**SCHOOL GUIDANCE COUNSELING PROGRAM What is an elementary school counselor?**

* A certified, specially trained professional educator who has a minimum of a Masters Degree in School Counseling or the equivalent
* A special friend when a child needs someone to listen
* An advocate for students
* A caring person who provides help and guidance to teachers, parents, students, and administrators
* Someone who counsels with students both individually and in groups
* A teacher of social-emotional learning curriculum

**What does an elementary school counselor do?**

* Offers student body a wide range of school counseling services that are developmentally appropriate for each grade level, and are generally preventative in nature
* Conducts a comprehensive and developmentally appropriate guidance and counseling program (based on the American School Counseling Associations National Model)
* Collaborates with staff to support students
* Utilizes referral services and helps families and students to access community resources
* Conducts parent and teacher conferences
* Provides guidance lessons to each class, works with identified groups of children with specific needs
* Provides brief individual counseling to:
  + help students develop effective communication skills
  + help students develop positive interpersonal relationship skills
  + help students set positive goals, exercise responsibility and improve academic success
  + help provide support during a crisis

**A child may see the counselor for:**

* Any social-emotional problems that they may be experiencing that are impacting the student’s academic performance and functioning at school
* Ongoing social difficulties/conflicts
* Divorce or changing family issues
* A loss of a family member or close friend
* Decision-making and problem-solving skills
* Improvement and aid in the development of positive self-esteem
* Family concerns or fears
* Developing and increasing social, self-regulation and organizational skills as it relates to functioning at school
* Review and discussion of academic needs and concerns
* Individual counseling at school is short-term in nature and should a student need long term, on-going therapy, a referral can be made to an outside mental health provider. Individual counseling referrals for students can be made through the request of a student, parent or teacher.