

Frequently Asked Questions about Implementation of the Wisconsin Comprehensive School Counseling Model (WCSCM)

1. Is it a state requirement that school counselors become certified in the WCSCM by completing the Level I-III trainings?

No. Standard (e) PI 8.01 (2)(e) of the Wisconsin Administrative Code requires that school districts plan and implement a program of guidance and counseling services for all pupils enrolled in their district. Local school boards decide how the school counseling program will be implemented in their respective school districts. The Wisconsin Comprehensive School Counseling Model (WCSCM), which closely mirrors the American School Counselor Association's (ASCA) National Model, is regarded as "best practice" for school counselors, and they are encouraged and supported to access trainings that will help them implement the WCSCM. The Level I-III trainings are among those professional development opportunities that can provide assistance to school counselors in that endeavor.

2. For whom are the Level I-III trainings appropriate?

If a school district decides to utilize the Level I – III trainings, or other trainings on the ASCA National Model or the WCSCM, to help them implement the WCSCM, at a minimum, they should consider sending one or more school counselors. Successful implementation of the WCSCM may be facilitated by having other educators who will be involved in the implementation attend, as well, e.g., other pupil services professionals. Participation in such training by administrators, especially principals, would help to ensure that the implementation of the WCSCM is coordinated with other related programs and initiatives, e.g., at-risk programs, comprehensive pupil services, career development.

3. Our district's school counselors have recently rewritten our school counseling program curriculum and aligned it with our district's standards and benchmarks. Must they still attend the Level I-III trainings or similar professional development on the ASCA National Model or the WCSCM?

There is no requirement to attend such professional development, but it can be very helpful for the systematic development and implementation of the district's comprehensive school counseling program to do so.

4. Our school counselors returned from training saying they no longer should be doing non-counseling activities like bus duty and preparing the master schedule. Is this true? We're a small district and we need them to fulfill these roles.

Implementation of the WCSCM involves systemic change in local school districts that affect all staff, not just school counselors. It is critical that any decisions about changes in what school counselors (and other educators involved in implementing the WCSCM) do be made with an understanding of how other programs and staff will be affected. Bus,

recess and lunch duty are staff responsibilities that help to maintain a safe and welcoming school environment. Leadership by the school administration is critical in ensuring the successful implementation of any systemic change.

5. In my district, school social workers are conducting the eighth grade conferences. Is that appropriate? What role should they play in implementing the WCSCM?

School counselors are the pupil services professionals who coordinate and help deliver services under the WCSCM. Other pupil services professionals, such as school social workers, school nurses, and school psychologists, as well as other professional educators, may participate in the delivery of services for which they have been prepared in their professional training or through ongoing professional development. This is a local decision for each school district.

6. What is the state minimum requirement for career education?

Standard (l) PI 8.01(5) requires instruction in career education by stating, “An introduction to career exploration and planning, through a one semester course or the equivalent in instructional time and course content, shall be integrated within grades 5 through 8.” In addition, Standard (l) PI 8.01 (6) (m) addresses Education for Employment and says, “Each school district board shall comply with s. 121.02 (l) (m), which requires student access to education for employment and ch. PI 26, which defines education for employment.”

7. How can I implement the WCSCM in my district where I’m the only school counselor for grades K-12?

The flexibility of the WCSCM allows districts to incorporate activities which address their unique needs and priorities to prevent and reduce barriers to student success. **The WCSCM Resource and Planning Guide** offers guidelines for counselor time allocation and suggestions for utilizing those guidelines in determining the school counselor’s schedule and in developing the school counselor’s annual and weekly calendars. Collaboration with other educators is critical to implementing the model in such settings.

8. Where can I find an overall description of the WCSCM and its components?

You can access an overall description of the WCSCM at this link:
<http://www.dpi.wi.gov/sspw/scguidemodel.html>.

9. I’d like to share information about the WCSCM in a quick and easy way with the administrators in my school/district. Any suggestions?

Yes. Again, use the above-mentioned link, and then select “Powerpoints”. You will find a number of Powerpoint presentations that you are welcome to use in your efforts to share information with your stakeholders.

10. How long does it take to fully implement the WCSCM into a school district?

The school counseling leadership team is committed to three tasks during implementation: assessing the system needs by evaluating existing programs, generating support for comprehensive school counseling, and determining strategies to deliver the developmental school counseling curriculum effectively. This kind of collaboration is essential to providing a seamless system of delivery and it requires time and ongoing professional development. Generally, a district can expect that full implementation of the WCSCM will take 5-7 years.

11. Must our district use individual planning conferences to deliver the individual student planning component of the WCSCM?

Individual student planning consists of ongoing activities that help students plan, monitor, and manage their educational, personal, and career development. Parents/guardians have considerable influence on the future career choices of their children, and individual planning conferences are an excellent method for involving parents in the process of planning for students' futures. Evaluative feedback in many districts confirms wide parental acceptance and high regard for the effectiveness of individual planning conferences. Whether to utilize them, or other effective strategies in the individual student planning component is, again, a local school district decision.

12. What does an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) include and who is responsible for the development of it?

An ILP includes a program of study and learning that represents a mapped academic plan reflecting a student's unique set of interests, needs, learning goals, and graduation requirements. It goes beyond the "four-year plan" by recording the student's connections to the larger community including examples of community service and volunteerism; membership in community organizations like 4-H or church youth groups; participation in leadership activities outside of school; involvement in job shadowing, mentorships, and/or apprenticeships; and the pursuit of skill development through hobbies, athletics, and fine arts. The local school district determines what form the ILP will take and who will be responsible for its development. The eighth grade year is the optimal time to develop the ILP, and its review and revision are ongoing throughout the high school years. The ILP can be developed as part of the school counseling program during an advisory period, in a core content area's curriculum, or in an exploratory career and technical education course curriculum. The school counselor can utilize the ILP during individual student planning activities.