

School Counseling Monthly Newsletter
December 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 3rd year at TRES and her 5th 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 teach monthly classroom lessons, and rotate which one of us visits your child's class, so that all students know who we are.



Go Team Therapy Dogs

We are excited for the opportunity to invite Go Team Therapy Dogs to Twin Ridge. The dogs will be in our school a few times this school year, for about an hour. Students in Learning for Life and other individual and small groups of students will be offered the opportunity to meet with the therapy dogs. However, we understand that some families may not want their child to participate.

Please complete the following form if you would NOT like your child to participate in our Therapy Dogs experience: [Go Team Therapy Dogs Opt-Out Form](#).

Classroom Lessons

Each month, one of the school counselors will visit your child's class for a half hour lesson. The counseling team's fall lessons included:

- **November Lessons-** Lessons focused on gratitude. Students decorated a paper leaf sharing things for which they are grateful. Students learned about how gratitude is good for our emotional and physical health, as well as ways to show gratitude to others. Student leaves are on display on a gratitude tree in the cafeteria for all to enjoy.
- **December Lessons -** Lessons will focus on culture and diversity. More information about these lessons will be shared in our January newsletter.



Small Groups

Our team runs small groups throughout the school year. We run groups focusing on emotions, social skills and problem solving. Please reach out if you are interested in having your child participate in a group and we will let you know about group availability for your child's grade level.

Panda Pride Assemblies

Dates for assemblies, Bingo games and J&P Nights are below:

Panda Pride Dates	Bingo Game Dates	J&P Nights
Friday 12/1	Thursday 12/7	Thursday 11/30
Friday 1/12	Thursday 1/18	Thursday 1/11
Friday 2/2	Thursday 2/8	Thursday 2/1
Friday 3/8	Thursday 3/14	Thursday 3/7
Friday 4/12	Thursday 4/18	Thursday 4/11
Friday 5/3	Thursday 5/9	Thursday 5/2

Helping Children with their Feelings

Your child's classroom teacher is teaching PATHS lessons, and a major component of these lessons is learning to recognize and name different feelings. All feelings are okay and normal, and when children have a larger vocabulary of feeling words, they can more easily identify how they feel in different situations and can express themselves appropriately, i.e. "I feel annoyed" versus yelling or losing control. Children can learn to differentiate between smaller problems (Small Mouse Problems) which should elicit smaller emotions, such as feeling frustrated or irritable, in comparison with bigger problems (Big Elephant Problems) that could elicit larger emotions such as feeling angry or furious. Labeling smaller problems with smaller emotions can help them put their problems into perspective. Practice this when your child is calm ("You look calm right now") as well as when he/she is experiencing uncomfortable emotions ("It looks like you are having a problem figuring that out, and you seem frustrated. What can I do to help?"). Alternatively, if your child is quick to anger, *after* your child has calmed down, talk with them about the feelings they had and how to handle that feeling in the future.

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**