

## **Professional Statement**

*As an elementary guidance counselor, it is my mission to be an objective, effective, unbiased, school counselor that effectively guides students towards self-awareness, self-advocacy, enhance the development of social and emotional skills while advocating the counseling field , upholding ethical standards and committing myself to lifelong learning so that I can continue to develop and hone techniques within the profession.*

### **Contact Information at Elmwood:**

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### **General Guidance Information:**

The theme we are developing this year for our guidance program is the: **"Nature Knows"** character development program, or, "COTM" (character of the month). For this school year, the character words of the month words are as follows:

**N-** Nurturing Ourselves (September)

**A-** Attitude of Gratitude (October)

**T-** Trustworthy (November)

**U-** Understanding self and others (seeing it from another's perspective) (December)

**R-** Relationships (January)

**E-** Emotions Emotions in Motion (February)

**K**- Kind-hearted and Knowledgeable (March)

**N**- Noble (April)

**O**- Opportunity to be Optimistic (May)

**W**-Welcoming, Wise and Warm (June)

**S**- Selfless (June)

We can and do learn from nature, being in nature, working with nature or being in an outdoor setting. Nature has the power to help children socially and emotionally.

Research about the effects that nature has on children show the following factors:

- Nature doesn't judge-- it just IS
- Nature instills a sense of wonder and beauty and calmness
- Nature is ALIVE. We are ALIVE too. (But sometimes when we spend all day indoors these concepts are easy to forget.)
- Nature repairs itself as best it can
- Nature can allow people to "remember" that there is a whole other world out there
- We all need to take time and UNplug from TV, and fast-pace of the digital world

Credit: <https://www.naeyc.org>

It is my hope that by the end of the school year our students will have the basic ability to recognize when their emotions and/or behaviors are not in-check--and/or with some prompting from adults-- and remember some key go-to coping skills to help them process and deal with what they are feeling in a constructive manner.

During the school day, I am available to students on an individual basis and for group play therapy. With individual counseling sessions, we work together to try and discover what the underlying concern(s) may be and work towards a solution-focused goal to quickly resolve the situation. At times there is a need to refer or consult with outside therapists. During play therapy, topics may range from developing more appropriate peer-to-peer interactions, recognizing one's anger "buttons", and covering what it means to feel grief (from losses such as divorce, absent parent relationships, death, etc.) where we work in small groups of 4-5 students on proper social interaction.