

## **Comprehensive School Counseling Program Policy**

### **1.0 Scope**

This policy sets forth requirements for pre-k-12 Comprehensive School Counseling Programs (CSCP) in Barbour County public schools.

### **2.0 Authority**

West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2315: Comprehensive School Counseling Program.

### **3.0 Purpose**

The Barbour County Board of Education recognizes the importance of establishing a CSCP in every Barbour County public school to support student academic success, college- and career-readiness, and social/emotional wellbeing. The CSCP is an integral part of the total school program and aligns with the school's mission. The CSCP is a proactive, systemic approach to assist students in acquiring attitudes, knowledge, skills, and behaviors necessary to maximize student success and preparation for a variety of postsecondary options. The CSCP incorporates a multi-tiered system of supports to provide universal prevention for all students, targeted interventions for at-risk students, and intensive interventions for the most at-risk students. The CSCP is standards-based and designed to address identified needs developmentally and sequentially within each programmatic level. The CSCP utilizes school and community data to identify student needs related to the CSCP and set annual priorities aligned with the school's strategic plan.

### **4.0 Definitions**

**Advisement.** The process used by school counselors to make recommendations based on the appraisal of student tests, inventories, or other data. School counselors work with students through this process to help them plan for the future, realize opportunities, and maximize their potential. Advisement includes recommendations made by the counselor to assist the student with exploring services and opportunities available at the school and community, determining meaningful educational and career goals, selecting programs of study, and making appropriate course selections. Often advisement is a collaborative process involving the school counselor, student, family members, teachers, and other relevant stakeholders, to assist the student and promote student success.

**4.1 American School Counselor Association (ASCA).** A professional organization supporting school counselors, school counseling students/interns, school counseling program directors/supervisors, and school counseling educators by providing ethical standards, professional standards, student standards, best practices, resources, and professional learning. The West Virginia School Counseling Model aligns with the ASCA National Model.

**4.2 Appraisal.** The process school counselors use to assess students' abilities, interests, skills, and achievements by analyzing tests, inventories, or other data. This process helps students develop short-term and long-term plans for academic, career, and social/emotional goals.

**4.3 ASCA Code of Ethics.** Specifies the obligation to follow the principles of ethical behavior necessary to maintain high standards of integrity, leadership, and professionalism. School counselors are bound to behave ethically, exhibiting the highest standards of practice. West Virginia school counselors must align their practices with the ASCA Code of Ethics. West Virginia school principals must be familiar with the ASCA Code of Ethics and its implications for school counselors.

**4.4 Certified School Counselor.** A school counselor who holds a master's degree in school counseling from an accredited university and certification in school counseling from the WVBE per W. Va. 126CSR136,

Policy 5202, Minimum Requirements for the Licensure of Professional/Paraprofessional Personnel and Advanced Salary Classifications (Policy 5202).

4.5 Collaboration. A partnership in which two or more individuals or organizations actively work together on a project or problem. School counselors collaborate with various educational and community stakeholders to develop and deliver the CSCP to support the success of all students.

4.6 Comprehensive Drop-Out Prevention Program. A comprehensive program designed to reduce the drop-out rate by meeting the needs of youth in at-risk situations, including students with disabilities.

4.7 Comprehensive School Counseling Program (CSCP) Plan. A school-level plan developed by each school annually, utilizing the CSCP Plan template, coordinate and implement a CSCP. The CSCP Plan is supported and monitored by the principal, who ensures the school counselor(s) collaborate with school leadership, the school counseling advisory council, and other stakeholders to review relevant data to guide the development of the annual plan. This data includes school data (various student assessments, attendance, discipline, drop-out rates, etc.) and community data (disasters, crime, poverty, domestic violence rates, etc.). Supplemental data (needs assessments, focus group results, etc.) is helpful to determine student needs and the CSCP focus. The CSCP Plan aligns with the school's mission and strategic plan.

4.8 Confidentiality. The right to privacy and the expectation that the school counselor/student relationship complies with all laws, policies, and ethical standards regarding confidentiality in the school setting. The counselor must ensure that personal information shared by the student or parents/guardians remains confidential unless the information pertains to harm to self or others. School counselors must adhere to Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 USC 1232g; 34 CRF Part 99, guidelines and the ASCA Code of Ethics to protect personal student information.

4.9 Consultation. Provided by the school counselor to support a student's needs or to provide information to parents/guardians, teachers, other educators, and community agencies regarding strategies and resources to help students and families. School counselors exchange strategies, information, and resources with stakeholders to meet individual student needs. School counselors both offer and seek consultation. During the consultation process, school counselors serve as advocates for students to promote wellbeing and success in school.

4.10 Counseling. The professional assistance and support provided to a student or small group of students during transitions, heightened stress, critical change, crisis, or other situations impeding student wellbeing and success. Counseling provided by the school counselor is short-term and based on counseling theories and techniques effective in a school setting to promote academic, career, and social/emotional development. Counseling can be proactive and responsive and helps students identify problems, causes, potential consequences and benefits, alternatives, and outcomes so they can make decisions and take appropriate actions. School counselors use the WVCCRDSSS to provide focus in the counseling process.

4.11 Crisis Response. Provides prevention, intervention, and follow-up to individual and school-wide crises that impact students, staff, or families. Crisis response is usually temporary and includes a variety of research-based interventions to support individual or group needs. Long-term reactions to a crisis may result in a referral to appropriate community or school-based resources and follow-up interventions. Principals and school counselors adhere to W. Va. 126CSR99, Policy 4373, Expected Behavior in Safe and Supportive Schools (Policy 4373), to develop the school crisis prevention and response plan.

4.12 Direct Services. In-person interactions between school counselors and students. Through the direct services of instruction, appraisal, advisement, and counseling, school counselors help students develop the

knowledge, attitudes, and skills outlined in the WVCCR DSSS and the West Virginia Pre-K Standards to help students improve wellbeing, achievement, attendance, and discipline. Through each of these direct services, the school counselor and students work toward a specific goal.

4.13 Equity and Access. The process of reforming practices, policies, and procedures at the school, county, and state level to ensure all students have equal access to relevant programs, courses, resources, and activities regardless of race, ethnicity, social class, family background, ability, sexual orientation, or gender.

4.14 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 USC 1232g; 34 CRF Part 99. Provides legal guidance for disclosure of personally identifiable student information, including education records. Without a legitimate educational interest, individuals, including school officials, may not access student records without parental consent. School counselors must be familiar with and follow federal guidelines of the Family Policy Compliance Office in the U.S. Department of Education.

4.15 Group Counseling. Provided for small groups of students experiencing similar difficulties that impede school success. Group counseling sessions may include personal concerns, relational concerns, behavioral issues, school adjustment issues, attendance problems, academic concerns, or developmental issues. Small group counseling is skills-based, helping students with similar concerns develop strategies that improve personal and school success. Small group counseling is typically scheduled during a non-instructional time or is staggered between class periods, minimizing absences during instruction while building coping and school success skills. Group counseling in schools is short-term and typically occurs for 30-50 minutes once a week for four-seven weeks. School counselors refer students who need more intensive therapeutic counseling to school-based or community mental health professionals.

4.16 Indirect Services. Include consultation, collaboration, and referral. School counselors provide indirect services to support student success and to promote equity and access for all students.

4.17 Individual Counseling. A helping process implemented by a professional with a certification in counseling that uses various evidence-based techniques and strategies to help individual students explore academic, career, and social/emotional issues which may impede healthy development or academic progress. Individual counseling aims to assist students with addressing barriers and improving success at school, at home, and in the community. Individual counseling in the school setting is short-term in nature. School counselors refer students who need more intensive therapeutic counseling to school-based or community mental health professionals.

4.18 Informed Consent. Involves seeking written permission from parents/guardians of minors for services typically not provided by certified school staff and is required when students receive services from non-school employees. Students under the age of consent may assent to school counseling services offered by the school counselor without parental permission because the comprehensive school counseling program is a required school component of W. Va. 126CSR42, Policy 2510, Assuring the Quality of Education: Regulations for Education Programs (Policy 2510). Therefore, school counselors are not required to seek parental permission for students to benefit from components of the school counseling program, with the exception of administering student needs assessments. As a best practice, counselors may inform parents/guardians when students receive school counseling services if the information does not conflict with students' desire for confidentiality.

4.19 Instruction. The process school counselors use to teach the school counseling curriculum to deliver the West Virginia Pre-K Standards and the WVCCR DSSS. School counselors provide instruction in classrooms, large groups, small groups, and individually. Instruction intends to help all students maximize their potential by enhancing academic, college/career, and social/emotional development and improving achievement, attendance, and discipline outcomes.

4.20 Needs Assessments. A supplemental method school counselors may use to solicit additional information from students and relevant stakeholders about needs identified in school data. Needs assessments help contextualize the problems by providing input on what is contributing to the identified need. The contextual information gathered helps school counselors respond with more effectively targeted interventions. When conducting student needs assessments or other student surveys, school counselors adhere to The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), 20 USC 1232h; 34 CFR Part 98, in the U.S. Department of Education.

4.21 Personalized Education Plan (PEP). Developed collaboratively, involving students, parents/guardians, teacher advisors, and school counselors as a part of the personalized student planning process. The PEP identifies the student's career interests and courses needed for graduation and assists with high school and postsecondary goal planning. Policy 2510 and the West Virginia School Counseling Model outline grade-level expectations for completing the PEP.

4.22 Personalized Student Planning. Provides opportunities for students to plan, monitor, and manage their academic, college and career, and social/emotional development. The school counselor works closely with the school leadership team to plan ongoing opportunities during the school day for career exploration and self-discovery at all programmatic levels. Personalized planning allows the student to develop academic and social/emotional skills, identify interests, maximize strengths, minimize weaknesses, set and reach personal and educational goals and realize their career aspirations.

4.23 Postsecondary. Includes educational and career options available to students after high school (e.g., two and four-year colleges, certificate programs, on-the-job training, apprenticeship programs, and the military).

4.24 Referral. Initiated when students' needs extend beyond the school counselor's role, training, and responsibilities. School counselors provide appraisal, advisement, personalized student planning, and counseling services through short-term targeted approaches. When students need support beyond short-term services or counseling, a school counselor's ethical duty is to provide a referral to school-based or community resources for additional assistance or information.

4.25 School Counseling Advisory Council. A group of stakeholders, invited by the school counselor(s), and reflecting the community's diversity to include students, parents, teachers, school counselors, administrators, school board members, business leaders, and community members. The advisory council meets a recommended minimum of two times per year to provide feedback on the CSCP goals, developed and explained by the school counselor(s); to review program results based on the school counselor(s) data; and to make recommendations about the CSCP. The advisory council members also serve as advocates for the program.

4.26 School Counselor Administrative Activities. The 20 percent of a school counselor's time set aside for activities related to defining, managing, and assessing the CSCP. In addition, the school counselor may spend a small portion of the 20 percent providing fair-share responsibilities if the percent does not exceed that of the other school staff in the building and the responsibilities do not require the school counselor to take a disciplinary role.

4.27 Social/Emotional Development. The process through which both students and adults gain the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to develop healthy identities, identify and manage emotions, set and achieve goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

4.28 Stakeholders. Any person who assists with or benefits from the school counseling program and includes students, school staff, school leadership, parents, community leaders, community members, higher education, and workforce leaders.

4.29 West Virginia College- and Career-Readiness Dispositions and Standards for Student Success (WVCCRDS). Standards that describe the attitudes, knowledge, skills, and behaviors essential to support K-12 students in achieving everyday school success and being college- and career-ready and are outlined in W. Va. 126CSR44U, Policy 2520.19, West Virginia College- and Career-Readiness Dispositions and Standards for Student Success for Grades K-12 (Policy 2520.19). The WVCCRDS are critical to the holistic development of all students and require integration into all aspects of each student's educational experience utilizing all school staff and key community stakeholders through a variety of delivery modalities. The WVCCRDS are the foundational standards for each CSCP.

4.30 West Virginia CSCP Plan Template. Provides a standardized format for West Virginia school counselors, administrators, and stakeholders to plan, coordinate, and assess the CSCP. This plan is not a binding, unchangeable document but a guidepost for the program focus in the school year. The school counselor develops the plan in collaboration with school administrators and other stakeholders to provide an organized, integrated, and planned sequential, needs-based approach aligned with the school's strategic plan. The West Virginia CSCP Plan aligns with requirements outlined in this policy, the West Virginia School Counseling Model, and the ASCA National Model.

4.31 West Virginia Pre-K Standards (Ages 3-5). Standards for children enrolled in pre-k that are grounded in scientific child development research, children's approaches to learning, and effective educational practices outlined in W. Va. 126CSR44O, Policy 2520.15, West Virginia Pre-K Standards (Ages 3-5) (Policy 2520.15). The ability to use appropriate strategies is vital to implementing these standards. School counselors use these standards when working with pre-k students to guide counseling practices and offer high-quality early education environments and experiences that are responsive to individual children and maximize learning.

4.32 West Virginia Professional School Counselor Standards (WVPCS). Standards that describe the essential skills, knowledge, dispositions, and behaviors all West Virginia professional school counselors must possess. W. Va. 126CSR142, Policy 5310, Performance Evaluation of Professional Personnel and Athletic Coaches (Policy 5310), outlines the standards. These standards align with best practices to guide school counselors to improve program effectiveness and student success. A performance level rubric is available to guide school counselors in accomplishing all the significant facets of effective school counseling practice.

4.33 West Virginia School Counseling Model. The model provides consistency and standardization for school counseling programs in West Virginia. The West Virginia School Counseling Model aligns with the ASCA National Model promoting best practices, professionalism, and ethical standards. In addition, the model outlines the components of an equitable and inclusive comprehensive school counseling program that are integral to the school's mission and created to impact academic success and social-emotional wellbeing for all students.

4.34 West Virginia School Crisis Prevention and Response Plan. The plan outlined by Policy 4373, to be developed by the school crisis and response planning team, utilizing the WVDE Crisis Prevention and Response Plan Template, which contains the requirements for school-specific plans. The template aligns with the Safe Schools Initiative of the School Building Authority of West Virginia and West Virginia Homeland Security and Emergency Management per W. Va. Code §18-9F-9.

4.35 West Virginia Tiered System of Support (WVTSS). A three-tiered system of student support that aligns with the West Virginia School Counseling Model that provides universal prevention, targeted interventions, and intensive interventions through direct and indirect services to support success and wellbeing.

## **5.0 Responsibilities**

5.1 The county board of education shall ensure that:

5.1.a appropriate and effective implementation of all components outlined in this policy to ensure that every student has access to a CSCP coordinated by full-time certified school counselors as defined in Policy 5202; and

5.1.b a CSCP policy for schools aligned with requirements outlined in this policy is submitted for approval to the WVDE. The initial and subsequent revisions will be submitted to the WVDE by October 1 of each school year; and

5.1.c a comprehensive drop-out prevention program utilizing the expertise of school counselors and any other appropriate resources is implemented per W. Va. Code §18-5-18b.

5.2 The county central office shall ensure that:

5.2.a principals and school counselors are provided professional learning opportunities and appropriate resources to effectively implement the components outlined in this policy;

5.2.b each school's CSCP aligns with the West Virginia School Counseling Model and the applicable WVBE policies: Policy 5310, Policy 4373, Policy 2520.15, Policy 2520.19, and Policy 2510; and

5.2.c a CSCP Plan is developed and implemented at each school.

5.3 The school shall ensure that:

5.3.a each student benefits from a CSCP through appropriate and effective implementation of all components outlined in this policy.

5.3.b in accordance with W. Va. Code §18-5-18b, school counselors spend at least 80 percent of work time in a direct counseling relationship with students to provide both direct and indirect services that support student success. School counselors shall devote no more than 20 percent of work time to administrative activities which include planning, managing, and assessing the CSCP according to the West Virginia School Counseling Model and as defined in this policy;

5.3.c school counselors, in collaboration with the principal, school leadership team, school counseling advisory council, or other stakeholders, develop an annual CSCP Plan, utilizing the West Virginia CSCP Plan Template;

5.3.d school counselors are supported in the establishment and convening of the school counseling advisory council to develop and assess the CSCP. The school counselors develop agendas and plan meetings to inform stakeholders about the CSCP. The advisory council meets at least two times per year to discuss school data, CSCP priorities, assessment, and annual student impact goals. The school counselors analyze and incorporate feedback from the advisory council;

5.3.e the CSCP utilizes student, school, and community data to identify student needs, annual CSCP

goals aligned with the school's strategic plan, and evidence-based practices to address student needs;

5.3.f through a collaborative partnership and an integrated delivery model involving school counselors, school leadership team, and other stakeholders, all students are provided opportunities to achieve the foundational standards established in the West Virginia Pre-K Standards (Ages 3-5) and the WVCCRDSSES;

5.3.g the CSCP includes the program delivery components: integrated delivery of WVCCRDSSES, instruction, appraisal, advisement, personalized student planning, counseling, consultation, collaboration, and referrals;

5.3.h the CSCP Plan is supported and monitored by the principal to assure that students benefit from the implementation of the CSCP;

5.3.i school counselors adhere to FERPA guidelines, ASCA Ethical Standards, confidentiality laws/guidelines, and informed consent;

5.3.j school counselors are evaluated by the school principal as defined in Policy 5310 and per the WVPSCS; and

5.3.k the school counselor is a member of the school crisis prevention and response planning team and is involved in developing and updating the school crisis prevention and response plan per Policy 4373.

## **6.0 Components of a Comprehensive School Counseling Program (CSCP)**

6.1 The CSCP is based on data-informed decisions, integral to the school's academic mission, and designed to have a significant positive impact on student wellbeing and success. This section defines components of a standards-focused and evidence-based CSCP.

6.2 The following student and professional practice standards define the CSCP.

6.2.a The West Virginia Pre-K Standards, outlined in Policy 2520.15, guide school counselors in offering high quality early education environments and experiences that are responsive to individual students and maximize learning. These are the foundational standards for the development and implementation of a CSCP in pre-K.

6.2.b The WVCCRDSSES, outlined in Policy 2520.19, are the foundational standards for developing and implementing a CSCP in elementary, middle, and high schools.

6.2.c The West Virginia School Counselor Professional Standards, outlined in Policy 5310, provide the necessary guidance, framework, and evaluation to assist all school counselors with self-assessment and implementation of exemplary practices that impact student achievement, attendance, behavior, and general wellbeing.

6.2.d The ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors specify the principles of ethical behavior necessary to maintain the highest standard of integrity, leadership, and professionalism. These standards guide school counselors' decision-making and help standardize professional practice to protect students and school counselors.

6.3 School counselors manage the CSCP to encompass planning and activities to address the needs of all students. A school-level CSCP Plan is developed by each school annually, utilizing the West Virginia CSCP Plan Template. The CSCP Plan includes the essential components of an effective CSCP. The

principal supports and monitors the CSCP Plan and promotes collaboration between the school counselor(s), school leadership, the school counseling advisory council, and other stakeholders to review applicable data to guide the annual plan development. This data includes school data (i.e., various student assessments, attendance, discipline, drop-out rates) and community data (i.e., disasters, crime, poverty, domestic violence rates). Supplemental data (i.e., needs assessments, focus group results) are helpful to determine student needs and the CSCP focus. The CSCP Plan aligns with the school's mission and strategic plan.

6.4 School counselors deliver direct and indirect services through the WVTSS framework, a multi-tiered system of support that promotes equity and access for all students and fosters student wellbeing, achievement, and success.

6.5 School counselors provide direct student services to help students develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills outlined in the West Virginia Pre-K Standards and the WVCCR DSSS. The following are direct services provided through the CSCP.

6.5.a Instruction. School counseling instruction is a direct service that includes teaching a school counseling curriculum by incorporating student standards from the West Virginia Pre-K Standards or the WVCCR DSSS. Instruction occurs in classrooms, large groups, small groups, or individually. School counselors may provide instruction through direct instruction, team teaching, or assisting in learning activities. The focus of instruction is to assist students in developing needed skills for improvement in social-emotional wellbeing, achievement, attendance, or discipline.

6.5.b Appraisal. Appraisal is a direct service provided by school counselors to individual students to analyze and assess students' abilities, interests, skills, and achievement through the appraisal of student tests, inventories, universal screeners, or other data. This process involves the interpretation, assessment, and feedback leading to the development of academic, career, and social/emotional plans.

6.5.c Advisement. Advisement is a direct service provided to individual students through which school counselors make recommendations based on the appraisal of tests, inventories, and other data to help students make decisions for their future.

6.5.d Personalized Student Planning. Personalized student planning is a direct student service that provides students with opportunities to plan, monitor, and manage their academic, college and career, and social/emotional development. Personalized planning allows students to develop academic and social/emotional skills, identify interests, maximize strengths, minimize weaknesses, set and reach personal and educational goals, and realize their career aspirations. The school counselor works closely with the school leadership team to plan ongoing opportunities during the school day for career exploration and self-discovery at all programmatic levels. The Personalized Education Plan (PEP), described in Policy 2510, is part of the personalized student planning process and is developed for each student, starting in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The PEP is developed in consultation with the student's parent and/or guardian, school counselor, and/or teacher advisor and is used to guide, personalize, and maximize each student's learning experience.

6.5.e Counseling. Counseling is a direct service provided through individual counseling or group counseling to provide professional assistance and support. Counseling is provided during transitions, heightened stress, critical change, crisis (crisis response), or other situations impeding student success. It is short-term and based on counseling theories and techniques that are effective in a school setting to promote academic, career, and social/emotional development.

6.6 School counselors provide indirect student services to support student success and promote equity and



access for all students. School counselors work with parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, school staff, community stakeholders, and other partners to address the needs of students in the school. The following are indirect services delivered through the CSCP.

6.6.a Consultation. Consultation is an indirect service that involves providing information, opinions, and recommendations to individuals who support students' needs. It also involves seeking information from an expert about student needs. School counselors both offer and seek consultation.

6.6.b Collaboration. Collaboration is an indirect service school counselors provide when working with multiple individuals on a common goal and sharing responsibility for the associated tasks. Refer to the West Virginia School Counseling Model for examples of collaboration that occur within the CSCP.

6.6.c Referral. Referral is an indirect service a school counselor provides when a student's needs extend beyond the school counseling roles, training, and/or responsibilities. School counselors provide instructional, advisement, and counseling services through brief, targeted approaches. When students need support beyond short-term services or counseling, a school counselor's ethical duty is to refer students and parents/guardians to school or community resources for additional assistance or information.

6.7 The CSCP is designed with continuous assessment and improvement in mind. The program is regularly assessed through data analysis and reports (i.e., CSCP Program Assessment, Classroom and Small Group Results Report, Closing the Gap Results Report) to determine its effectiveness and impact on student wellbeing and success.

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