R277. Education, Administration.

R277-462. Comprehensive School Counseling Program.

R277-462-1. Authority and Purpose.

(1) This rule is authorized by:

(a) Utah Constitution Article X, Section 3 which vests general control and supervision over public education in the Board;

(b) Subsection 53E-3-401(4), which allows the Board to make rules to execute the Board's duties and responsibilities under the Utah Constitution and state law;

(c) Subsection 53E-2-304(2)(b) which directs local boards to develop policies for the implementation of student Plan for College and Career Readiness; and

(d) Section 53F-2-317, which directs the distribution of the weighted pupil units for college and career counseling.

(2) The purpose of this rule is to establish:

(a) standards and procedures for an LEA applying for funds appropriated for the School Counseling Program;

(b) the minimum counselor to student ratios within an LEA; and

(c) provisions for an LEA not meeting the minimum counselor to student ratios;

R277-462-2. Definitions.

(1) "LEA" means, for purposes of this rule, an LEA that serves students in any of grades 7-12.

(2) "Program" means an LEA's school counseling program that shall be consistent with the program model described in Section R277-462-3.

(3) "School Counselor" means an educator licensed as a school counselor consistent with Rule R277-306 and assigned to provide direct and indirect services to students consistent with the program.

(4) "Secondary School" means, for purposes of this rule, a school serving students in grades 7-12.

(5) "Student" means, for purposes of this rule, only students in grades 7-12.

R277-462-3. Incorporation of Utah K-12 Comprehensive School Counseling Program Components Document.

(1) This rule incorporates by reference the Utah K-12 Comprehensive School Counseling Program Components Document, April 2024.

(2) A copy of the current Utah K-12 Comprehensive School Counseling Program Components Document is located at:

(a) https://schools.utah.gov/administrativerules/documentsincorporated; and

(b) the Utah State Board of Education -- 250 East 500 South, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111.

R277-462-4. School Counseling Program Approval and Qualifying Criteria.

(1) To qualify for a funding distribution outlined in Subsection (2), an LEA shall:

(a) have a plan for college and career readiness consistent with Sections 53E-2-304 and R277-462-5;

(b) have an approved student success framework described in Section 53G-7-1304;

(c) at least once every six years, participate in an on-site program review conducted by the Superintendent which shall assess the components of the program as outlined in Section R277-462-3:

(i) collaborative classroom instruction;

(ii) implementation of the plan for college and career readiness;

(iii) program contribution to achieving the student success framework;

(iv) systemic dropout prevention; and

(v) overall administration of the program.

(d) at least once every three years conduct an internal on-site review consistent with elements of the on-site review conducted by the Superintendent;

(e) ensure the school's program is self-evaluated annually;

(f) participate in statewide trainings provided by the Superintendent;

(g) provide adequate resources and program management to each program within the LEA;

(h) conduct a program needs assessment with relevant stakeholders at least once every three years;

(i) submit an annual school-based data project demonstrating program or intervention effectiveness by June 15;

(j) provide evidence of LEA governing board approval of the program;

(k) demonstrate parental involvement in the program including advisory council participation;

(l) integrate collaborative classroom instruction consistent with standards identified by the LEA;

(m) maintain the required school counselor to student ratio described in Section R277-462-6;

(n) design a program that includes the needs of diverse students; and

(o) provide assistance for students in career literacy and future decision-making skills.

(2) An LEA that meets the requirements in Subsection (1) may receive a funding distribution as follows:

(a) a WPU base for the first 400 students; and

(b) a per student distribution for each additional student beyond 400 students, up to 1,200 students.

(3) An LEA shall use the October 1 enrollment count of the previous fiscal year when determining the distribution amount to request.

R277-462-5. Plan for College and Career Readiness.

(1) To qualify for funding described in Section R277-462-4 an LEA shall ensure each student within the LEA has a plan for college and career readiness.

(2) A student, student's parent, and school counselor shall collaboratively develop the student's plan for college and career readiness.

(3) A plan for college and career readiness shall:

(a) be a four-year plan; and

(i) initiated at the beginning of a student's seventh grade year; or

(ii) within the first year the student is enrolled in grades 7-12;

(b) include parents in the individual planning meetings with a student;

(c) be maintained by the counseling department in each school;

(d) follow a student as the student progresses through each grade; and

(e) when applicable, transfer with a student between LEAs.

(4) An LEA shall ensure that a student's course registration and class schedule is consistent with the student's plan for college and career readiness.

(5) An LEA shall require all schools within the LEA to document parental involvement in a student's planning meetings.

(6) An LEA shall ensure the implementation of a plan for college and career readiness is consistent with the LEA's program goals and includes the following conference meetings:

(a) at least one individual and one group conference meeting with a parent, school counselor and student during the student's:

(i) grades 7 and 8;

(ii) grades 9 and 10; and

(iii) grades 11 and 12; and

(b) other meetings as needed.

R277-462-6. School Counselor to Student Ratios.

(1) To qualify for funding described in Section R277-462-4 an LEA shall have at least one school counselor for every 350 students.

(2) For purposes of counting toward fulfillment of this ratio, a school counselor shall be:

(a) a full-time equivalent within an LEA; and

(b) Board certified and licensed as a school counselor.

(3) An LEA may be considered compliant with Subsection (1) if less than .25 school counselors would be needed for the LEA to meet the required ratio.

(4) No later than October 1 of each year an LEA shall certify to the Superintendent the school counselor to student ratio.

(5) No later than May 1 from submitting the LEA's certified ratio, an LEA that does not meet the required ratio in Subsection (1) shall submit to the Board a plan outlining a reasonable timeline and method for achieving compliance.

(6) If an LEA fails to fulfill the plan described in Subsection (5), the LEA may be placed on a corrective action plan described in Rule R277-114.

(7) If an LEA fails to complete the corrective action plan described in Subsection (6), the LEA shall be referred to the Board for further corrective action including loss of distributed funds.

R277-462-7. Allowable Use of Distributed Funds.

(1) An LEA shall ensure all funds distributed are used for any of the following purposes:

(a) collaborative classroom and small group curriculum;

(b) personnel costs, including clerical positions that support the plan for college and career readiness process;

(c) career center equipment or materials such as computers, media equipment, computer software, or occupational information;

(d) professional development for personnel involved in the program;

(e) expenses of extended hours which are required to run the program; and

(f) membership in Utah School Counselor Association, Utah Association for Career and Technical Education Association, and the Association for Career and Technical Education for one or more school counselors per school per year.

(2) An LEA may not use funds to supplant currently existing personnel or programs.

(3) An LEA may not use funds as part of a matching requirement.

(4) Restricted rate of indirect costs will be used.

R277-462-8. Variances, Accountability, and Reporting.

(1) A new LEA or existing LEA with a new program, may receive funding under Rule R277-462 if the new LEA:

(a) has received accreditation pursuant to Rule R277-410; and

(b) has an approved program pursuant to Rule R277-462.

(2) A new LEA or existing LEA with a new program, that does not meet the school counselor to student ratio described in Section R277-462-6 may receive a funding distribution after two years of planning, training, and program implementation.

(3) No later than October 1, an LEA shall certify annually all previously qualified schools continue to meet the program criteria.

(4) An LEA shall provide data and information about the LEA's program as requested by the Superintendent.

R277-462-9. Disbursement of Funds.

(1) An LEA shall meet all requirements of this rule to be eligible for College and Career Counseling (CCR) funding.

(2) The proportion of total CCR funding allocated for a participating LEA shall be determined by the formula described in Section 53F-2-317.

(3) CCR funds are restricted and shall be allocated to an LEA for an approved school counseling program as follows:

(a) an annual base amount of $20,000 per eligible secondary school; and

(b) an additional allocation that is proportional to the LEA's grades 7-12 prior school year's October 1 headcount in comparison to all other LEAs with an approved program;

(4) An LEA shall annually complete a funding application as defined by the Superintendent with assurances that the LEA meets the school counseling program standards as described in this rule.

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