Student #_____

Escambia County Public Schools
INFORMED CONSENT SCHOOL-BASED COUNSELING

ECPS is committed to fostering the mental health and resilience of students. The goal of counseling is to help students build life skills, increase academic engagement, and socialize effectively within the school community. It involves a relationship between your child and a counselor who has the desire and willingness to help your child accomplish their individual goals. Counseling involves sharing sensitive, personal, and private information that may at times be distressing. During counseling, there may be periods of increased anxiety or confusion for your child. The outcome of counseling is often positive; however, the level of satisfaction for any individual is not predictable. Your involvement as a parent is critical to your child's success and we encourage you to support your child on the path to wellness.

Please be aware that ECPS mental health counselors only work during the traditional 10-month academic year. All efforts will be made to bring your child's treatment to a close prior to the end of the school year. If continued therapeutic services are required, appropriate mental health resources will be given.

There is no fee for school-based counseling services. If you are referred off campus to health, mental health, or substance abuse professionals you are responsible for their charges. Should it become necessary, I am aware that my child may be offered telecounseling.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All ECPS mental health providers adhere to strict confidentiality standards in accordance with Florida Law. In accordance with the Parental Rights in Education, parent notification will take place when there are critical decisions to be made related to your child's mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being; there is a recommended change in your child's services or monitoring; or the school has concerns related to the ability to provide a safe and supportive learning environment. The counseling staff works as a team and your child's therapist may consult with other counseling staff to provide the best possible care.

- Information may need to be withheld if a reasonably prudent person believes that disclosure would result in abuse, abandonment, or neglect. Staff who learn of, or strongly suspect, physical or sexual abuse or neglect of any person under 18 years of age must report to the Department of Children and Families.

- If there is evidence of clear and imminent danger of harm to self and/or others, a therapist is legally required to report this information to the authorities responsible for ensuring safety.

- A court order, issued by a judge, may require staff to release information contained in records and/or require a therapist to testify in court.

I have read and discussed any questions I may have about the above information with my child's therapist. I understand the risks and benefits of counseling, the nature and limits of confidentiality, and what is expected of my child for school-based counseling.

_____ _____ _____
Signature of Parent/Guardian **Printed Name of Parent/Guardian** **Date**

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Signature of Mental Health Counselor