



Greetings,

I am Ms. Horstkamp, and I'm so excited to begin the 2023-2024 school year serving the students, staff and families of Baden Elementary School as your Professional School Counselor. The School Counseling program at Baden Elementary will be a combination of virtual and in-person services. It is a data driven program with a focus on enhancing the academic, career and personal/social areas of children's development. At the beginning of the year and throughout the school year, needs assessments are used to collect data, which drives the comprehensive School Counseling program. Listed below are a few things the program consists of:

Classroom Counseling is when I go into classrooms and teach various lessons about different life skills. The guidance curriculum for classes includes an emphasis on college/career readiness, bullying prevention, character development, and problem solving skills, with a focus on Sanford Harmony's Social Emotional Learning Curriculum and Quaver Ready Curriculum. This school year all grades will also be completing the Safer, Smarter Kids Curriculum which focuses on abuse prevention and personal safety for students. You can find the introductory parent letters [here](#). Please reach out to me if you have any questions regarding this curriculum. All lessons will occur bi-weekly for 40 minutes.

Individual Counseling in school is brief, solution focused counseling. Individual counseling will be available to students who currently attend Baden Elementary school. During counseling, I implement a variety of counseling approaches in order to meet students' unique needs. Please keep in mind that individual counseling in school is not long term, mental health counseling/therapy. If the student is in need of additional mental health services, referrals and suggestions can be made. Individual counseling can begin at any time during the year, as needs arise and students are referred. Individual counseling will occur between the school counselor and the student in-person. Counseling sessions will be confidential and a parent must give verbal or written consent for their child to participate prior to the start of counseling. Referrals can be made [here](#) (Spanish Form: [Here](#))!

Information shared with the School Counselor will remain confidential unless a student reports (a) *hurting self*, (b) *hurting others*, (c) *someone has hurt them* or (d) *the student gives me permission to share*. Confidentiality is the hallmark of the counselor-student relationship and will not be broken unless the aforementioned exceptions are determined.

Group Counseling and Committees are a part of the comprehensive professional school counseling program. Throughout the school year, I will be working to develop various groups depending on the needs of the students. These can focus on topics such as academic skills, self-esteem, mental health support, social skills, anger management, etc. My hope is to also create committees that are dedicated to building community within the school and spreading awareness to important topics such as kindness, anti-bullying, and environmental issues. As these groups are developed, I will reach out to students, faculty, and parents. Additionally, I participate in various in-school committees which help to develop a positive school climate and an environment where students feel accepted and a strong sense of belonging. These staff committees include: Positive Behavioral Interventions Program (PBIS), Student Government Association (SGA), Family and Student Engagement, and Generating Outstanding Leadership Development (GOLD).

I look forward to working with the students, staff, and families of Baden this school year and helping every student develop strong character traits, life skills, and positive relationships in order to live successfully in a diverse world. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to me through email: margaret.horstkamp@pgcps.org or calling the main office at 301-888-1188.

Sincerely,

Ms. Margaret Horstkamp, M. Ed.

Margaret Horstkamp