

# Services

## **Student Orientation and Transition**

The school counselor works as part of the school team to support students entering and leaving the OQS community. As part of this process the school counselor will be in communication with the sending or receiving school to help ensure a smooth transition. Additionally, the counselor helps with kindergarten orientation and works collaboratively with 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers and middle school counselors to help support students in their transition to Hartford Middle School.

## **Classroom Guidance**

OQS is in the process of developing and implementing a comprehensive developmental guidance program is taught in grades k-5. The counselor is in each classroom once a week for 30-40 minutes for approximately 12 weeks. Additionally, based upon the needs of individual class the counselor will go in and teach a class tailored to the needs of the class. It is important to the counselor to communicate with families, so a letter will go home with students outlining the units that will be taught in the classroom. To see details on the Elementary School Counseling Classroom Curriculum please visit the link below.

## **Small Groups**

Small groups (4-6 students) are offered for students in grades K-5. The focus of these groups is for the students to better understand themselves and others. In the group model, students are able to learn from one another in a small environment. The groups are focused on peer relationship building and Social Thinking. The hope is that in the group students will learn skills and gain a great sense of awareness that they can transfer to the rest of their day at school to help them be successful. Groups often take place during lunch or snack time to help ensure that students are not missing important time in the classroom.

## **Individual Counseling**

Individual counseling is available to all students to help them be in a better place to learn in school. Students sometimes refer themselves but most often are referred by the classroom teacher or parents. Students usually work once a week with the counselor for 20-30 minutes, for 6-8 weeks.

If the counselor thinks the child might benefit from therapy a referral is made to the parent and in some cases to the school clinician with parental permission. All individual counseling is confidential, but if a student shares information that a parent needs to know, the counselor enables the child to inform the parent or informs the parent, depending upon the situation.

## **Staff Consultation**

The counselor serves a large group of students through consultations with teachers, administrators and special educators. This team approach is used to support learning, enhance relationships and promote success. Consultation with staff around issues for individuals is on-going two way street to ensure communication is clear as situations change.

**Parent Involvement**

The counselor works with parents to help support and promote their children's social and educational development. Parents are encouraged to communicate with the counselor, either by telephone or by setting up an individual appointment. Additionally, the counselor is available to attend parent-teacher conferences upon request.

**Referrals**

The counselor is responsible for providing both school and community based referrals. Specific areas of referrals include but are not limited to Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center small groups, Holiday Helpers Basket program, individual and family counseling and the school based mental health clinician. In addition the counselor is a mandated reporter to DCF and is a member of the Hartford area Child Protection Team.

**Information Services**

The counselor is knowledgeable about resources in the community and works with community agencies to benefit children and families. Please view the Local Resources and On-line Resources links below.

**Other Services**

The counselor attends IEP, and other team meetings when appropriate, to ensure that all children receive necessary social and emotional support to be successful in school. In addition the counselor consults with the school clinician and district elementary counselors on a regular basis.