

SCHOOL COUNSELING CONNECTION



Sinking Fork Elementary
October 2026



MEET MRS. WESTERFIELD

Hi! I'm Mrs. Westerfield, the School Counselor. You can find more information about my role on our school's web site at <https://sinkingfork.christian.kyschools.us> Click the "Academics" heading & choose the dropdown for "School Counselor" for more information about me, Social Emotional Learning, and the monthly Character & Competency Words for Student of the Month. Please contact me with any questions or concerns about your student that I can assist you with.

THIS MONTH

I will start going into K-5th grade classrooms once a month for SEL after Fall Break. Teachers are looking for students who demonstrate the competency **"Accountable Self Starter"** showing traits like responsibility and a positive outlook. Students displaying these characteristics may be chosen as a Student of the Month.

WHAT IS SEL?

Social Emotional Learning helps students develop skills of self awareness (thoughts/feelings/how they affect what you do), self-management (controlling stress, impulses, working toward personal goals), social awareness (empathy/understanding different people's perspectives), relationship skills (building/keeping healthy supportive connections with others), and responsible decision making (caring, safe, and ethical choices). SEL helps support students in reaching their fullest potential for academic, social-emotional, and career development skills.

LAST MONTH

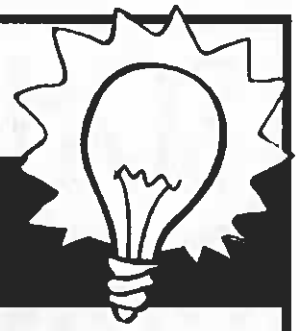
I began "Minute Meetings" with 1st-5th grade students. This is a quick check-in so I can meet each student and see how their school year has started. I introduced myself to the Kindergarten classes. Congratulations to the September Students of the Month for being **"Empathetic Communicators"** that show empathy, kindness, and listening skills.



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Importance of ATTENDANCE



Highlights

Regular school attendance in elementary school is linked to **academic achievement, social skill development, and long-term success.**

Why Chronic Absenteeism is a Problem

ACADEMIC IMPACTS

- Students fall behind in reading and math, making it harder to catch up.
- Missing class creates gaps in learning that affect grades and long-term success.

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL IMPACTS

- Regular attendance helps students feel connected to friends and teachers.
- Missing school can lead to feelings of isolation and lower confidence.

Did You Know?

Missing just two days of school each month adds up to 10% of the school year! That's considered being chronically absent.

Plus, we really miss your child when they aren't here!



Being Proactive

- Set a regular bedtime (and stick to it)
- Create a morning routine for school days
- Talk to your child about things they enjoy at school and what they look forward to
- Think through what "too sick to go to school" vs. "not feeling great but can still go" looks like
- Make a backup plan for school transportation