

MS. DILLOW



April is everything we want in a human being and especially as a school counselor. When it comes to providing the best care for students, there isn't anyone that does it better than Mrs. Dillow. She makes every effort to meet students where they are to ensure they have a therapeutic plan in place that meets their individual needs.

April provides guidance, education, and resources to teachers. Some of the students' writing assignments focus on introspection. April will review the students' writing samples and provide suggestions for scaffolding that encourage reflection, brainstorming, problem-solving, and empathy. Mrs. Dillow will always make time to provide the staff with (non-privileged) information that will allow them to approach students in a manner that best serves the students' needs.

April advocates for student behavior to be monitored consistently, that they be held accountable, and that limits are set in a safe and supportive environment. By providing a structured environment, students improve consequential thinking and skills needed to navigate conflict in a productive manner. Mrs. Dillow guides students to understand why they experience emotions in a certain way and helps them to analyze their behavior and decision-making process. Through her guidance and counseling, students reenter the classroom after negative interactions with either the teacher or peers with a positive attitude and ready to learn. She helps them develop vital interpersonal skills, which are necessary to have as they make their way into the world of work.

A student was experiencing escalated emotions and April stepped in to guide the student in using de-escalation techniques they had been practicing together through therapeutic counseling. Instead of directing him what to do, she actively listened, then restated the response options he identified. Given time and space to consider the options with a rational perspective, he developed a multi-step action plan and verbalized the plan to his instructor with gentle prompts from April. Recently, a student attended his IEP meeting and was unhappy with the outcome. He refused to speak with anyone for several hours. The first person he agreed to speak with was Mrs. Dillow. She spent the next hour in session with the student. The student then attended his next class (4th block) and discussed the IEP meeting and proposed educational plan with the teacher. The very plan that had angered him earlier in the day was now a source of joy and excitement as he described how he would transition back to his base school. I have no doubt that the reason for the new outlook was dependent on the time he spent with Mrs. Dillow.

April donated her time outside of the workday to support the Oberle Alumni Association. She is invested in student successes even after they leave the Oberle School.

