



River Bend Elementary School

Placement Description

Rockingham County Elementary School placement that offers practical foundational experience working with students.

Field Placement Responsibilities/Opportunities

- One-on-one mentoring with 4-8 students (ages 5-12)
- Group counseling experiences (with counselor)
- Consultation with parents and teachers
- Classroom instruction assistance (Guidance Classes PK-5)
- Student Study, ASSIST, and other team service coordination meetings

Contact Information

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Read about students' experiences at this site below:



Fall 2018 – Ocianna Gregg

The mission within my site is project based learning, safety, mental health and consistency within the school to help the traumatic kids within this placement site. Services within the school deal with supporting students and families as they navigate through Pre-K to fifth grade on helpful problem solutions in regards to their attendance, physical mental health, and ensuring they feel safe within the school system here at River Bend Elementary School. We ensure we meet with small groups of children who have similar concerns. When students hear others talk about feelings or handling problems, they get ideas that they can use for themselves and that is very important for self-regulation. Group topics include making friends, adjusting to new school settings, study skills, stress management and safety skills. We follow a cardinal creed of the school which states “we are safe, we are kind, we are responsible” because not only do we need to take responsibility for our actions but to ensure the kids learn from each other on better live and school skills as well. As I see it, it’s better safe than sorry when teaching important information to students. This month we presented a program on safety for each grade. In kindergarten and first grade we watched a “stop, get away, get an adult” video in regards to teach kids strategies on dealing with strangers, drugs, guns, and knife safety. As well as what to do when you are home alone and when to ask for help. Mrs. Muraskin also meets with teachers and parents to plan for students, and discuss helpful strategies for problems, and to review progress for students who have red flags presented within classrooms.

What I have been able to do at this site is sit in on sessions with kids who have issues within the school and watch how Mrs. Muraskin deals with the situations accordingly. I have been able to sit in and help with lesson plans, where we teach children in the library on important lessons for each week. I have been able to see three SPED students every visit I have at River Bend. I sit with the SPED kids and help them with word plays, spelling, and reading within the 45 min meetings they have with SPED teacher Ms. Jenkins. I also have been able to participate inside Kindergarten classrooms and spend some time with kids in the classroom and their activities. Lastly, I have been able to see three students early in the mornings with a speech teacher, and we go over how to communicate efficiently with our friends and family on a daily basis. The only downside I have experienced is realizing my comfortability with actually teaching lesson plans on my own. I was not ready to do that type of experience within this being my first time experiencing a counseling placement. I did teach at least three times and finally realized I needed to speak with my supervisor about what would be best for me in order to feel more comfortable with helping at River Bend. Mrs. Muraskin is extremely open-minded and considerate, therefore, she was open to giving me other experiences that I could enjoy. I liked being able to have smaller classroom settings with students in a manner where I am able to spend more individual time with them. It is much easier for me to give attention to three students than to a whole classroom since I have not had prior experience to working in an elementary school.

Impressions with being at this placement are good. I enjoy kids, so if you are someone who looks forward to being in a school setting, surrounded with kids and all that comes with that you will surely enjoy coming to River Bend. I liked being able to do things everyday with Mrs. Muraskin, whether it be lessons, sessions with kids, activities or sitting in on important matters. Getting any experience I can to shadow and learn what it is about being a school counselor in an elementary school setting is perfect to me. Advantages are that you are able to provide mental



health and educational support services to help students throughout their school time. You are able to help kids with personal problems hands on and assisting parents/staff with understanding on the resolving issues. It is a meaningful job for sure. You help students overcome obstacles to learning and assisting them developmentally, socially and meaningfully. You build relationships with student's everyday while in this setting. You are able to help kids reach their full potential and in doing so you get to watch them succeed throughout your time with them.

Disadvantages for school counseling would be that it can sometimes be overwhelming. You have to deal with an erratic schedule. While most counselors offer services on a regular hourly schedule, you will have to be able to handle emergency instances and when schedules change due to field trips, child behavior and other teaching that may go on during the time you have something planned. You also may experience emotional tolls as well within this setting. I know that with being new to this whole experience, sitting in on sessions with kids, I would leave the school feeling emotional and very empathetic for children who deal with very hard home lives or mental health issues. You are required to listen to people's emotional problems day in and day out, the work may take a toll on your own mental state.

What I have been able to learn at this site is just about human interaction, and how important it is to really focus on your own mental health so that you are able to productively help others in need. I also learned that in part of being a school counselor you are able to teach lessons to students and give you more interaction with classroom settings. Being in this setting has really helped me on figuring out my career path. I have realized I may not be the best at school counseling in an elementary school setting but possibly open my opportunities to be with college or high school. I have learned more about myself by being able to participate with children and Mrs. Muraskin on how I deal with issues in my own life and how I am able to help students through their issues as well.