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Chris Reykdal, Superintendent

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BULLETIN NO. 083-21 ELEMENTARY EDUCATION & EARLY LEARNING AND SECONDARY EDUCATION & PATHWAY PREPARATION

TO: Educational Service District Superintendents
School District Superintendents
School District Business Managers

FROM: Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Public Instruction

RE: Comprehensive School Counseling Programs, SSB 5030

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PURPOSE & BACKGROUND

During the 2021 legislative session, the Legislature passed [Substitute Senate Bill \(SSB\) 5030](#), which was the result of a multi-year effort by the Washington School Counselor Association (WSCA) and other statewide advocates to clarify the role of the school counselor in alignment with current best practices. SSB 5030 requires districts to develop and implement a comprehensive school counseling program (CSCP) for all schools within the district that addresses students' social/emotional, academic, and career development in alignment with the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model.

School counselors provide universal learning supports for all students, often positioned to be the first school-employed professional to recognize and address students' social/emotional, career, and academic needs. They function as advocates, collaborators, and leaders to bring about the systemic changes necessary to provide an equitably administered CSCP aligned with the district's vision, mission, and school improvement goals. In alignment with [ASCAs ethical standards for school counseling](#), practitioners are compelled to deliver services in a universally accessible, strengths-based, and unbiased manner. School counseling staff demonstrate their

commitment to promoting equitable student outcomes by examining their own personal biases and engaging in professional development to recognize and break patterns of bias. They also authentically engage with their entire school community, advocating and collaborating to remove systemic barriers to help all students feel safe, valued, and supported in their academic, career, and social/emotional development.

Within this bulletin is an outline of the requirements for developing and implementing a district CSCP as an integral component within a larger framework for a tiered student support system. It is important to be clear that the legislature's intent is to align the role of the *school counselor* to the ASCA national model best practices. This bill does not require that other Educational Staff Associate (ESA) staff employed in Washington schools in the specific roles of school social worker, school psychologist, school nurse, and behavior consultant take on the role, activities, or professional identity of the school counselor. The ESA roles are distinct in their training and expertise, and ideally work collaboratively to provide a tiered support system for all students. Thus, acknowledging that districts' support needs and staffing options differ, the legislature recognizes in the bill that other ESA staff may be tasked with implementing components of a CSCP, either in collaboration with school counselors or as the school's existing support staff.

This bulletin also directs districts toward tools from the ASCA national school counseling model and other related national- and state-level resources, in accordance with the requirements of SSB5030. The national models of best practice for school social workers and other ESAs may be important resources for developing district policies and practices specific to offering a comprehensive student support system that integrates multiple ESA roles, although this additional alignment of best practices for other ESA roles is outside of the scope of this bill.

In collaboration with other state and regional organizations, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) intends to offer a variety of supports for school counseling staff and district support staff to learn more about the ASCA National Model and school counseling best practices over the next two years and beyond. At the time of this publication, these activities are under development. Event and resource information will be shared via the [OSPI School Counseling News & Notes newsletter](#) and the [OSPI School Counseling webpage](#).

REQUIRED PROGRAM COMPONENTS

This section will outline the minimum requirements included in Section 2 of SSB 5030.

A district comprehensive school counseling program (CSCP) plan, based on the national school counseling model, must be developed, and adopted prior to the start of the 2022–23 school year, with at least transitional implementation beginning in the 2022–23 school year, and full implementation in 2023–24 and beyond. Districts are encouraged to post their CSCP plan on their website so students, staff, families, and the community can learn more about available supports.

The district written plan must:

1. Include related state and national learning standards that align with the CSCP. The three domains that school counselors are trained to address include social/emotional, academic, and career development, and are listed below with related resource links.
 - **Social/Emotional Development:** Implement strategies and activities to support and maximize each student's ability to manage emotions, learn and apply interpersonal skills, and maintain positive mental health. CSCPs will systemically align with:
 - ASCAs [Student Mindsets and Behaviors Standards](#), especially the Self-Management and Social Skills Standards, and
 - [Washington SEL Standards](#).
 - **Academic Development:** Implement strategies and activities to support and maximize each student's ability to think critically and creatively, engage in their learning, access rigorous coursework, and make informed decisions.
 - CSCPs will systemically align with [ASCA's Student Mindsets and Behaviors Standards](#), especially, the Learning Strategies Standards.
 - District plans should articulate how staff implementing the CSCP will provide academic advising and supports that can be differentiated to meet students' unique learning needs and support each student in reaching their academic goals.
 - **Career Readiness:** Implement strategies and activities to support and maximize each student's ability to understand the connection between school and the world of work; plan for and make a successful transition from school to postsecondary education and career, and from job to job across their lifespan.
 - Social/emotional development is integral to building the foundational skills students need to make decisions that will prepare them for their career and postsecondary goals.
 - District plans should articulate how school counseling staff will provide P-12 career exploration and preparation information, including activities that can be differentiated to meet the unique interests and support needs of each student.
 - Staff should work to expand students' understanding of career options, in-demand skills, and post-secondary opportunities for further education and training.
2. Provide a process for identifying student needs through multi-level school data review and analysis. School counselors must incorporate at least the following tools and strategies into their process:
 - **Use-of-time data**
 - A breakdown of the time spent providing direct and indirect student services, program planning and school support, and non-school counseling tasks.
 - A template for ASCA's Use of Time Calculator is available [online](#).

- Many school counselors categorize their calendar appointments to track their activities without a template or special software or use other available tools (see Other Related Resources on pg. 9).
 - **Program results data**
 - Documents that instruction was delivered as planned, all students were served, and the impact of the services delivered.
 - Informs improvement of future activities and interventions to better meet students' needs.
 - Analysis of disaggregated data supports advocacy for systems change and closing opportunity gaps. (See link to templates in resource section for Closing the Gap Results Report).
 - The best use of the school counselor's time should be identified through data analysis and annual student outcome goals.
 - Related ASCA position statement – [Counselor evaluation & annual performance appraisal](#).
 - *Note: As with all interventions, results from school counseling activities take time and concerted, sustained effort to see positive results. It should be expected that outcome data will fluctuate due to the many factors that influence students' feelings, behavior, and school performance.
 - **Data regarding communications** with administrators, parents, students, and stakeholders
 - Key questions to consider:
 - How have CSCP staff engaged with school and community stakeholders this year?
 - What kinds of communications with families were most successful? Are they accessible for multi-lingual families?
 - How, when, and why did the school counseling staff communicate with students this year? How did students respond? What sources of student voice are being utilized to inform CSCP services?
 - Have the school counselor and building administrator(s) communicated regularly and effectively?
 - Are there communications needs not yet being met?
 - This multi-level school data review and analysis process may align well with existing school and district Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) data-based decision-making processes. Incorporating school counseling data and interventions into the school's and district's MTSS is an important step to coordinating student supports.
 - [Washington MTSS Framework](#)
3. Explain how direct and indirect services will be delivered through the CSCP.
- This process may align well with the existing school and district MTSS continuum of student supports, evidence-based practices, team-driven shared leadership, and family, student, and community engagement. Incorporating school

counseling activities into the school's and district's MTSS is an important step to coordinating student supports.

- [Washington MTSS Framework](#)
 - Related [ASCA Position Statement on MTSS](#)
4. Establish an annual review and assessment process for the CSCP that includes building administrators and stakeholders
- Using the data collected to identify student needs that drive the interventions and supports provided during the year, school counselors report their outcomes and results to administrators and interested parties.
 - Two of the [templates](#) ASCA recommends that school counselors use to evaluate their program include:
 - Classroom and Group Mindsets & Behaviors Results Report
 - Closing-the-Gap Results Report
 - Data to consider may include participation, mindsets and behaviors changes, and student outcomes, including but not limited to, changes in attendance, discipline rates, postsecondary pathway attainment, grades, course choices, and behavior across all student groups.

IMPLEMENTATION DETAILS AND DEFINITIONS

This section outlines the minimum requirements included in Section 3 of SSB 5030.

The implementation considerations for comprehensive school counseling programs, which must also be incorporated in the district's written plan as required by Section 2 of this bill, must:

1. Be implemented by certified school counselors or other certified Educational Staff Associates (ESA) for the purpose of guiding students in their academic pursuits, career planning, and social/emotional development.
 - Created by the statewide associations representing school counselors, social workers, psychologists, and nurses, these descriptions of tiered ESA [staff roles](#) and [distinguishing factors between the different professions](#) may be helpful in understanding the expertise and strengths of each ESA role.
2. School counselors and other ESA staff assigned to implement the CSCP must allocate 80% of their **work time** to providing **direct** and **indirect services** to benefit students, aligned with the ASCA standards. This requirement may necessitate assessing the duties assigned to school counseling staff for alignment with the national school counseling model. The resources below will be helpful to undertake this evaluation and transition.
 - [National Model: Appropriate and Inappropriate Activities for School Counseling Staff](#)
 - Refer to [ASCA Position Statements](#) to learn more about the best practices for specific aspects of the school counselor role, such as anti-racist practices, school–family–community partnerships, career development and supporting students with disabilities or a 504 Plan, for example.

- **Direct Services** are in-person interactions between CSCP staff and students that help students improve achievement, attendance, and discipline. For example: instruction, appraisal, advisement, and counseling.
 - **Indirect Services** are provided on behalf of students to enhance student achievement and promote equity and access for all students. For example: collaboration, consultation, student advocacy, and referral.
 - **Program Planning and Support** includes the 20% of time used to plan and prepare, which includes activities such as analyzing data, goal setting, lesson planning, developing an annual calendar, and the annual administrative conference.
 - **Work Time** is the portion of an employee's contracted hours for which they are contracted to implement the CSCP.
3. Staff implementing the CSCP on a part-time basis will use the 80% requirement for direct and indirect services only for the time they're contracted to implement the CSCP.
- For example, a .5 FTE school counselor would spend 16 of their 20 contracted hours per week in direct and indirect support of students, in alignment with the ASCA National Model. That same person may also be contracted for .5 FTE in another role that does not implement the CSCP. The 80% requirement does not apply to the time spent in a role that does not implement the CSCP.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

This chart gives a brief overview of the expected timeline for districts to develop a plan for providing a comprehensive school counseling program (CSCP) and implementing a transition to aligning CSCP services to national and state standards as outline in SSB5030.

2021–22 School Year	Develop district CSCP plan, ideally in collaboration with staff assigned to implement and supervise the program
	Adopt district CSCP plan through locally defined process prior to the 2022–23 school year
	Create transition plan to begin implementation of adopted CSCP in 2022–23 school year
2022–23 School Year	Begin implementation of district CSCP, utilizing transition plan to work toward full implementation
2023–24 and Beyond	Full implementation of district CSCP

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Small Districts

Based on feedback received from small school district superintendents and school counselors across Washington, there are challenges for small school districts that must be considered in this process:

1. How can small districts implement this bill if they do not have any certified ESA staff and face challenges with recruiting and retaining support staff?
 - In places where school counseling or other ESA staff are not available or are not adequately allocated for in the prototypical school funding model, other staff can assist with the implementation of the district CSCP without an ESA certification.
 - Consider supporting staff with an existing interest in or passion for social/emotional development, career exploration and planning, and/or academic development in delivering services to students that are aligned to the national school counseling model as closely as possible. Available training and professional learning resources for these three domains of student supports are included in this section.
 - It is considered best practice for all educators to understand and support students' social-emotional learning. OSPI has online professional learning resources to assist educators with developing their social-emotional learning support capacity.
 - [OSPI SEL Modules](#)
 - [OSPI Confident Action and Referral by Educators \(CARE\) Online Training](#)
 - In addition to providing the best possible academic supports to meet the unique learning needs of every student, OSPI has staff and online resources available to assist educators with facilitating the academic guidance and advising that students need to ensure their preparation for graduation and their postsecondary goals.
 - [Graduation Pathway Toolkit](#)
 - It is also considered best practice for all educators to understand and support students' career exploration and preparation. OSPI has a comprehensive curriculum that includes lessons meeting all three domains of student support and other resources to assist with career exploration, related academic planning, and post-high school preparation.
 - [Career Guidance WA lesson plans](#)
 - [High School and Beyond Plan template](#) (writable Word doc)

2. How would staff delivering comprehensive school counseling services juggle multiple roles and meet the 80%-20% stipulation?
 - The intent of this bill is to increase support services to students by only allocating school counseling duties to staff who are implementing the CSCP and assigning non-school counseling duties to non-school counseling staff.
 - It is possible that the realignment of existing staff roles may necessitate adjustments in staff contracts.
 - In small districts, staff serve in multiple roles. The 80%-20% stipulation does not apply to staff who provide direct and indirect services to students as 'other duties as assigned'.
 - However, districts should document in the CSCP plan how current resources and staff are addressing students' academic, career, and social/emotional development in alignment with comprehensive school counseling programming.

Reassignment of Duties

District and building administrators may find that some duties previously assigned to staff delivering the CSCP will need to be transitioned to other staff upon alignment to the 80% direct and indirect service stipulation. No more than 20% of a school counselor's time may be spent on school support activities or program planning.

- The [Appropriate and Inappropriate Activities for School Counseling Staff](#) resource from ASCA clarifies the activities that should be provided by other staff within the school building or district.

More Student Support Funding Allocated to High-Poverty Schools in the 2022–23 State Budget

The 2021–23 state biennial budget allocates an additional .5 FTE to every 'high-poverty' school in Washington starting in 2022–23 to increase students' access to support services. Qualifying schools have more than 50% of students eligible for free and reduced-price meals in the previous school year. ([ESSB 5092\(2\)\(d\)\(ii\)\(B\)](#), p.379). This is not a component of SSB5030 but is supportive to the CSCP work.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Some of these tools are referenced earlier in this guidance and some are additional resources that districts may find helpful.

Equity and Social Justice Resources:

OSPI [SEL Equity Brief](#)

Learning for Justice [Social Justice Standards](#)

ASCA Resources:

[ASCA National Model & Implementation Guide](#), *books available for purchase*

In-depth resource for understanding and implementing the national model

Complimentary copies were mailed to every Washington public school district superintendent in August 2021.

[ASCA National Model Executive Summary](#)

High-level overview of the national model

[ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success](#)

Describe the knowledge, skills and attitudes students need to achieve academic success, college and career readiness and social/emotional development

[ASCA Ethical Standards](#)

"Specifies the obligation to the principles of ethical behavior necessary to maintain the high standards of integrity, leadership and professionalism."

[ASCA Templates and Resources](#), *no charge*

Includes Use of Time calculator, Annual Administrative Conference template, Annual Calendar example, data collection tools, data reporting templates, lesson planning outline, and Advisory Council guides.

[ASCA National Model Portal](#), *for a fee*

Create, store, and review CSCPs

Other Related Resources:

[SCUTA](#), *for a fee*

School Counseling Use of Time Application

[RAMP Ready](#), *no charge for 'base camp' service, other services for a fee*

ASCA-aligned resource from the American Student Achievement Institute. Includes tools for tracking time use, setting goals, and developing an annual calendar.

INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

For questions regarding this bulletin, please contact Megan LaPalm, Program Supervisor, Elementary School Counseling, at megan.lapalm@k12.wa.us; Kim Reykdal, Director, Graduation and Pathway Preparation, at kim.reykdal@k12.wa.us. The OSPI TTY number is 360-664-3631.

This bulletin is also available on the [Bulletins](#) page of the OSPI website.

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