



Lacey Spring Elementary School

Placement Description

Public elementary school in the Rockingham County School district that offers practical foundational experience working with students ages 4-11.

Intern or Field Placement Responsibilities/Opportunities

- One-on-one activities with students
- Possible group counseling
- Meetings with parents and teachers
- Teaching academic, social/ emotional, and career concepts to large groups of students

Contact Information

- Contact Person: Katie Greene, School Counselor
- Address: 8621 N. Valley Pike, Harrisonburg, VA 22802
- Telephone: (540) 433-7819
- Email Address: kgreene@rockingham.k12.va.us
- Website: <http://lses.rockingham.k12.va.us/>

Read about students' experiences at this site below:



Spring 2018 – Margaret Wallace

Lacey Spring Elementary School strives to provide children with a supportive environment to allow students to access their full academic potential. The faculty and staff promote learning throughout the school and support child growth developmentally, socially and academically. Furthermore, teachers and staff work to promote students' self confidence and the opportunity to develop their unique skills and talents. Additionally, they expose the children to technological tools to advance their learning and prepare them for the technological future that lies ahead of them. Lastly, and what I believe to be their greatest philosophy, they work to emphasize that learning is lifelong and instill the skills of 'learning how to learn' in their students. It is extremely clear to see the passion held by each staff member for these students and their well-being.

During my time at Lacey Spring I had the privilege of working with the school counselor, Ms. Katie Greene. I was allocated the responsibility of mentoring 5 children in all different grade levels. Every day that I was at my site I met with one of my students for typically a 30 minute period. During these sessions we would usually play a game or draw pictures. This allowed students to have a time where they could express themselves and discuss with me any difficulties they may be having at the time. We often discussed conflicts with peers and ways to resolve them, struggles at home and coping strategies. Along with mentoring, I was able to assist Ms. Greene in teaching the 6 pillars of character education: respect, caring, responsibility, trustworthiness, fairness, and citizenship, to all of her classes. Towards the end of the semester I was able to create a lesson plan and teach my own class; this was an amazing learning experience for me! A lot of our day was filled with checking in on classrooms and assisting teachers with whatever they needed, and just being an extra set of hands in the classroom. Additionally myself and other practicum students were also asked to complete various tasks like creating lesson plans, researching ideas, creating bulletin boards and printing off various items like posters or worksheets. Often, these posters included things like bullying, mindfulness education, emotional management strategies etc. I learned so much not only from Ms. Greene but also from observing the other teachers as well. I spent a lot of time in the pre-k and kindergarten classes, and learned so much from the ways they interacted with their children and incorporated play and movement into their curriculum. Overall, as practicum students, we had quite a bit of flexibility in the areas we wanted to focus on. Whether it was observing certain grade level classrooms, working with special-ed, or researching topics of interest to implement in the school, Katie really supported us and worked really hard for us to be able to get all that we could out of our experience there.

Working at Lacey Spring was my first exposure in working in an academic setting. I learned a lot about the day to day duties of a school counselor and what it actually looks like in real life. The average day is much more fluid than I imagined; there really isn't an "average day". I never knew what I may encounter when walking through those doors, whether it was entertaining a group of kids when a teacher had to step out, or assisting an individual child in need. Furthermore, with permission granted from the child, I was able to observe Ms. Greene's interactions with students during difficulties like peer-to-peer conflicts, anger management, coping with trauma and home life troubles. It was so helpful to see Ms. Greene's responses to sensitive cases like these. I learned a lot from observing her counseling techniques and strategies.



The biggest challenge I encountered at the site was the emotional challenges that came with it. In the beginning I was a bit surprised and overwhelmed by the amount of trauma some of these children had gone through. However, as hard as this may be it was such a huge learning experience for me. I was able to better understand the various backgrounds children come from and how that can affect their behavior. Overall, I have such positive impressions on the site as a whole. The faculty and staff are great, my supervisor was fantastic, and I really enjoy the way things are run. I think the only limitation the site may have is the fact that the student population is not particularly diverse. This could be a factor for some practicum students to consider because it is so helpful to learn about and interact with other cultures.

Overall, I feel that the site not only gave me a great vision for what it would look like to be a school counselor, but it also opened up my eyes to many other related careers. Ms. Greene always took the time to explain roles and responsibilities of the people she worked with, for example, Therapeutic Day Treatment Specialists, School Psychologists, Behavioral Specialists, Social Workers and many others. It was so helpful to hear about what these positions do in an academic environment and how they interact with a school counselor.

I chose this site as a way to explore the field of school counseling to determine if that was the path for me, and though I am not sure it is for me, I gained so much knowledge and skills that I know will be useful for me in a related field. In terms of my career I am unsure if a school counselor is the right choice for me, however, regardless of the career path I choose, I know I will use the skills I gained from this experience. More than likely I will be working with children for a large chunk of my career, and I believe this experience has prepared me for that.

Spring 2018 – Rachel Biggs

Lacey Spring Elementary focuses on the idea that education does not just involve the student, but the parents, staff, and the Rockingham County community. They believe that every child should be looked at as an individual, and treated as such. The school promises to promote a high quality program that provides students with the opportunities and instruction to help them be successful in the future. The school works with students' ages ranging from Pre-K through fifth. In comparison with various elementary schools around the county, Lacey Spring holds a very small population of students which helps to bring about a more personal environment for both the staff and students.

Throughout my experience at Lacey Spring Elementary, I was able to see just how important a part a school counselor plays in the lives of students. I was paired up with five students who all are currently struggling with various personal or academic struggles. These students consisted of one in Pre-K, one first grader, two second graders, and one fifth grader. I was able to spend one on one time with each of the students at least once a week, helping them in the various areas of life that they may be struggling with. In addition, I was able to assist my mentor in her classes every week, as well as prepare and conduct my own lesson. The school counseling curriculum focuses on character education, traits such as Respect, Citizenship, Trustworthiness, etc. Finally, I was able to perform various activities such as creating bulletin boards and working on activities that all focused on the specific area of character education that my mentor was teaching at the time.



When describing my overall experience at Lacey Spring Elementary, I have nothing but positive things to say. My mentor, Katie Greene, the current school counselor at the school, provided me with such an incredible experience. She made sure that I always felt comfortable before introducing me to a new project, and was always ready to answer any questions that I had about not only the school counseling profession, but my future academic plans as well. Just as I do, the students at Lacey look at Katie with such admiration and comfort, for they know that she is always there when they need her. I believe the best part of my experience was getting to know not only the students and Katie, but the staff as well. The whole school welcomed me with open arms, and I could not have asked for a better field placement site.

The main lesson that I feel I have learned from my experience while at Lacey Spring is just how big of a part educators play in children's lives. These students spend nearly all of their time at school, interacting with the staff on an individual basis. The impact that I have seen throughout my time at Lacey Spring has provided me with a great deal of knowledge that I hope to use as an educator someday as well. My observations and experiences have greatly influenced both the career and personal goals that I hope to achieve in the future.

Overall, my field placement experience could not have been better. I am confident in that this school would provide a great amount of knowledge and opportunity for any student who is interested in getting involved within the education system. I believe that Lacey Spring in particular was able to give me an insight into just how living in a lower socioeconomic level community is able to effect children. I was in awe of how resilient the children at Lacey Spring remained despite the many stressors that they had going on at home. I am hopeful that through their interactions with the wonderful Lacey Spring educators, they will overcome whatever struggles that they are dealing with.

Fall 2017 – Courtney Hevener

Lacey Spring Elementary School's mission is to ultimately provide students with a nurturing and safe environment in which they are able to flourish academically and developmentally. Lacey provides an educational setting for Pre-K through fifth grade with special education classes for both lower and upper level students. They are a smaller elementary school which allows for an environment where everyone really knows one another. They have specials as well which includes art, music, gym, the library, and the computer lab.

During my time at Lacey I have had experience with several real-life scenarios that a school counselor would be presented with. First, I have observed various lessons on character education and created and implemented my own lesson as well. Secondly, I have created several posters and bulletin boards to showcase what is being taught in the character education lessons. Third, I have had the opportunity to meet one-on-one with five students weekly to check in with how they are doing in school and at home and attempt to try and work with them through things they may be struggling with in either setting. Ultimately, I have been able to really be able to see what it is like to be a school counselor by seeing the things that happen on a daily basis.

I could not have asked for a better supervisor; Katie the school counselor, has constantly answered any and all questions that I have had about the site and the profession but also questions about graduate school. My time spent at Lacey was very fast-paced and I always had



something to do. It was the type of environment that I did well in because there was not much time just sitting around. I enjoyed always having a task or having a situation we had to deal with. I honestly can't think of something I did not enjoy about this site. I feel like I was given a real look into being a school counselor and Katie provided me with any and all information that was needed for me to truly succeed during my time there. I also was able to really become close with the students at Lacey. They are a great group of kids that really make you feel welcome during the time spent there. I enjoyed the freedom of the site the most. Katie provided structure in terms of expectations and tasks that she wanted to be accomplished; however, she always allowed the freedom for me to create and implement my own creativity and ideas into anything that I was doing. Katie truly cares about each intern at this site and does everything she can to ensure that we get the most out of being at Lacey.

I think the biggest thing I have learned during my time at Lacey has been how to successfully manage fast-paced days. What I mean by this is that you never know what you might get when you walk through those doors. You may be faced with kids that are in a fight and you are the one to mediate the situation, a child that is having outbursts and the teacher needs you to talk him down, or even a child comes to school covered in marks and bites and you have to take him to the nurse to get checked out. I am extremely thankful that Katie allowed me to see and experience all the different situations that may happen in a typical school day. I think this allowed for me to have a clearer idea of what a school counselor may be expected to do depending on the school that they are in. While all of this situations may pop up throughout the day it is important to make sure that you still have lessons planned and to make sure you check in with all the classes in the school. Overall, I have learned how important it is to be flexible and available to the needs of the students and the teachers while also making sure that you are able to take care of your own responsibilities as well.

Ultimately, this experience strengthened my passion for working with kids, but it especially showed me that this is the career that I want to pursue for the rest of my life. I think it really allowed for me to see the practical and realistic responsibilities and expectations of a school counselor. In addition to strengthening my overall career goals, this experience at Lacey showed me that I really have a passion for working with populations in lower socioeconomic levels. I firmly believe that I want to spend my career as a school counselor working with those kids that typically get looked over. I know this tends to come with additional challenges; however, I want to be able to give a voice to those kids that are typically overlooked. My time at Lacey Spring showed me the importance of having a school counselor but also the importance of taking the time to really get to know the kids and their specific needs whether it be things like clean clothes, extra snacks, or even just giving them extra hugs because they need it.

Spring 2017 – Stephanie Romero Mosqueda

Lacey Spring is a school that focuses on child success through a well-planned instructional program. There is an opportunity for children to succeed in academics, leadership, and relationship skills. In addition, part of Lacey Spring's mission states that the school plans "To provide a quality education that promotes respect for self, others, and the school". The concept of respect and other character traits are taught through the school counselor Katie Greene. She teaches guidance lessons on the six traits of character (respect, trustworthiness, caring,



citizenship, responsibility, fairness) to grades K-5. Apart from teaching, Katie offers individual counseling which can include play, activities, or drawing. Other forms of counseling can include small groups. There are also different small groups available to students which can include groups on self-image, broken families, or anger management.

In my time at Lacey Spring, I was paired up with 5 different students ranging from grades 1-5. I would meet with each student every day that I was at Lacey Spring. With my mentees, I would usually play with the sand box, play games, and talk about what was on their mind. In addition, I would create worksheets or activities to help them through emotional or other situations. For example, I created a paper game that included strategies for anger management for one of my students. For another student, role play was a great way for her to express herself and we would play with puppets at times. Apart from one on one time with my mentees, Katie would find projects for me and the other field placement students to work on. Projects included creating posters for her classroom and lesson plans. Posters that we created included concepts learned in guidance class. For example, one poster focused on the differences between the words, rude, mean, and bullying. Another poster gave students coping strategies for anger management. These posters allowed me to get creative and be able to tailor information to the elementary school level.

My supervisor Katie Greene is a young school counselor starting out her career; this was exceptionally advantageous for me and the other field placement students. She was very up to date with recent changes and gave us excellent tips on school counseling. She was always willing to answer any questions and open to my suggestions. There were many opportunities that we took advantage of. Unfortunately, due to time, I was not able to start a small group. Although we were not able to start small groups, there was a lot of talk about it and it could have been done.

This placement requires dedication and a willingness to be challenged. I enjoyed my time at Lacey Spring because I always stayed busy and challenged throughout the semester. I chose this placement because I have plans to be a school counselor. This placement helped me confirm school counseling as my desired career. I also learned many things about school counseling that I never realized (like teaching) were a part of the profession. I learned that it is definitely a setting that I would like to be in for a while. I am very fortunate to have spent a semester at Lacey Spring and I recommend it to anyone who is even considering school counseling or school psychology.

Spring 2017 – Becca Smoot

This semester, I had the privilege of working in the school counseling department at Lacey Spring Elementary School under the supervision of school counselor, Ms. Katie Greene. Lacey Spring's mission and philosophy states "every child is entitled to a well-planned, well-organized, and well-implemented instructional program in a warm and supportive classroom setting." The faculty, staff and volunteers at Lacey not only strive to create successful students but also well rounded individuals. In addition to academics, social skills, communication and self-confidence are at the forefront of values and skills to be instilled within the children. Lacey



Spring provides public education for children grades Pre-K through fifth. In addition to general classroom education, Lacey provides counseling, speech development, special education, and reading support as well as supporting classes such as gym, art and music.

While at Lacey Spring this semester, I was given a multitude of different opportunities and experiences. I was able to shadow and learn from Ms. Greene in a variety of school counseling settings and situations. Throughout the entirety of the semester, I acted as a mentor for five students, ranging in grades Pre-K through fifth. I would spend twenty to thirty minutes with each student twice a week. During my sessions with each child, I would conduct activities focused on self-esteem, communication, friendship and proper behaviors. I would give the children the opportunity to share any concerns or thoughts with me and then complete an activity with them to help aid any issue they may be experiencing. In addition to acting as a mentor, I was able to assist Ms. Greene in leading counseling lessons for each grade level. The counseling lessons were centered around the six pillars of the character counts program – trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. Alongside Ms. Greene, I was able to create and facilitate activities and readings for the children centered around character building. While I was not working individually with students or aiding in classroom instruction, I would create supplemental posters and activities, develop thorough note taking and proper filing skills and assist Ms. Greene with any additional tasks.

From the first time, I set foot in Lacey Spring, I felt the warm and welcoming environment. Every teacher, staff member or child you see is willing to greet you and share a smile. This atmosphere made me feel wanted and useful at this site. I was able to form rapport and relationships not only with my supervisor but also many teachers and students. The warm atmosphere of the school was by far one of my favorite aspects of my experience. Another aspect that I thoroughly enjoyed about Lacey was the size of the school. Lacey is a relatively small school, only having two classrooms per grade level. As such, I was able to meet and interact with most of the teachers and many students. I feel this experience was beneficial as I was able to learn from a multitude of individuals about aspects of being in a school. My experience at Lacey was also strengthened through the relationship I developed with Ms. Greene and the other field placement students at my site. It was both beneficial and enjoyable to be able to discuss my experiences with these individuals. I was always able to go to Ms. Greene for suggestions on how to approach unique situations. Similarly, it was nice to get feedback from the other field placement students on how they dealt with similar scenarios. Without the strong support system created by Ms. Greene and the other field placement students at my site, I likely would not have had the same experience I did. When reflecting on my experiencing as a whole, I can honestly say I only recall positive memories and learning experiences.

Two of the biggest skills I learned and developed while at Lacey were patience and the ability to think on my toes. When working with children, specifically in a school setting, you never know what to expect. You may have some background information on the child yet you do not know the details of their home life or what they are dealing with outside of the school setting. Many of the children I worked one-on-one with did not have the best home lives. They would often come to school after experiencing rough and often saddening experiences at home the night before. Therefore, I had to learn to be ready for anything. As a trusted adult for these children, I needed to be prepared to hear them out and offer guidance and support. These scenarios required a great deal of patience. Children, specifically younger children, may not



know how to express exactly what happened or how they are feeling. Thus, it may take a while to piece together the story they are sharing. The skills of patience and quick thinking have influenced my career goals in a great way. Next year I will be working in an elementary school as a teacher. Within my role as a school counseling intern, I have worked on skills that will directly benefit be in the classroom. Having developed my patience and quick thinking skills, I now feel more comfortable moving forward in my new role of teaching.

My experience at Lacey Spring was fantastic and I would not change a thing if given the opportunity. It gave me great insight into the career of school counseling as well as tools on how to prosperously function in a school setting. While my short-term goals are teaching, this placement has helped solidify my long-term goals of becoming an elementary school counselor. While as time progresses these goals may change, I am confident that I have gained skills in this placement that will help prepare me for any youth centered, helping position I may pursue in the future.

Spring 2017 – Emily Smith

The mission of Lacey Spring Elementary School is similar to many elementary schools in that the staff wants to create a warm and safe learning environment for the students. Lacey Spring Elementary School is somewhat of a small school with about 260 students and over 55 staff members to service the students. I found it interesting that there are only two to three 2nd-5th grade classrooms; the small number of students could be seen as an advantage for the school counselor. The smaller population makes the role of a counselor easier to be able to get to know and spend time with more of the students. I was able to get to know, mentor, and build a relationship with 5 students at Lacey Spring who were in 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 5th grade. There was one boy and four girls all with different age ranges that I got to learn from and experience the best ways in which to interact with them. Each student had a different situation going on their life and each student had different ways that worked best as a counseling session. However, all of the students responded well when we played games and read stories together. Most of my time with the students was spent during their lunch time. I was also able to help Ms. Greene with several projects and many posters for her classroom. If I wasn't spending time the kids or working on projects, I was observing or helping teach the class and I even got to read to a couple classes. My impressions of the site are great; the school sticks to their values and missions and creates a warm and pleasant environment for the kids and the staff members are always willing to help. The only disadvantage I can think of at Lacey Spring is the student population as a whole is not very diverse both culturally and economically. This lack of diversity can also be seen as a limitation because there is so much to learn from other people and their cultures. I think it would be interesting if Lacey Spring held a culture day similar to the structure of their agriculture day.

I have learned so much at Lacey Spring and hope to continue work within an elementary school. I think the biggest takeaway from my time at Lacey Spring is learning how to interact with children on a deeper level. When I practiced the one on one counseling techniques with the kids I was able to see a little bit more into the lives of children and how most kids have very adult-like problems that they are faced with. Knowing the problems the children face it has



become such a learning experience to interact with the kids, solve issues, and build a trusting relationship. I have discovered through my experience at Lacey Spring that I love working with kids in their school environment, however, I think I would like to focus more on the academic level rather than emotional level of students. I still appreciate and value the emotions of students and have taken away such a valuable experience at Lacey Spring.

Spring 2017 - Caroline Mathews

At my time at Lacey Spring Elementary School, I was privileged to work beneath the school counselor, Katie Greene. I learned so much through her teaching as well as through LSES' mission that "every child is entitled to a well-planned, well-organized, and well-implemented instructional program in a warm and supportive classroom setting" no matter the classroom and no matter the material they learn. The services a school counselor offers at LSES is one on one counseling as well as teaching each class about the "Character Pillars." The Character Pillars are values that the county finds important and what they believe every child should know. They are trustworthiness, fairness, caring, respect, responsibility, and citizenship. The counselor teaches a lesson on each value throughout the school year. Through my practicum, I was able to have a good amount of responsibility. My main responsibilities were counseling five students within the school as well as teaching a lesson on "Character Pillars". Not only that, but I decorated the room with time appropriate posters, came up with ideas on what to teach, and created lesson plans of my own for each of my students. By counseling students one on one, I was able to see what these students were like, what problems they had and needed to work on, what they wanted to learn, and more. Together, each student and I completed steps to improve their problems, whether it be learning ways to calm down, how to follow directions, or how to be a good role model. I got to know each and every student in depth. I tried to be a person the students could come to for anything; I was a friend for these kids who may not have someone to turn to. I was also a resource they could use to solve problems or gain advice from. Being able to meet with these students one on one, generally unsupervised, made me feel that I was a trusted individual within the school. I felt as though my work that I was doing was important and that I was trusted enough to handle that great responsibility. I loved feeling responsible enough that I could help these children.

Overall, I thought that this was an amazing experience and I am so glad that I was able to work here for the semester. I was able to see what it was like living day to day as a counselor. I was able to see how the school counselor carries so much responsibility within the school and within their community. I learned so much through the opportunities they gave me, like teaching a class and counseling one on one. Those were the greatest advantages I experienced at LSES. If I had not done my field placement here, I am not sure how much I would have learned about truly being a counselor. I didn't feel that there were any disadvantages, honestly. My supervisor taught me so much about how to be a counselor and all that the job entails. I feel as though, I am prepared now to take on a role of a counselor, or at least attend graduate school for school counseling. There were no limitations while I was there. I was given essentially free reign to teach what I'd like and work with the kids on what they needed. It's been a wonderful experience at LSES and I will surely miss the friends I've made there and the students I have met.



When thinking of my future, I have had the idea for the past couple of years that I would like to be an elementary school counselor. I have shadowed counselors before and I always liked their mission to help as many kids possible, no matter the situation. That is why I accepted this position at Lacey Spring Elementary School. I wanted to know more about the job and that's exactly what I got. My experience here has reassured me even further that this is the career that I want and that I am meant to be doing. Being here, watching Ms. Greene, gave me something to strive for within my career and I can't wait to one day have my own school and help even more children.

If I had to choose a site all over again, I would choose Lacey Spring Elementary School one hundred times over. The staff there is unbelievably kind, the kids are so sweet and they embrace new people with open arms. It is a wonderful way to learn more about counseling children, but also how the school system works, in general. You learn how the relationships work between other teachers, counselors, and staff members so all can work as a team to give each child every possibility they deserve. Overall, it was a wonderful experience that everyone who would be interested in working with kids should try.