



# Lacey Spring Elementary School

## Placement Description

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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

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- 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

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**Read about students' experiences at this site below:**



### *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 me 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 with 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.