

# SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCE

## ON-SITE REVIEW REPORT

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***Jefferson County  
High School Counseling***

July 2021

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Office of Support &  
Accountability



**West Virginia Board of Education  
2020-2021**

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# Introduction

The Office of Accountability conducted a Special Circumstance Review of Jefferson County Schools, June 1-3, 2021, to obtain specific information regarding the efficiency and operation of the counseling programs at each of Jefferson County's two high schools. The review process was conducted as outlined in West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) Policy 2322: West Virginia System of Support and Accountability. The review included ongoing document review and interviews of school and central office personnel, as well as parents, and students.

A Team consisting of staff members from the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) Offices of Accountability, Data Management and Information Systems, Middle and Secondary Learning, and Student Support and Well-Being compiled the information gathered during the onsite review and provided findings and non-compliances outlined in this report. The report will acknowledge identified strengths and provide recommendations and corrective actions to support a comprehensive school counseling system to enhance student success. The report will be presented to the WVBE at the July 14, 2021, board meeting.

## Onsite Review Team Members

Tim Conzett, Technology Officer, Division of Data Management and Information Systems, WVDE

Alexandra Criner, Coordinator, Office of Accountability, WVDE

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Susan Young, Coordinator, Office of Accountability, WVDE

## Background

On April 13, 2021, the WVDE Office of Support and Accountability received a letter from Ms. Kathryn Skinner, President of the Jefferson County Board of Education, requesting a comprehensive review of the counseling services at both Jefferson High School and Washington High School. Areas of focus identified in the letter included the processes of registration, scheduling, grading, transcription, counseling, college application, and parent and student supports, as well as additional duties as outlined in the Jefferson County Schools school counselor job description.

WVBE Policy 2315, *Comprehensive School Counseling Program (CSCP)*; WVBE Policy 2510, *Assuring the Quality of Education: Regulation for Education Programs*; W. Va. Code; and local policy served as the framework for the Review.

Prior to the Review, the Jefferson County Superintendent provided the Team with a summary of perceptual data gleaned during a stakeholder meeting conducted at the local level. Major issues identified by Jefferson County Schools staff were as follows: technical issues with the WVEIS platform; course creation; professional learning in the areas of enrollment, scheduling, grades, and transcription; the local Program of Studies alignment with WVBE policy and timelines; scheduling processes to allow students to receive a schedule prior to school starting; the role of the school counselor in providing counseling and mental health support; the roles and responsibilities of the school registrar; and providing stakeholders with customer service. The document also outlined local efforts to resolve these issues.

# Focus Area I: Comprehensive School Counseling Program

Overview: The CSCP is an integral part of the total school program and is aligned with the school's mission. The CSCP is a proactive, systemic approach to assist students with the acquisition of attitudes, knowledge, skills, and behavior. Certified school counselors, in collaboration with school and community stakeholders, develop an Annual CSCP Plan to coordinate and implement services designed to address student needs. WVBE Policy 2315, Section 5 defines components of a standards-focused and evidenced CSCP, including: **Personalized Student Planning** includes providing opportunities for students to discover their interest in emerging careers. Ongoing opportunities at all programmatic levels are provided during the school day for career exploration and self-discovery. Personalized planning allows students to develop academic skills, identify interests, maximize strengths, minimize weaknesses, set and reach personal/educational goals, and realize their career aspirations. A Personalized Education Plan (PEP) is developed collaboratively, involving students, parent/guardians, and school staff.

- *Integrated Delivery of WV Standards for Student Success* is coordinated by the school leadership team, the school counselor, and teachers. The WVSSS, defined in WVBE Policy 2520.19, describe the attitudes, knowledge, skills, and behaviors all students shall develop in relation to academic and learning development, career development and life planning, personal and social development, and global citizenship. The WVSSS are the foundational standards for the CSCP.
- *Responsive Services* are provided when events and situations in students' lives or in the school climate and culture impedes student success. Responsive services offer preventive activities and programs to address the identified needs of students in each school, as well as evidence-based interventions to address targeted student needs. Responsive services include individual and small group counseling, academic and behavior intervention plans, crisis prevention and response, consultation with parents/guardians and other school staff, and referrals to school and community resources.
- *Student Supports* consist of a systemic, coordinated approach of developing and implementing programs and activities within the school and community aimed at supporting the success of all students. The school counselor collaborates with stakeholders to ensure school-wide coordination of the counseling program and other student support programs. Schools design and identify programs and resources that address identified student needs and enhance the success of each child. Additionally, students and families may seek support to address their unique academic, career, and personal-social needs.

The Team conducted interviews with school leaders, staff, parents, and students, and conducted document review to determine the extent to which each school's CSCP meets the requirements of WVBE Policy 2315 and is positively impacting student well-being.

### **General Observations:**

- Interview responses were inconsistent regarding the development and monitoring of the CSCP. Within each school, conflicting descriptions of the CSCP were shared with the Team. Some staff members disclosed the CSCP Plan is developed at the school level using the American School Counselor Association model, while others stated the CSCP Plan is created at the district level. A CSCP Plan document was not produced at either school.
- School administrators and central office personnel did not articulate a process for the development or monitoring of the CSCP.
- A sample of seventy-two randomly selected student PEPs were requested by the Team upon arrival. Of the requested plans, thirty-three were produced and made available to the Team. Of the thirty-three PEPs provided, no plans had been reviewed annually, nor were they signed and dated by the student, parent, advisor, and counselor.
- Interview responses from staff members at Washington High School described an advisory system implemented during the first period class. Lessons on career exploration and guest speakers are integrated, especially in the CTE department. Responses indicated the English classes are utilized to embed career exploration into the school day, with a career interest inventory provided upon request.
- Jefferson High School staff reported the advisory system is implemented during a time period called Cougar Hour, with some career exploration and self-discovery opportunities built into classroom experiences. Social-emotional learning opportunities and guidance lessons are delivered during this time. Topics addressed include the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB), College Foundation of West Virginia resources, and career interest inventories.
- Administrators in both schools indicated the counselors do not have a consistent way of documenting time spent providing direct and indirect counseling services and performing administrative tasks. Spreadsheets and written calendars are primary methods used. The School Counselors' Time Analysis System provided by the WVDE is not utilized.
- Interview responses consistently acknowledged other duties assigned to counselors interfere with providing students adequate counseling and support services. Counselors expressed they are often asked to perform duties outside of their job responsibilities.
- School counseling responsibilities discussed by staff included building the master schedule, coordinating paperwork and data entry, coordinating cognitive aptitude and achievement testing programs, and maintaining student records.
- Job roles and responsibility documentation provided by the counseling department at Washington High School revealed school counselors are tasked with responsibilities such as updating bulletin boards and social media, coordinating achievement testing, and coordinating Advanced Placement® (AP®) exams.
- All counselors in Jefferson County Schools hold the appropriate credentials to serve in the counselor position. Data recorded in the WV Educator Evaluation System online platform showed the timelines for self-reflection, goalsetting, and evaluation were not met for all counselors in accordance with WVBE Policy 5310. Responses to interview questions and document review did not confirm the WV School Counseling Program Audit was completed at either school during the 2020-2021 school year. School administrators were unaware of previous program audit results and how those results are used to inform the counseling program.

NONCOMPLIANCE 1.1 – The Team determined an Annual CSCP Plan was not developed in order to coordinate and implement a counseling program designed to address student needs.

*WVBE Policy 2315, Section 3.1, Section 10.1*

CORRECTIVE ACTION 1.1 – Each school annually develop a CSCP Plan to outline priority goals and strategies to attain those goals. The counselors, school leadership, and school counseling advisory council members review relevant data to guide development of the Annual CSCP Plan. This data will include the results of the CSCP Audit, the school counselor self-reflections completed as part of the performance evaluation, student and staff needs assessments, other school data, and community data. The Annual CSCP Plan must address the five school counselor performance standards and identify priority WVSSS objectives to be addressed in each of the four program delivery systems.

NONCOMPLIANCE 1.2 – Consistency of interview responses confirmed school level administrators do not support and monitor the development of an Annual CSCP Plan aligned with WVBE policy requirements.

*WVBE Policy 2315, Section 4.1.j*

CORRECTIVE ACTION 1.2 – Working in collaboration with school counselors and the school counseling advisory council, principals ensure the development of an Annual CSCP Plan. Frequently monitor student, school, and community data to determine the effectiveness of the CSCP in meeting the goals established in the Annual CSCP Plan. NONCOMPLIANCE 1.3 – Of the seventy-two PEPs requested by the Team, thirty-three were produced for Team review. The thirty-three were incomplete and did not contain evidence the plans had been reviewed annually or signed and dated by the student, parent, advisor, and counselor.

*WVBE Policy 2315, Section 5.1.a.2*

CORRECTIVE ACTION 1.3 - Each school principal, leadership team, and counseling department ensure yearly review of the PEP with each student. Include academic offerings, career plans, student interests, and other information to guide changes to course selections. School staff ensure each PEP is reviewed annually in grades 9-12 with the student and his or her parents/guardian and is signed and dated during an annual review conference.

NONCOMPLIANCE 1.4 – Evidence did not support school counselors spending at least 80 percent of work time in a direct counseling relationship with pupils, with no more than 20 percent of the workday devoted to administrative activities.

*W. Va. Code §18-5-18b (f), WVBE Policy 2315*

CORRECTIVE ACTION 1.4 – Central Office Personnel revise the Jefferson County school counselor job description to align professional responsibilities and expectations with WVBE Policy 2315 and the WV School Counseling Model. Provide professional learning to support a uniform understanding of the role of the school counselor and what activities are considered appropriate use of counseling time. It is recommended that counselors utilize the School Counselors' Time Analysis System, and frequently monitor and report data to ensure effective student supports.

NONCOMPLIANCE 1.5 – Evidence and data collected did not support the use of the WV Educator Evaluation System by school leadership to promote professional growth and development for school counselors and ensure the effectiveness of the CSCP.

*WVBE Policy 5310, Section 14*

CORRECTIVE ACTION 1.5 - Provide WVBE Policy 5310 training to all evaluators, including use of the WV Educator Evaluation System online platform. School leadership collaborate with school counselors to identify an area of need, set student impact goals, and document results from the implementation of counseling program.

NONCOMPLIANCE 1.6 – The Team determined the WV School Counseling Audit is not utilized effectively to assess the school counseling program in comparison with the WV School Counseling Model. This document helps school counselors identify strengths and weaknesses of the school counseling program and provides an opportunity for school counselors to discuss areas for continued program improvement.

*WVBE Policy 2315, Section 4.1.e*

CORRECTIVE ACTION 1.6 – Utilize the WV School Counseling Program Audit, first to assess the initial completeness of the CSCP. Continually review the audit and update bi-annually to evaluate the progress of the program. Counselors share results of the audit at the beginning of each school year with administrators and an advisory council to inform them about program improvement needs and at the end of the school year to share progress toward goal attainment.

# Focus Area 2: Grading, Transcription, and Scheduling

## Course Codes

Review of school master schedules and the Jefferson County Schools Program of Study Handbook revealed utilization of incorrect West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS) Course Codes. WVEIS Course Codes are used for a variety of data collection purposes including GPA calculation, graduation requirement fulfillment, Early Warning Information System and Zoom data, and eligibility for scholarships, including the Promise Scholarship.

The WVEIS Course Code Manual specifies the way course numbers are assigned and the correct usage of codes. Course code numbers can have up to six digits. The first four positions are assigned by the WVDE. The fifth position can be assigned by the Local Education Agency (LEA), except for the specific letters listed in the manual. The LEA can assign numbers 0-9 in the sixth position; letters “A-Z” have specific meanings assigned by the WVEIS Office and are to be used when appropriate.

## General Observations:

- Jefferson County Schools is using the “C” designation in the fifth position of the WVEIS course code, indicating the course is a Collaborative Embedded Credit, for multiple courses other than the WVBE approved courses. See unapproved list below:

English	Mathematics	Social Studies	Science	Other
English Language 9 4009C	Math I 3012C	World Studies 7010C	Earth Science 6201C	Health 6909C
English Language 10 4010C	Math II 3014C	US Studies 7009C	Biology 6021C	
English Language 11 4011C	Math III 3017C	Contemporary Studies 7011C	Environmental Science 6312C	
English Language 12 4012C	Math IV 3019C	Civics 7031C		

- Flags/Rifle, Course number 3722, is not an approved course or course number in the WVEIS Course Code Manual.
- Several course numbers and course titles are incorrect.
  - » 1135 is the number for Teacher Preparation: Seminar in Educational Practice; however, Jefferson County Schools is using the code for Student Learning, Development and Diversity.
  - » 1304 is the course number for Secondary Literacy Awareness but is used for two courses: Foundation in Education and Educational Psychology and Learning. Educational Psychology and Learning is not an approved course.

NONCOMPLIANCE 2.1 - Master Schedules for both schools contained course codes with “C” in the 5<sup>th</sup> position indicating students are receiving an embedded credit. CTE completers in WVDE approved embedded Programs of Study may receive embedded credit for Transition English Language Arts (ELA), Transition Math and in some cases Advanced Mathematical Modeling. Students enrolled and successfully complete an embedded credit program of study will be awarded the credit for transition ELA and or Math during their senior year.

*WVBE Policy 2510, Appendix A*

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2.1- All transcripts for affected students must be reviewed, corrected, and schedules changed to ensure students will meet graduation requirements. If students are enrolled in the courses listed above as embedded courses for the 2021 – 2022 school year, the students will need to be rescheduled and transcripts reviewed. All personnel responsible for scheduling and maintaining course information in WVEIS must complete professional learning on WVBE Policy 2510.

NONCOMPLIANCE 2.2 - Review of school master schedules and The Jefferson County Schools Program of Study Handbook showed incorrect use of course code numbers and course titles in school master schedules. Course code numbers, course titles, and course descriptions are WVEIS standards assigned by the WVDE Office of Data Management and Information Systems.

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2.2 - Arrange, provide, and monitor the results of professional learning to support shared understanding of both Policy 2510 and the WVEIS Course Code Manual. Procedures for requesting a WVEIS course code are found in Section Three of the WVEIS Course Code Manual and must be followed before assigning a number. All courses with incorrect or unapproved WVEIS Course Codes must be corrected for the 2021 - 2022 school year in each master schedule and the Jefferson County Schools Program of Study Handbook.

### ***Certification***

Document review of the school master schedule and certifications identified several areas of concern, prompting interview questions to determine how personnel are assigned to specific course offerings.

### **General Observations:**

- Two teachers are assigned and teaching Advanced Placement (AP<sup>®</sup>) courses without completing the required AP<sup>®</sup> Summer Institute.
- Interview responses indicated department chairs receive input from teachers regarding the courses and teacher’s preferred course schedule for the upcoming school year. In some instances, teachers are teaching courses they are not certified to teach.
- According to the master schedule, one administrator was assigned a Learning Skills course with 11 students enrolled for the entire school day.
- One administrator did not apply for the Initial Administrative Certificate within 90 days of hire and is not certified to conduct evaluations; however, the administrator is assigned 24 teachers in the Education Evaluation System.

NONCOMPLIANCE 2.3 - Teachers are assigned and teaching AP® courses without completing the required AP® Summer Institute prior to teaching the course(s).

*WVBE Policy 2510, Sections 6.2.b, 9.1.e.2.H*

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2.3 - All teachers assigned to AP® courses must attend the AP® Summer Institute prior to teaching the course.

NONCOMPLIANCE 2.4 - Staff members are working outside the areas of endorsement specified on their certificates.

*WVBE Policy 2510, Section 9.1.e.2.B.*

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2.4 - Review the master schedule for each school to ensure teachers are assigned courses specified on their certificate. Teachers may need to be reassigned based on teaching certification and positions currently staffed with uncertified personnel must be advertised until filled with a qualified applicant.

NONCOMPLIANCE 2.5 - The Team determined teacher of record data was not entered into WVEIS in an accurate manner. One master schedule indicated an administrator was assigned students for classes every period of the school day.

*WVBE Policy 2510, Section 7.1.a.7, WVBE Policy 4350, Section 3.4.c.2*

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2.5 - Ensure the teacher of record for all student schedules is accurately documented in WVEIS. Administrative personnel should not be assigned students for classes during the school day. All personnel responsible for data entry into WVEIS must have professional learning to address data entry quality and accuracy.

NONCOMPLIANCE 2.6 - An administrator tasked with conducting professional evaluations has a Provisional Administrative Certificate and has not attended the required Evaluation Leadership Institute (ELI). An individual holding a Provisional Administrative Certificate may be employed as an administrator in a West Virginia school system and may perform observations with the online initial ELI but is unable to perform evaluations until they hold an Initial Professional Administrative Certificate.

*WVBE Policy 5310, Section 5.2, WVBE Policy 5202, Section 10.*

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2.6 - Central office personnel develop a process to ensure all administrators apply for an Initial Professional Administrative Certificate and attend the Evaluation Leadership Institute training provided by the WVDE within 90 days of employment as a school administrator.

## ***School Master Schedule and Student Scheduling***

Document review and interviews were held to determine the process for how students are scheduled for courses and how the school master schedule is created. The school master schedule should be developed to meet student learning needs and may change every year based on student data. The master schedule provides the framework for academic achievement.

Student scheduling and creating the master schedule are directly related; however, the responsibility for each task is specific to different personnel. According to the ASCA and WV School Counseling Models, course selection, academic planning, and PEP completion are appropriate duties of counselors. The preparation of timelines, materials, reviewing conflicts, and creating a master schedule is an administrative responsibility.

### **General Observations:**

- Building the school master schedule is a group effort in both schools. The Leadership Team, Curriculum Team, Department Heads, and teachers provide input.
- Department Chairs provide the teachers with the classes requested and the teachers create their ideal course schedules for the following year. The department schedules are added to the scheduling board.
- Multiple groups, including counselors, have an opportunity to review the scheduling board and to suggest revisions. After they have “all eyes on it,” they add the schedule to WVEIS and run the scheduling program and check for errors.
- The Jefferson County Schools Programs of Study Handbook provides the graduation requirements and course options for students attending Jefferson County Schools. The Program of Study Handbook is aligned with WVBE Policy 2510 and contains the correct and accurate WVEIS Course Codes and Course Names except for JROTC. Jefferson County Schools is offering all the courses required in Policy 2510.
- Counselors visit classrooms to review scheduling requirements and to complete in-class scheduling.
- Counselors visited Grade 8 students to review scheduling requirements and hold evening sessions for parents. However, due to pandemic restrictions, the counselors created a video for students this year.
- Student interviews revealed the counselors previously presented a PowerPoint which helped to explain how to schedule; some students described the presentation as “false advertising,” because many of the courses were not available.
- Students reported many courses do not get scheduled, although they are offered, and they are not informed that they need to make a new course request. One student was placed in a study hall instead of an academic class as requested or in a different course working toward goals in the PEP plan.
- Interviews indicate there is not a consistent timeline for providing students with their schedule for the upcoming school year. Several students indicated they did not receive schedules until after school started.
- Students and counselors indicated the PEP does not impact the master schedule for the school.

- Many interviewees did not understand the role or believe the student PEP plays a part in the le of the school master schedule.
- Many parents interviewed did not know what the PEP plan is, and several remembered it from when their student was in the Grade 8, but it had not been reviewed since then.
- Some parents and students expressed the schedule is not made to meet student interests and needs.
- Some teachers expressed feeling “handcuffed” on the courses they can offer because of student enrollment numbers.
- Student interview responses indicated some students were scheduled in study halls instead of credit earning courses. Subsequent review of student transcripts revealed inconsistencies with possible credits earned.
- The Jefferson County Schools Policy Manual, Section 7 describes the requirements students must complete to earn an Advanced Studies Diploma from Jefferson County Schools. During interviews, respondents were not aware of the program, did not state or were unaware of how many students are working towards an Advanced Studies Diploma, or stated the program was not in existence.

COMMENDATION 2.1 - Including department chairs and leadership teams in creating the master schedule is a best practice currently in place.

COMMENDATION 2.2 - The 2021 – 2022 Jefferson County Schools Program of Study Handbook is an excellent tool for students, parents, teachers, administrators, and counselors. It is evident a significant amount of time has been spent to create this resource.

RECOMMENDATION 2.2 - To ensure accurate and consistent use of course numbers in the master schedule at each school, add the course numbers and credits possible for each course offered in future revisions to the Jefferson County Schools Program of Study Handbook.

FINDING 2.1 - Students, teachers, and some central office personnel communicated there was confusion regarding the large number of courses offered to students and mentioned narrowing the selection to those taught would streamline the scheduling process.

RECOMMENDATION 2.1 - WVBE Policy 2510 outlines the courses which must be offered to students. The Jefferson County Program of Study Handbook should reflect all courses required to be offered instead of narrowing the courses to only the courses taught. Providing information to all stakeholders regarding the required course offerings may support a more thorough understanding of course options.

FINDING 2.2 - The Team determined some aspects of the scheduling process are in place, but overall, they are lacking specific procedures, timelines, roles, and responsibilities for creating a student driven master schedule.

RECOMMENDATION 2.2 - Central Office Personnel create procedures, clearly define roles and responsibilities for all personnel involved in the scheduling process, and set clear timelines for the different scheduling tasks. School administrators should participate in a master schedule professional learning focused on creating schedules based on student needs. Each course and potential conflict matrix must be considered from a schoolwide perspective.

NONCOMPLIANCE 2.7 - Students and parents were not given the opportunity to develop and update individualized course selections through the PEP process. Individual assessments, and interest inventories were not used to maximize individual student strengths and addresses weaknesses in regard to scheduling courses.

*WVBE Policy 2510, Appendix D*

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2.7 - Ensure scheduling, course offerings, and the school master schedule include student and parent input and provide for the academic needs of all students.

NONCOMPLIANCE 2.8 - Some students were not scheduled in credit earning courses to fulfill graduation requirements for a full instructional day.

*WVBE Policy 2510, Section 8.1.a.3.C*

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2.8 - Review all student schedules for the 2021 – 2022 school year to ensure all students are scheduled in credit earning courses for a full instructional day aligning with the students' PEP.

FINDING 2.3 - County boards of education are given the ability to increase graduation requirements. Jefferson County Schools Policy Manual states students have the opportunity to receive an Advanced Studies Diploma from Jefferson County Schools.

RECOMMENDATION 2.3 - If the Advanced Studies Diploma is not an option for students, it should be removed from the Jefferson County Schools Policy Manual; however, if the program is in existence, all stakeholders in the system must be informed.

## **Transcripts**

The Team reviewed a sample of seventy-two randomly selected student transcripts encompassing Grade 9 through Grade 12 students. Review of transcripts identified several areas of concern and noncompliance.

### **General Observations:**

- Some students have taken the JROTC courses out of sequence which could impact the fulfillment of the Physical Education graduation requirement.
- Some students are earning credits for courses more than once and some are earning too many credits for some CTE courses. For example, one transcript showed a student earning 2.0 credits for Computer Skill I and 3.0 credits for Career Exploration 1. The student should have received a maximum of 1.0 credit for Computer Skill I and 1.0 credit for Career Exploration 1. Another transcript showed a student earning 6.0 credits, instead of 3.0 for Masonry courses.

- A letter sent to Jefferson County Parents dated February 23, 2021, indicated an issue with transcripts which impacted Grade Point Averages of students which had to be addressed prior to releasing transcripts. This could have potentially impacted scholarships, college admissions, and other postsecondary functions.
- Interview responses regarding who is responsible for ensuring grades, transcribing grades, and course credit is accurate in WVEIS were inconsistent.
- Frequency of review of student transcripts and responsible personnel is not clear.
- The Jefferson County Schools Policy 5.2.7 Procedure for Testing Out of a Class states students may request to “test out” of the core classes of English, social studies, science, mathematics, and health. The score earned on the comprehensive examination will determine the student’s grade per the following scale:

<b>Percent</b>	<b>Letter Grade</b>
80% - 100%	P
0% - 79%	F

A student who passes the test will be granted credit and the grade will not be computed in the student’s grade point average.

NONCOMPLIANCE 2.9 - Completion of JROTC I and II will fulfill 1 credit of Physical Education requirement; however, Jefferson County students are not scheduled in the correct sequence of JROTC courses.

*WVBE Policy 2510, Section 6.1*

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2.9 - Update the Jefferson County Schools Program of Study Handbook and all scheduling materials to reflect the correct sequence of courses. All student schedules for the 2021 – 2022 school year must be changed to reflect the correct sequence of courses. Review student transcripts to ensure students who have taken the JROTC courses out of sequence are scheduled for JROTC II or are fulfilling the Physical Education graduation requirement with a different course.

NONCOMPLIANCE 2.10 - Students in some CTE courses received too many credits for work completed while attending school, regardless of the duration of their enrollment period. Students cannot receive credit for the same course twice.

*WVBE Policy 2510, Section 6.4.a.3*

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2.10 - All affected student transcripts must be updated to reflect the accurate amount of credit earned for each course. The course file in WVEIS must be corrected to provide the correct amount of credit during the transcription process.

NONCOMPLIANCE 2.11 - It was not verified the principals and school personnel monitor and update records of student progress for student, parent, and teacher information.

*WVBE Policy 2510, Section 7.1.b.6, WVBE Policy 4350, Section 3.4.c.2*

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2.11 - Create and follow a procedure at the school level for submitting, reviewing, and transcribing grades. Ensure transcripts are reviewed for accuracy and with students several times a year. Provide professional learning for all personnel responsible for reviewing transcripts, including teachers, on how to read a transcript and the graduation requirements.

NONCOMPLIANCE 2.12 - As indicated in a letter to Jefferson County parents, student transcripts and grade point averages had to be corrected due to data not entered into WVEIS in a timely and accurate manner.

*WVBE Policy 2510, Section 7.1.a.7, WVBE Policy 4350, Section 3.4.c.2*

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2.12 - Ensure all personnel responsible for entering data into WVEIS have the appropriate professional learning to enter the different data types in WVEIS. Professional learning should include, but is not limited to, scheduling options, grading options, attendance options, course definitions, grade symbol definitions, grading worksheet formats, report card formats, and auto posting (live grades) versus manual entry.

NONCOMPLIANCE 2.13 - Jefferson County Schools awarded students with a Pass or Fail when testing out of classes.

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2.13 - All counties must use the uniform grading rules established by the WVBE for those courses for which high school credit is to be awarded (*W. Va. Code §18-2-5*). The non-weighted grading scale must be used for any courses taken for high school credit, other than courses that CBEM are required or choose to weigh (see weighted course grading scale).

*WVBE Policy 2510, Section 9.1.h*

Non-weighted Course Grading Scale		
Average	Grade	Quality Points
90-100	A	4.0
80-89	B	3.0
70-79	C	2.0
60-69	D	1.0
0-59	F	0

NONCOMPLIANCE 2.14 - Jefferson County students testing out of courses received credit, but the grade was not computed in the student's grade point average.

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2.14 - All students testing out of courses will receive credit for the course on the student transcript and the grade will be computed in the student's grade point average. All students will receive appropriate grades and/or credit for all work completed while attending school, regardless of the duration of their enrollment period.

*WVBE Policy 2510, Section 6.4.a.3*

## Focus Area 3: Communication and Customer Service

The ASCA, a professional organization supporting school counselors, develops and publishes the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors. According to the ASCA, “the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors were developed in consultation with state school counseling associations, school counselor educators, school counseling state and district leaders and school counselors across the nation to clarify the norms, values and beliefs of the profession.” The ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors, and WVBE Policy 2315 served as the basis for the Team’s inquiry into communication and customer service provided by the Jefferson County high school counselors.

### **General Observations:**

- Interviews confirmed Live Grades, Schoology, and email are used to provide communication to parents. Some stakeholders expressed frustration with access to information about graduation requirements, virtual school, FAFSA, and other online programs.
- Information is posted on each school’s website regarding counseling services, including counselor contact information. Some scholarship and financial aid information, as well as academic information are readily available. Washington High School’s counseling website has a particularly thorough and robust collection of academic and social/emotional resources for parent and student access.
- Students and parents at both high schools described delays in receiving services from the school counseling departments. Students relayed instances in which they requested to see a counselor and never got an appointment, and stated it is rare to see a counselor on the same day as a request is made. Students also communicated the only way to receive assistance from a counselor is to ask another staff member to intervene on their behalf. Several respondents reported waiting in the counseling office for an unreasonable length of time before receiving service. A parent recounted waiting forty-five minutes in the office for the counselor to finish her lunch. Students shared they have the most success in contacting counselors by email, as they are more responsive to email than in-person requests.
- Interview respondents expressed the counseling department is unable to provide timely service due to the number of students and a shortage of school counselors. The American School Counselor Association states the ideal caseload for school counseling is one counselor per 250 students. The average number of students per counselor in Jefferson County High Schools is approximately 345, which is the average number of students per counselor in WV during the same time period.
- Guidance staff at both high schools disclosed an electronic sign-in and documentation system was implemented to track student services, but the system was out of service for most of the 2020-2021 school year. Some staff members expressed students should be greeted in the counselor’s office by a person who can immediately determine the urgency of a student’s particular situation. The Team observed a sign in one counseling office reading “By Appointment Only.”
- Although some parents described positive supports provided by the school counselors, multiple parents described negative experiences. A lack of responsiveness to parents, failure to provide information, and discourteous service were mentioned as barriers to problem solving in several situations. Parents expressed “one counselor is so rude we just try to bypass her altogether.”

NONCOMPLIANCE 3.1 – The Team determined Responsive Services, as described in WVBE Policy 2315, Section 5.1.c., are not provided in a consistent and timely manner to those students requiring immediate and expert response to assist with an academic, emotional, or behavioral crisis.

*WVBE Policy 2315, Section 5.1.c., ASCA Ethical Standards, Section A.1.h*

CORRECTIVE ACTION 3.1 – Provide students with confidential and immediate access to counseling services. If the use of the registration kiosk in the counseling office is continued, ensure a staff member is positioned in the reception area who can monitor for signs of distress. Prioritize student support services over other tasks. Plan counselor lunch schedules to avoid periods where no counselor is accessible.

NONCOMPLIANCE 3.2 – Evidence revealed a negative climate and culture within the counseling office of each school has prevented the effective coordination of student support services. WVBE Policy 2315, Section 5.1.d describes student supports as “a systemic, coordinated approach of developing and implementing programs and activities within the school and community aimed at supporting the success of all students.” School counselors are tasked with collaborating with stakeholders to support and address their unique academic, career, and social-emotional needs.

*WVBE Policy 2315, Section 5.1.d, ASCA Ethical Standards, Section A.1.a*

CORRECTIVE ACTION 3.2 – Principals set high standards for professional behavior for all counseling department staff, including respect, communication, customer service, and responsiveness to parents. Consider adopting a practice of responding to stakeholders within a given timeline. Utilize the WV Educator Evaluation System as necessary to thoroughly address verified disrespect or unprofessional behavior among staff.

## Focus Area 4: Central Office Supports

County boards of education are tasked with ensuring the CSCP at each school meets the requirements of WVBE Policy 2315, Section 4.1, and supports student achievement and well-being. As part of the Review, the Team conducted interviews Jefferson County School central office staff to determine positive practices and opportunities for growth in ensuring student supports are effectively designed and delivered as part of the CSCP.

- Central office staff charged with supporting counselors were aware of many of the state and local policy requirements of the CSCP but could not articulate specific processes for ensuring those requirements are met. Interviews revealed central office staff members were not aware of the procedure for developing the CSCP Plan, the staff members involved in developing the Plan, or how frequently the Plan is revised. Central office staff members stated they could only make assumptions about what data is used to create the CSCP. Staff members did not mention the WV School Counseling Program Audit when responding.
- Local efforts to support the school counseling program included hiring a service personnel for each high school's counseling office, referred to as a "registrar." Evidence reviewed by the Team and interviews with staff and parents revealed these personnel are underutilized, with unclear job descriptions and inadequate training to support the counselors and students.
- Several interview responses noted the designation of a "head counselor" position in the schools is problematic, citing a negative impact on teamwork and collaboration among the school counselors. Additionally, the Team noted principals relied heavily on the "head counselors" to oversee the CSCP and often deferred to those people during interviews.
- During interviews, respondents from multiple stakeholder groups disclosed a lack of coordinated central office support for counselors. Central office staff did not articulate what data is used to determine the professional learning needs for school counselors in Jefferson County. Additionally, it was reported school counselors do not have the opportunity to collaborate with peers.
- During interviews and document review, the team observed a lack of foundational knowledge from central office and school personnel regarding the operation of the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS).

NONCOMPLIANCE 4.1 – School Annual CSCP Plans are not monitored by the central office to ensure they meet WVBE policy requirements and support student success. Staff did not articulate specific processes for ensuring those requirements are met.

*WVBE Policy 2315, Section 4.1*

CORRECTIVE ACTION 4.1 – Review the central office organizational chart and roles and responsibilities of central office staff and determine one qualified individual to be tasked with providing support to school counselors and serve as a central office point of contact. Provide professional learning opportunities and coordinate with WVDE to provide training and support to ensure central office capacity to provide oversight for the CSCP at each school.

NONCOMPLIANCE 4.2 - The Team determined not all school counselors have access to high quality county level professional and personalized learning experiences that focus on their individual professional growth. From April 2020 through June 2021, twenty-two virtual school counselor meetings were hosted by WVDE Staff. Of those twenty-two meetings, a Jefferson County high school counselor participated in nine.

*WVBE Policy 5500, Section 4.3b*

CORRECTIVE ACTION 4.2 – Ensure school counselors are proportionally represented on the local professional staff development council in accordance with W. Va. Code §18A-3-8. Support school counselors in attending WVDE Office of Student Support and Well-Being monthly counselor meetings and other professional learning opportunities. Coordinate and deliver professional learning opportunities specific and relevant to the role of the school counselor in providing student supports and monitor the effectiveness of the professional learning using a variety of data. Encourage collaboration with school counselors at the county, state, and national level for the purposes of networking and sharing best practices.

NONCOMPLIANCE 4.3 – Lack of WVEIS foundational knowledge across the county, has caused errors to student transcripts and records.

*WVBE Policy 4350, Section 3.4.a*

CORRECTIVE ACTION 4.3 – The WVEIS County Contact must have professional learning, provided by the WVDE, on WVEIS, in order to expand central office and school level capacity. Central office, school administrators, counselors, and other school personnel responsible for data entry in WVEIS will receive professional learning appropriate for job responsibilities.





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