

School Counseling Monthly Newsletter  
Sept. 2023



# Twin Ridge Elementary

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## Meet the Counselors

Hello TRES families! We are Mrs. Engler, Mrs. Esworthy and Mrs. Little - your school counseling team! Mrs. Engler has been a school counselor at TRES for over 18 years. This is Mrs. Esworthy's 3<sup>rd</sup> year at TRES and her 5<sup>th</sup> year in FCPS. Mrs. Little has been a school counselor for over 13 years, and we are so excited to have her join us from Howard County Public Schools. As your school counseling department, we take a team approach in working with our students. We will be teaching monthly classroom lessons, and will rotate which one of us visits your child's class, so that all students know who we are.

## What Do School Counselors Do?

This is a common question, because school counselors have many different roles and responsibilities. Unlike in many schools, we do not have grade-specific caseloads. We are here to support all students in our building. Here are a few of the main jobs that we do at Twin Ridge.

- **Individual Counseling:** If your child needs support while at school, we can offer short-term counseling. This is different than long-term therapy that outside practitioners can provide. For example, we can help your child problem-solve through challenges that may come up during the school day or to talk about things that may be weighing heavily on their minds and making it hard to learn. Our goal is to help students work through their feelings, provide strategies, and return to learning. Families and staff can request that we talk with a child for a variety of reasons, i.e. if they're having a tough time, need to talk about a problem, or need help learning social or emotional skills.
- **Small Group Counseling:** We run small groups focusing on topics such as social skills or friendship, emotions, family changes and study skills. Groups meet weekly and run for about 8 weeks, generally during lunch. Invitations go home ahead of time with information about the group. If you are interested in having your child participate in a small group, please let us know!
- **Classroom Lessons:** We love visiting your child's class! One of the greatest perks of being a school counselor is that we get to visit all classrooms. This helps us get to know your child, as well as classroom dynamics. We teach topics such as bullying prevention and problem solving, empathy, diversity and teamwork.
- **504 Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator:** You may hear from us or see us around the building in one of these roles.
- **Coordinator of 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Jobs (Student Ambassadors, Mentors, Announcements and Panda Pride Crew):** We work with students to get them involved in a variety of different ways.
- **Running Panda Pride Assemblies and Student of the Month Bingo Games:** Your child will participate in monthly Panda Pride assemblies where students are recognized for exemplary behavior and hard work. As students earn Panda Paws for their choices and hard work in school throughout the month, they drop the Panda Paws in a box in the cafeteria. Then, 15 students/grade are chosen each month to receive a Panda Pride award. They will receive a prize, such as a panda keychain. From those 15 students per grade level, 2 students are then chosen to be Students of the Month. They are selected based on character, choices, attendance and effort in school. These students then will visit the counseling office the following week, to play a game of Bingo for more prizes! The dates for each are below. Dates are subject to change, if needed.

Panda Pride Dates	Bingo Game Dates
Friday 10/6	Tuesday 10/10
Friday 11/3	Thursday 11/9
Friday 12/1	Thursday 12/7
Friday 1/12	Thursday 1/18
Friday 2/2	Thursday 2/8
Friday 3/8	Thursday 3/14
Friday 4/12	Thursday 4/18
Friday 5/3	Thursday 5/9

- **Duties:** Students see us around the building at Car Riders, the Bus Doors and in the cafeteria. Although it is a small part of our jobs, because we are consistently in those places, it is often where we build relationships with students.

This is just a snapshot of the many things that we do at Twin Ridge. We are both looking forward to supporting your child in his/her learning this year!

## Looking Ahead

September lessons will focus on the role of the school counselor and how the counselors can support students on a daily basis. Individual and small group check-ins, lessons and interventions will be provided to students to best support their social and emotional needs and development.

## We want to hear from you!

Communication from parents and guardians about concerns or struggles that the student or family may be experiencing allows us to best tend to individual student needs and provide support at school. **#Together**