

Vision Statement - Winnie Naggar

As I enter the field as a school counselor, I carry a very clear belief in my heart. Every child deserves to be known, cared for, understood, and valued as a whole person. I see children not only as students, but as people with unique personalities, stories, cultures, humor, strengths, fears, and hopes. I believe that when students feel emotionally safe and deeply seen, they can learn, connect, and grow in meaningful and authentic ways. School is not only a place where students develop skills. It is also a place where they learn who they are, who they can trust, and how they fit in the world. I want to be the kind of counselor who helps students feel at home in themselves and in their school community.

Education, at its best, should create spaces of belonging. I believe student learning happens most powerfully when students feel safe enough to take risks, to try again after hard moments, and to express both their strengths and their struggles. Children are not problems to be fixed. They are humans learning to understand their emotions, build relationships, and navigate complicated worlds. As a counselor, I want to slow down with students, listen deeply, and truly know them. I want to know what they love, what makes them laugh, what frustrates them, what feels hard, and what lights them up. From that place of knowing, I want to help them build the social, emotional, and coping skills they need not only to get through school, but to feel confident and capable within it.

I see school counselors as leaders, helpers, and powerful protectors of students' well-being. Leadership, for me, does not mean standing at the front of a room. It means standing beside students, partnering with teachers, collaborating with families, and helping shape a school culture where care, connection, and inclusivity matter. I see advocacy as part of my daily work. Advocacy is supporting the student who is having a hard time transitioning to school. It is

noticing the child who seems left out and helping them feel included. It is supporting teachers as they navigate complex student needs. It is working to ensure that systems do not overlook students who may not have loud voices. My training has helped me trust that I can do this work thoughtfully, ethically, collaboratively, and with heart.

Social justice is also central to how I understand counseling. A social justice orientation means recognizing that not all students enter school with the same experiences, opportunities, and access. It means noticing inequities and caring enough to do something about them. It means honoring students' identities, cultures, languages, bodies, families, and lived realities. It means asking whose voice is missing, who may not feel safe, and who may need stronger systems of support. Social justice in my counseling will look like sitting on the floor with a child and laughing with them. It will sound like saying, "I believe you. You matter. I am with you." It will feel to students like warmth, steadiness, kindness, and genuine care. To colleagues, it will look like collaboration, thoughtful questioning, and courage wrapped in compassion.

Throughout my training I have learned something really important about myself. I have learned that I am deeply relational. I build trust with students because I truly enjoy them. I like getting to know who they are as people, not only how they function in the classroom. I have also learned that I love teaching skills in gentle, practical, playful ways. I believe skill building is one of the most powerful gifts counseling can give students. I hope my work clearly reflects that I am always teaching strategies for emotional regulation, coping, problem solving, communication, and resilience. Over time, stakeholders should be able to observe growth in students' ability to name feelings, use coping strategies, transition more smoothly, build relationships, and advocate for their needs. Families and educators should be able to see that I am consistently present,

communicative, thoughtful, and responsive. These outcomes will show that my belief system is not theoretical. It is alive in the day-to-day work.

My work will be observable in the way I build trusting relationships with students. It will be visible in counseling groups, classroom lessons, and one-on-one support. It will be measurable in the ways students develop usable skills, stronger belonging, and improved school functioning. It will be experienced in the warmth students feel, the collaboration teachers experience, and the trust families hold in me. I plan to document progress, check in meaningfully with caregivers and teachers, engage in ongoing communication, and collect data that reflects growth both in student outcomes and in school climate.

Sustaining social justice oriented work requires care, support, and community. I know I will need mentors, colleagues, supervisors, and spaces where I can reflect honestly. I will need school leadership who values counseling work and understands the emotional labor of caring deeply. I will need continued professional learning to grow in competence and cultural humility. I will also need personal grounding practices that help me stay present, steady, playful, and human. I want to do this work in ways that honor both students and myself.

Ultimately, my vision of entering the field as a school counselor is grounded in love, relational warmth, advocacy, skill building, and unwavering commitment to children as whole people. I want students to feel known. I want families to feel supported. I want educators to feel partnered with, not judged or alone. I want school communities to feel more compassionate, inclusive, and joyful because I am there. Above all else, I hope that any child who walks into my counseling space feels safe enough, important enough, and worthy enough to simply be who they are.

AI Use Statement

I used AI for light wording and organizational support while drafting this statement. The ideas, reflections, and final content are fully my own.