



Counselor Connections: West Junior High

Meeting Your Student's Needs Through School Counseling

As school counselors, we're here to help your child be successful in school, and we do so by supporting your child's academic, social/emotional and college/career development. To meet these needs we teach lessons in your child's classes, facilitate small groups, and meet individually to provide brief, solution-focused counseling and interventions. Here are some examples of how we do this:

Academic Development

- Grade checks
- Individual plan and goal setting
- Organization
- Time Management
- Accountability
- Academic resources
- Registration and scheduling
- Study skills
- Intervention planning

Social/Emotional Development

Safe, non-judgmental space to process:

- Anxiety
- Anger
- Self-esteem/image
- Stress management
- Sadness
- Grief / loss
- Peer and family relationships
- Equity, identity and culture
- Basic needs and resources
- Individual safety

College/Career Development

- School-wide Connect to College & Career activities once a month in GPS.
- Career exposure and exploration
- College exposure and exploration
- Post-secondary preparation
- Resume-building

Upcoming Events

Ongoing Mondays/Tuesdays
Breakfast Clubs

November

4-Year Plan Lesson in 8th & 9th Grade Classrooms

November 17/18

9th graders lead the Courage Retreat

Nov. 18

7th/8th New Student Lunch

Nov. 22-23

Connect to College & Career: Military

Dec. 8/9

New Student Activity in GPS

Dec. 12-14

8th Grade Career Lessons in Social Studies

Jan. 3-5

7th Grade Career Lessons in Social Studies

Jan. 4-6

Connect to College & Career: College Vocab/Terms

Mid-Jan

Registration Presentations

Highlights from Quarter One...

Small Group Meetings

Mrs. Richter did minute meetings with every 7th grader in August. This allows her to get to know every student a little bit more and start building connections with the new grade entering our school!

In **September** we had a new student lunch with all new 7th and 8th grade students. This was to welcome them to the school and introduce them to other new students. In **October** we had a giant game of Extreme Paper Rock Scissors with new students!

We also have met with our students that signed up to be student ambassadors two times. We will meet bi-monthly with them to review their responsibilities and to do a leadership activity.

7th and 8th grade Breakfast groups started in October. Students meet bi-weekly to review grades, set goals, and eat breakfast with their peers. 9th grade will be starting in November.



Classroom Lessons

Ms. Gerster presented High School 101 to all 9th grade English classes in September to review graduation requirements, credits, semester grades, grade point average (GPA), and transcripts.

Connect to College & Career

Connect to College & Career is an event taking place once a month in GPS and in lunch. Students will do an activity about college and/or career. They also get a chance to win free college swag for participating!

Students are invited to wear college gear on our Connect to College & Career Days! The activities we have had so far this year are:

September: College Bingo

October: Name that Skilled Trade (all about trades and apprenticeships)

Ask your child what they have learned about college and careers so far this year!



Erin Richter- 7th & 8th Grade Counselor

This is my 5th year here at WJH, and I continue to love it here! I graduated from UW-River Falls with my Master's degree in school counseling. After that I worked at the high school level before coming to Shakopee, and I really like working at the junior high level! The thing I love most about my job is the ability to really get to know students! When I am not at school, I enjoy spending time with my friends and family- especially my little boy Landon! I also enjoy playing soccer, watching movies, and reading a good book.

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Amy Gerster- 9th Grade Counselor

This is my 2nd year at WJH, and I am so excited to get to know the 9th graders! I graduated from the U of M with a Master's degree in educational psychology and a license in K-12 school counseling. Before graduate school I spent some time interning for The Walt Disney Company in Orlando, FL. Now I feel very lucky to have landed in Shakopee- the students here are the best part! Some of my favorite things to do outside of school are camping, hiking, playing games, watching movies, and spending time with family and friends.

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Introductions