

Jefferson County Schools Special Circumstance Review

High School Counseling Six-Month Update – February 2022



Focus Area 1: Comprehensive School Counseling Program Plan (CSCP)

- » Both Jefferson High School and Washington High School completed an Annual CSCP Plan utilizing a new WVDE template. These plans were submitted to the WVDE for review at the time of the visit, in accordance with the action plan.
- » Each school has established a School Counseling Advisory Council comprised of stakeholders to provide feedback on the school's CSCP Plan. Principals and counselors described a collaborative, data-driven approach was used to create the Annual CSCP plans.
- » Principal interview comments indicated counselors are making progress toward established goals in the action plan. Counselor evaluation goals for the Educator Evaluation System have been submitted and reviewed.

Focus Area 2: Grading, Transcribing, and Scheduling

- » A total of thirty-nine student PEPs were reviewed.
 - Of those thirty-nine PEPs: a career cluster had been selected on twenty-five; the career interest portion was complete on sixteen; and a program of study or CTE program of study had been completed on sixteen.
 - All grade nine and ten students should have completed the two-year plan. The two-year plan was complete on thirty-three of the thirty-nine PEPs submitted.
 - All grade eleven and twelve students should have completed the three-year plan. Of the twenty-five PEPs requiring completion of the three-year plan, ten were complete. The "first year after high school" portion of the PEP was complete on fourteen of twenty-five applicable PEPs.
- » Counselor interviews indicated a copy of the PEP is sent home with the student to obtain parent input and a parent signature. Eleven of the thirty-nine PEPs reviewed had been signed and dated by the student, parent, advisor, and counselor. Interview comments revealed the process of reviewing PEPs with students has been difficult but is approximately fifty percent complete. Counselors indicated review meetings with students are driven by conversations with students about their future goals. Some counselors mentioned they find the process of reviewing PEPs beneficial, as it allows them the opportunity to spend time with each student. Many students reported having meetings to review PEPs; however, some students did not articulate awareness of the PEP plan or its purpose.
- » Counselors described the process to enroll a new student varies based on factors such as the student's grade level, the transferring state or district, and the availability of the student's transcript.
- » Principal interview comments revealed scheduling nights, phone calls, and inviting parents are methods utilized to seek parent and student input into the scheduling process. One principal reported the number of parents entering the building to meet with school counselors has increased this year, with a counselor confirming during interviews "I have parents who email or message me with scheduling requests all the time."
- » Documentation added to the digital action plan platform indicated the administrator with incorrect certification had attended the Evaluation Leadership Institute, but his status had not been updated. Central office interviews indicated the Human Resources office assisted in ensuring proper certifications for all administrators. WVDE Office of Certification records confirmed all administrators currently hold the appropriate certification.
- » Interview comments described efforts to address the need for certified teachers include promoting the district as a positive work environment, providing mentorship and coaching, and supporting substitutes and new teachers in obtaining certifications.

- » During the January 2022 visit, Team members conducted collaborative transcript review sessions with the counselors, principals, the Director of High Schools, and the WVEIS Support Facilitator. The results of this process indicated further support in the area of transcribing appropriate credits is necessary in order to ensure compliance with WVBE Policy 2510 and state and local graduation requirements.

Focus Area 3: Communication and Customer Service

- » Counselors indicated wait time for a student to see a counselor is between zero and twenty-four hours, depending on the urgency of the student's need. Adjustments have been made to the counselors' work schedules to ensure a counselor is present from 7:30am-4pm. Interview responses indicated the addition of a clerk in the counseling office of each school has provided for more efficient and timely service to students.
- » Some student interview comments indicated the continued perception of long wait times and a lack of responsiveness from the counseling departments.
- » A counseling exit survey has been implemented within the counseling office of each school. After a student has seen the school counselor, the counseling clerk reminds the student to fill out the survey before returning to class. Most respondents to the survey indicated they were greeted upon arrival to the counseling office. Additionally, most respondents reported the school counselor was able to resolve their concerns.

Focus Area 4: Central Office Support

- » The superintendent reported meeting monthly with lead counselors to obtain progress updates and provide support. A plan was developed at the district level, in collaboration with counseling staff, to complete CSCP Plans, PEP and transcript reviews, and goal-setting.
- » The Program of Studies Handbook was revised through a Program of Studies Review Committee with the support of the Director of High Schools and WVDE staff. The Program of Studies is published and available for review on the Jefferson County Schools website.
- » A WVEIS Support Facilitator has been hired at the central office to provide one-on-one support for accurate data entry, including WVEIS course codes.
- » The High School Counselor job description has been revised to align with WVBE Policy 2513 and the American School Counseling Association (ASCA).
- » Jefferson County Schools has created and advertised a central office position to support counseling services within the schools. At the time of the review, a suitable candidate had not been retained to fill this position.

Conclusion

- » The WVDE School Counseling Coordinator has reviewed each school's CSCP Plan draft and will be meeting with school counselors to make suggestions for revision and provide ongoing support for the implementation of the CSCP Plans.
- » While the satisfaction survey tool is providing perceptual data from those students visiting the counseling department, the Team recommended the survey be expanded to include the perceptions of all stakeholders on the effectiveness and efficiency of the counseling services provided to students in Jefferson County's high schools.
- » Throughout interviews with school staff, the Team observed resistance to the process and interview respondents did not articulate a collective understanding of the rationale for improvement to current practices.
- » While both schools have made progress in addressing the identified deficiencies in the original report, the Team determined additional time and support from the WVDE is needed to fully address the recommendations. Support and monitoring for an additional six months is recommended.