

AN ACT

Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An act relating to the public school system; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the laws relating thereto," providing for comprehensive school counseling services.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. The act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, is amended by adding an article to read:

ARTICLE XIII-F

COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICES

Section 1301-F. Definitions.

The following words and phrases when used in this article shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Administrative activities." Activities that are not directly related to the plan and that are absent of any direct student services or interaction.

"Department." The Department of Education of the Commonwealth.

"Direct services." As follows:

(1) Services that are provided through face-to-face contact with students.

(2) The term includes the following:

(i) Classroom instruction.

(ii) Individual and group counseling for students.

(iii) Responsive services on behalf of a student whose immediate personal concerns and problems put the

student's academic, career or social and emotional development at risk. Responsive services include the administration of a risk-assessment.

(iv) Interventions for a student who is:

(A) at risk of dropping out of school; or

(B) exhibiting dangerous behaviors, such as drug use, self-harm or gang activity.

"Indirect services." Consultations among a student, a parent or legal guardian of the student, school staff and community agencies concerning the student's academic, career or social and emotional needs.

"Plan." The comprehensive school counseling plan under section 1302-F.

"School entity." Any of the following:

(1) A school district.

(2) A public school as defined in 24 Pa.C.S. § 8102

(relating to definitions).

(4) An intermediate unit as described in Article IX-A.

(5) A charter school as defined in section 1703-A.

(6) A cyber charter school as defined in section 1703-A.

(7) A regional charter school as defined in section

1703-A.

(8) An area career and technical school as described in section 1841.

Section 1302-F. Comprehensive school counseling plan.

(a) Authorization and purpose.--Each school entity shall develop and implement a written comprehensive school counseling plan that ensures that student services are coordinated in a

manner that provides comprehensive and developmental support to all students of the school entity.

(b) Requirements generally.-- A plan shall:

(1) Be implemented by a Pennsylvania-certified school counselor or counseling team working within each school in the school entity.

(2) Utilize nationally recognized and State-recognized counselor frameworks.

(3) Be reviewed annually and updated as needed by a school counselor or counseling team, in collaboration with each affected building principal as well as other stakeholders and staff of each school entity.

(4) Be systemically aligned from kindergarten through grade 12 within the school entity, including transitions across schools within the school entity.

(5) Include sections for each grade and building within the school entity, including student transitions between grades and buildings as well as student transition to other school entities.

(6) Be reflected in and integrated alongside the school entity's Student Services Plan as required under 22 Pa. Code § 4.13. (Strategic plans) or future regulation.

(c) Components.--A plan shall contain the following:

(1) A foundation component, which shall include:

(i) A vision statement.

(ii) A mission statement.

(iii) Plan goals.

(2) A management component, which utilizes assessments

and other data to develop, implement and evaluate the plan.

(3) A delivery component, which focuses on direct services and indirect services through the implementation of the plan and which shall include:

(i) A plan for each grade taught by the school entity.

(ii) A plan for students with individualized education plans and other special needs.

(iii) A plan for each building in the school entity, if applicable.

(4) An accountability component, which ensures regular analysis of the plan.

(d) Contents.--A plan shall:

(1) Guide students in academic pursuits, career planning and social and emotional learning.

(2) Follow the comprehensive school counseling program guidance provided by the department.

(3) Include goals that are developed annually based on the vision and mission statements that are shared by stakeholders to ensure equitable access to opportunities for all students.

(4) Identify student needs through a multilevel school data review that includes:

(i) Data analysis.

(ii) Use-of-time data review.

(iii) Program results data.

(iv) Communication and contact with administrators, students, parents and guardians of students and

stakeholders.

Section 1303-F. School counselor use of time.

(a) General requirement.--Sufficient time at each school entity shall be allotted for the school entity's counselor to carry out the duties stated in the school entity's plan.

(b) Direct and indirect services.--

(1) A school counselor shall spend at least 80% of the school counselor's working time during student contact days providing direct services and indirect services to students.

(2) Direct services and indirect services may be provided in collaboration with other school personnel and include:

(i) Providing academic advisement services, including:

(A) Developing an individual planning system to guide a student to access and monitor the student's own educational, career and social and emotional progress.

(B) Guiding a student along the pathways to graduation.

(C) Guiding a student in goal-setting experiences and course selection aligned with the student's post-secondary goals.

(D) Addressing accelerated learning opportunities.

(E) Addressing academic deficits and the accessibility of resources.

(F) Providing student assessment reviews,

interest inventories or academic results needed to develop, review and revise a student's plan of study.

(G) Providing support for students who show potential so they are more likely to engage in rigorous coursework and take advantage of post-secondary opportunities.

(ii) Providing a career planning process, including:

(A) Guidance in understanding the relationship between classroom performance and success in school and beyond.

(B) The provision of resources to identify career interests and aptitudes to assist a student in age-appropriate college and career planning.

(C) Guidance in understanding the advantages of completing career certifications and internships.

(D) Interpretation of augmented, criterion-referenced or norm-referenced assessments for students and parents or guardians of students.

(E) The provision of information to a parent or legal guardian of a student, such as through workshops on preparing for college, financial aid and career opportunities.

(F) Encouragement to a parent or legal guardian of a student to support partnerships in the student's learning and career planning processes.

(iii) Providing social and emotional skills designed to support students, including programs to:

(A) Promote cultural and social awareness,

positive communication and relationship skills,
collaboration with others and responsible decision
making.

(B) Improve culture and climate in the school
entity so that all students can feel that they are in
a safe and supportive environment.

(C) Develop conflict-resolution skills.

(D) Prevent bullying, including:

(I) Training programs for school employees
regarding how to recognize bullying behaviors.

(II) Protocols for responding to bullying
that is occurring in the school entity.

(III) Strategies that support a student who
is being bullied.

(IV) Strategies that help a bystander speak
out against bullying.

(E) Address age-appropriate suicide awareness
and prevention through:

(I) Strategies that help identify a student
who is at risk for suicide.

(II) Strategies and protocols that help a
student who is at risk for suicide.

(III) Protocols for responding to a suicide
death.

(iv) Intervening with students who are at risk of
dropping out of school to determine if there is a way to
keep the students in school.

(v) Providing orientation programs for new students

and transferring students at each level of education.

(vi) Serving as a contributing member of decision-making teams and programs, which include:

(A) Teams that are convened under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-112, 29 U.S.C. § 701 et seq.).

(B) Multitiered System of Supports (MTSS) or Response to Intervention (RTI) teams.

(C) English language learner programs.

(D) Parental involvement or family engagement programs.

(E) Positive behavioral intervention support programs.

(F) Advanced placement and gifted and talented programs.

(c) Administrative activities.--

(1) Administrative activities performed by a school counselor shall not exceed more than 20% of the school counselor's time spent working during student contact days.

(2) Administrative activities provided by a school counselor in collaboration with other school personnel include:

(i) Coordinating State assessments, cognitive achievement assessments, advanced placement programs and language acquisition testing programs.

(ii) Developing master schedules.

(iii) Coordinating the following:

(A) Teams that are convened under section 504 of

the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

(B) Response to Intervention (RTI) teams.

(C) English language learner programs.

(D) Parental involvement or family engagement programs.

(E) Positive behavioral intervention support programs.

(F) Advanced placement and gifted and talented programs.

(G) Data entry.

(iv) Monitoring students in common areas, such as the cafeteria, a hallway, the playground or bus lines.

Section 1304-F. Monitoring and support.

(a) Posting of plan.--Each school entity shall be responsible for posting its plan on the school entity's publicly accessible Internet website or, in the alternative, on the publicly accessible Internet website of the school entity's school district, under the category of State-required information.

(b) Oversight.--Beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, the department shall monitor each school entity to ensure implementation and compliance with this article.

(c) Departmental duties.--The department shall:

(1) Employ at least one individual who is certified as a school counselor.

(2) Provide a multilevel system of support to school entities to assist in complying with this article.

(3) Provide guidance and technical assistance to school

entities to support equitable access to school counseling services.

Section 2. This act shall take effect immediately.