WILLIAM BOYD BUILDING
41680 MISS BESSIE DRIVE · SUITE 201 · LEONARDTOWN, MD 20650
TELEPHONE: 240-309-4196

Statement on Counseling Staffing
at Evergreen Elementary School

October 27, 2026

Evergreen Elementary School serves 633 students with one school counselor, more than two and a half times the student-to-counselor ratio recommended by the American School Counselor Association. The Education Association of St. Mary's County is calling for the school's second counseling position to be restored and filled following its elimination through a budget amendment approved by vote on October 27.

The amendment was presented at a joint meeting of the St. Mary's County Board of Education and the Commissioners of St. Mary's County. EASMC opposes the elimination of this needed position.

The recommended ratio is 250 students per counselor. Restoring the second position would bring the student load at Evergreen to about 317 per counselor, a necessary first step toward that recommendation.

Alongside classroom lessons, individual and group counseling, family support, student-support meetings, and professional training, counselors help assess risks to children's safety. Urgent concerns require careful judgment and follow-up, leaving less time for scheduled services. If we expect school counselors to be there when children need them, we have to provide the staffing that makes that possible.

The amendment adds seven special education positions through a broader reallocation of existing positions. EASMC supports additional special education staffing and recognizes the budget pressures facing our schools. Meeting special education needs should not require reducing counseling capacity. The same child may depend on a special education teacher and a school counselor.

We call on the Board of Education to restore and fill Evergreen's second counseling position and establish a timeline for improving elementary counseling staffing toward the recommended ratio. We call on the Commissioners of St. Mary's County to provide the local funding needed to support that plan.

Sean Sayers
President
Education Association of St. Mary's County