

Meet your Counselor Ms. Cress

Dear Wagon Wheel families,

Allow me to introduce myself! I have been a school counselor for 14 years, working at high school, middle school, and elementary school levels. My years of experience working with all school-age groups have only confirmed my belief that noncognitive factors in education, such as personal self-confidence and awareness, social skills, conflict resolution, and academic skill sets, are what truly make a scholar thrive. I am committed and passionate about making our Wagon Wheel students whole-student learners, creating a foundation of skills and personal formation they will take with them, wherever their future paths may lead.

To learn more about the importance of noncognitive factors in education, please click [here](#).

*"Transforming the next generation of
empowered students" "*



What Exactly Does a School Counselor Do?

Classroom Lessons

All students receive monthly classroom lessons focused on social and emotional learning. Capistrano Unified School District uses a program called Second Step. The Second Step curriculum provides a comprehensive approach to social and emotional development, covering topics such as:

- Self Awareness
- Emotional Regulation
- Conflict Resolution Skills
- Coping Skills
- Resiliency Skills

Individual Counseling

I meet regularly with students one-on-one, based on referrals from teachers or parents. As a school counselor, I can work with students for 6-8 sessions for personal or academic skills and needs.

Small Group Counseling

For specific needs, working in small groups with other students who share similar needs or want to improve similar skills can be highly beneficial. Small groups are often formed by parent or teacher referrals.

Referral Process

The easiest way to refer your student to the counselor is via email.

E-mail: kmcress@capousd.org

Wagon Wheel Hours: M,T, every other W



Fun Facts About Ms. Cress

- I was born and raised in Georgia. My accent is most noticeable during my classroom lessons. "Listen up, y'all!"
- My extended family lives in Pittsburgh, so I will be cheering for the Pittsburgh Steelers in the Fall and the Atlanta Braves in the Spring. Here we go, Steelers! Go Braves!
- I have two wonderful elementary school children myself. I understand the beautiful "ups" and the challenging "downs" of parenting. I also appreciate the magnitude of entrusting your student's education to us.
- We love our golden doodle puppy named Waffles! She was also born in Georgia and was affectionately named after the Waffle House.

A School Counselor and Confidentiality

It is my utmost priority to provide a safe and supportive environment. Please know a school counselor's top priority is confidentiality. Anything you or your student shares is kept confidential. The only exceptions to confidentiality occur if a counselor has reason to believe that a student is being harmed, neglected, or is a danger to themselves or others. At that point, a counselor has the legal, ethical, and professional responsibility to report such concerns to the parents or the appropriate authorities.



I look forward to being on your student's educational team!