



McGaheysville Elementary School

Placement Description

Public Elementary School placement that offers practical foundational experience working with students.

Intern or Field Placement Responsibilities/Opportunities

- One-on-one mentoring with 4-6 students (ages 5-12)
- Group counseling experiences (with counselor)
- Classroom instruction assistance (Guidance classes PK-5)
- Consultation with parents and teachers
- Assisting with school-wide programs (Bullying prevention month)
- Student Study and other service coordination meetings

Contact Information

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Spring 2018 – Cheryl Drew

For the Spring 2018 semester, I completed my field placement at McGaheysville Elementary School with the school counselor, Michelle Boccock. Over the past couple of months, I have formed strong relationships with the students that I met with bi-weekly and with the school staff I interacted with. The mission of McGaheysville Elementary School is to focus on creating life-long learners who are caring and respectful. Their school motto is “A Caring Community of Learners” and they believe that all children can be successful, especially when the home, school, and community cooperate to create a conducive learning environment that encourages growth. McGaheysville Elementary serves pre-kindergarten through fifth grade with a total of about 295 students. They also have Regional Autism Program and several after-school activities like Chess Club and Girls on the Run.



My supervisor was the school counselor at McGaheysville Elementary School, Michelle Bocock. This year is Mrs. Bocock's third year at McGaheysville Elementary and she provides a variety of services to the students there. Mrs. Bocock not only administers individual and group counseling for students, but also provides in-class support for students struggling academically, Response-to-Intervention (RTI), breakfast and lunch groups, bullying prevention with student bullying reports, organizes Lion Leaders and parent Watch D.O.G.S. (dads of great students), gives each class a weekly guidance lesson, organizes events like Career Day, a visiting Milk Truck for dairy education, Yoga relaxation mornings, and gave each class a regulation station for students to work on self-regulation. I was lucky to witness almost all of these services being provided during my time at McGaheysville Elementary and gained an appreciation for how much Mrs. Bocock organized on a weekly basis and how important she is here.

I was present at McGaheysville Elementary School twice a week, on Mondays and Wednesdays for the whole school day (8:00 am – 3:00 pm). I met with 5-7 kids a day in their classrooms and helped them with their classwork. This consisted of one student in 3rd grade, two in 2nd grade, and four students in 1st grade. In the first grade classroom, I would usually spend time with the student or students who were struggling the most to keep up with their schoolwork and help them stay on task and provide them with individual support. I really enjoyed my time with these students because I felt like I was making a real difference in their day-to-day lives while also getting to know more about them. It was important for them to be able to receive mentorship while also completing their classwork and I am glad I got to be a part of that. I also spent time in the pre-kindergarten classroom to give the teachers an extra hand with activities like handwriting, letter practice, fine-motor skills, and snack-time. I had a lot of fun in the pre-k classroom and it was one of my favorite parts of the day. I also assisted in guidance lessons with 4th, 2nd, and 1st grade. Mrs. Bocock covered topics such as exclusion/inclusion, Kelso's Choices, self-regulation, Character Counts, bullying, and careers. I mostly observed these classes and gave support when it was needed. Some of my favorite guidance lessons were when the fourth graders made anti-bullying machines in the STEM lab and then presented them to the class and when first grade learned about self-regulation and what it means to "flip your lid." I was able to give two guidance lessons, one for my contribution project and one for Earth Day. It was very beneficial to both observe and administer guidance lessons since that will be such an integral part of being a school counselor. I was also able to participate in a "Gal Pals" 2nd grade girls lunch group focusing on building social skills and an "Anti-Test Anxiety Society" breakfast/lunch group for SOL test preparation. I also made copies for weekly character challenges for the character pillars and helped assemble bulletin boards. During my field placement, Mrs. Bocock and I compiled bulletin boards for Random Acts of Kindness week, Counseling Awareness Month (April), and for Career Day (Clothesline Clues for Jobs People Do). I was also able to attend Career Day and the day a milk truck visited with a dairy farmer and cow to talk about dairy farming and do a milking demonstration. Overall, I had a really impactful experience at



McGaheysville Elementary School and learned a lot of valuable skills and knowledge about school counseling.

McGaheysville Elementary School is about a 20 minute commute in the mornings and about 15 minutes when there is lighter traffic. This drive was definitely worth it and I am so grateful I had the opportunity to complete my field placement here. The staff is welcoming and supportive and every day was a positive experience. Mrs. Bocock was a wonderful mentor for me and she was willing to answer any questions I had. It was evident that she cares a lot about her students and is great at capturing their attention and affirming their contributions during guidance class. She was very receptive to my ideas and often asked for my opinion on lessons or topics classes were going to discuss during class. This made me feel more like a part of the school community, allowed me to gain more knowledge about the topics Mrs. Bocock focused on during my time here, and gave me a more holistic view of school counseling as a whole. The school is fairly small so I was able to come into contact with every teacher and most of the students, but there is not a lot of diversity. Also, this spring there was a lot of snow and cold weather which led to a lot of school cancellations. This made the beginning of my field placement more sporadic since school closings were often on Mondays. Even though this made the beginning a little slower to start, I was still able to complete my hour requirement and form relationships here. In addition, I found that this experience affirmed my choice to become a school counselor in the future and made me excited to pursue my Masters degree in School Counseling. I would highly recommend this site to future field placement students and I cannot say enough good things about Mrs. Bocock and McGaheysville Elementary School.