

Name: Kailey Mayo

Position: K-8 School Counselor

School: Clinton School District

Years Experience: 10

Where you attended graduate school: MSU-Billings

1. Share a little more about you: Where you are from? Hobbies/Interests?

I was born and raised in Missoula, and went to Carroll College (Go Saints!). My husband and I have three children; Hadley (9), Avie (7), and Will (4). I LOVE to cook and will devour cookbooks with notes and colorful tabs. I love the lake, farmers markets, playing basketball, and traveling. However, my soul is an introvert, and I am my happiest cozied up in sweatpants reading a book or watching movies with my family.

2. What compelled you to be a school counselor or led you to where you are today?

I come from a family of teachers, and I have always said that is what I wanted to be. However, I really leaned toward psychology and sociology, and followed that interest to a psych undergrad degree. After working with that degree in mental health, I wasn't feeling fulfilled in my job, so I actually went back to grad school looking at teaching. How wonderful when I realized I could do BOTH; honor my desire to teach with my love for counseling and psych. It happened by coincidence and faith, and I can honestly say I love my job and feel truly honored to do what I do. No day is ever the same, and I feel so lucky to go to a job that I love every morning.

3. Favorite aspect of your job?

Relationships. I have the unique opportunity to build relationships with my students from their first day in kindergarten until I give them a hug at their 8th grade graduation. I literally grow with them, and that time is invaluable. My end goal, everyday, is that my students leave school knowing they are loved, valued, honored, and important. Getting to know my students on such a personal level, being allowed into their lives, and having the opportunity to see into their world is truly an honor for me.

4. Particularly memorable program, intervention, group, lesson you've implemented that you believe made an impact with your students/staff?

Every Spring, we celebrate The Kindness Project. It is a weeklong school-wide celebration of kindness, compassion, and empathy. We have daily dress up days, morning announcements, school-wide events, lunchtime games, prizes, and more. We decorate the school and really try to make it an "event". Each grade does something different to go out of their way to show kindness to their classmates, their school, and their community. It is a week that is so important for me. I truly believe that kindness is a trait that is invaluable. We never know what someone is going through, and showing even the slightest bit of compassion and empathy could mean so much more to people than we realize. When that happens, we create change even in the smallest form. That small change can

genuinely change this world. We have the power to make our world better, brighter, and kinder. How awesome is that?

5. Favorite part of the spring/fall conference?

My favorite part was the fall conference where I was officially inducted into the MSCA Board of Directors. I cannot tell you what an honor it is to be working so closely with people I have always admired from afar. It was a big milestone in my career, and I feel truly lucky.

6. Memorable moment in your career?

I would have to say the most memorable moment in my career was when I was nominated for School Counselor of the Year in 2016. I was genuinely shocked, and the recognition from my school and staff meant more than I can put into words. In education, especially in school counseling, it is very easy to get burnt out and to almost get lost in the everyday whirlwind. So having this moment of feeling seen...it meant the world to me.

Please email/share a picture to include with the Member Spotlight Write-Up.