal is part of the Chapter 339 School Counseling Plan.



Student Survey Schedule:
January 18—22, 2021: Pre-Survey
February 1—5, 2021: Post-Survey

