

## **Catherine Ferguson**

### **Candidate Bio:**

My profession as a school counselor developed as a second career. I received my bachelor's degree from the University of Central Florida, and my master's degree from Buena Vista University. I was a middle school science teacher in Jacksonville, Florida for six years before I moved to Iowa. After moving to Iowa, I took a position as the administrative assistant in a middle school office. It was then that I started graduate school. I have now been a professional school counselor for three years. I am a member of the American Counseling Association, American School Counseling Association, and Iowa School Counseling Association.

My leadership experience has been in various areas of my life. I teach parent religious classes, been a leader in Weight Watchers, served on the board in my religious affiliation, teach middle school religious education classes, and a leader in religious education opportunities for my denomination. I have a passion for making a difference in the lives of others and would love to embrace the opportunity to serve fellow school counselors.

### **Candidate Statement:**

One of the most challenging struggles of being a professional school counselor is to feel isolated as we move forward in a changing and developing profession. We start with excellent training and dreams of making a difference to students by helping them succeed academically, socially, and mentally. All too often though, administration and teachers are stuck in old mindsets of what we are supposed to do as "guidance counselors", they often don't understand our value and/or allow us the opportunity to make the impact that we could.

It is my goal to educate and advocate to educators and state legislation of our worth and value. I would like to work with the Iowa School Counseling Association in developing opportunities for elementary school counselors to receive the opportunities needed to help them to excel in their careers. I would like to work with ISCA in advocating for realistic student-counselor ratios in the schools, licensing requirements, and job responsibilities. If we can work together we can help define our roles in the schools and align with ASCA guidelines.

Iowa could lead our nation in offering model school counseling programs. We have talented and passionate people working in this profession and in ISCA. I would like to be part of the movement to advance our profession and develop unity and value to what we do. For we are not alone, but we are a growing profession with limitless prospects.