ACP in Wisconsin

Implementing Academic and Career Planning

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Tony Evers, PhD, State Superintendent

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State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Academic and Career Planning (ACP) is intended to equip students and their families with the tools necessary to make more informed choices about postsecondary education and training as it leads to careers. We value all academic preparation coupled with career awareness, career exploration, and career planning and management activities into a student's educational experiences. When this occurs, students have the best chance of creating a realistic picture of what they need to do and which routes to take in order to achieve their dreams.

ACP is part of our overall vision for every student to graduate ready for further education and the workplace. That means our students must be competent both socially and emotionally. We want our students to be strong critical thinkers, to be able to collaborate and solve real-world problems, and persevere when things aren't quite going their way. When put together, it's really about making them productive adults with satisfying careers.

This document has been developed with your needs in mind. In conjunction with the ACP website, these two resources will provide you with the basic information needed to get started implementing ACP in your districts prior to September 2017.

DPI encourages school district leaders and others related to this work to take an opportunity to explore the contents of this toolkit. We encourage you to build on your current process using the documents and recommendations here and on the ACP website. These resources will allow you to strengthen your ACP team, develop and share your promising practices, learn and connect with colleagues, and create and enhance your school/district PI-26 plan as part of your overall district strategic plan. Finally, we remind you to celebrate the growth and success of your intentional efforts to meaningfully engage your students and families in the ACP process.

Tony Evers, PhD
State Superintendent

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WHAT IS ACP?

What Is Academic and Career Planning (ACP)?

Academic and Career Planning, or ACP, is a student-driven, adult-supported process in which students create and cultivate their own unique and information-based visions for post secondary success, obtained through self-exploration, career exploration, and the development of career management and planning skills.

MISSION: Empowering ALL students to travel the road TO adulthood THROUGH education and training to careers.

VISION: Re-imagining K12 education to equip students:

- With meaningful and supportive adult relationships
- And the ability to adapt to opportunities and challenges
- On their personalized journeys to successful lives.

The term ACP refers to both a *process* that helps students engage in academic and career development activities as well as a *product* that is created and maintained for students' academic, career, and personal advancement.

ACP is a student-driven, ongoing process that actively engages students enabling them to:

- Understand their own interests, strengths, values, learning styles,
- Create a vision of their future,
- Develop individual goals, and
- Prepare a personal plan for achieving their vision and goals.

Know · Explore · Plan · Go!

As illustrated on the table below, the difference between the two columns is that with ACP, the product (the plan) is intended to be dynamic and flexible reflecting the following:

- Students' coursework, learning, and assessment results,
- Students' postsecondary plans, aligned with their career, academic, and personal/social goals and financial reality, and
- Students' records of college and career readiness activities.

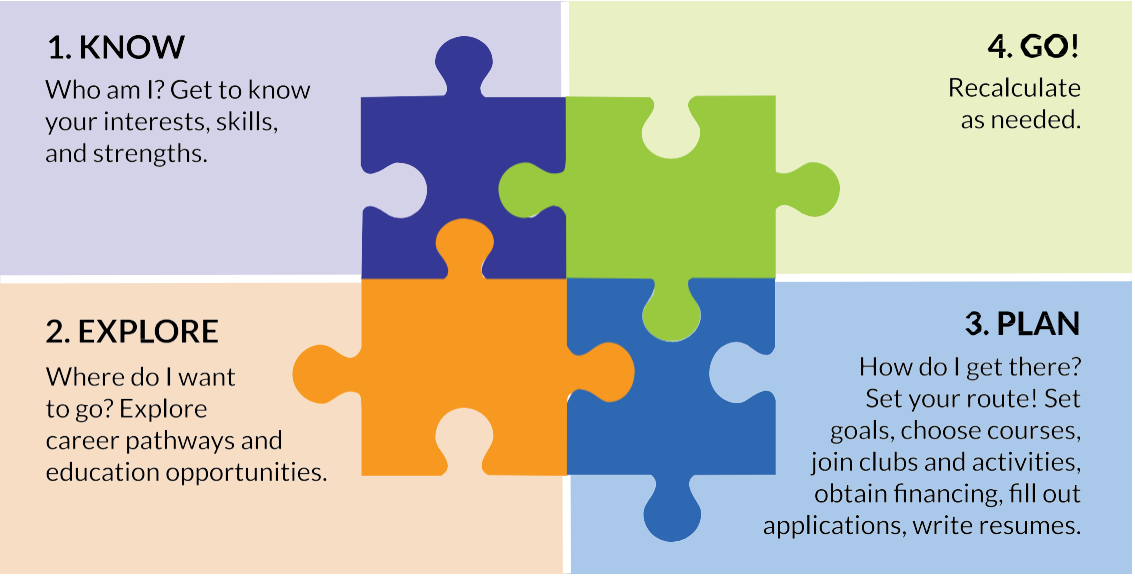
4-Year Plan (Traditional)	ACP (The Vision)
Product-based	Process-based
Some or select students (CTE, Special Ed)	All students
Acts as a 4-year plan of courses	Acts as a navigational tool for students grade 6-12 and beyond
Career application in elective CTE classes	Career application in all classes
Career development in elective courses or not at all	Career development infused throughout all courses
Student "on own" for its development	Student-driven with collaboration (mentor and parents)
HS Graduation = End point	HS Graduation = Check point
Career development is only the school counselor's job	Career development is a systematic, whole-school responsibility

The ACP process and related products can provide clear benefits to both students and schools, if the district supports ACP efforts in a strategic and coordinated manner.

Districts must make a shift in thinking, approaching, and delivering career development in their schools in order to help students and their families become more informed consumers of the education and training required to meet their personal goals.

This shift is a strategic one, toward a holistic and student-centered approach and away from the 'random acts of career development' that occur now. Strong infrastructure, relationships and student awareness are key to successful implementation of ACP.

4 Stages to Successful Academic and Career Planning (ACP)



The ACP Model

Know-Explore-Plan-Go aligns Wisconsin ACP required components with research-based recommendations for incorporating career development throughout K12 for self-exploration, career exploration, and career planning and management.

Self Awareness (KNOW)

- Periodic self-assessment of interests and strengths
- Reflection and goal-setting
- Financial knowledge & understanding of resources
- Academic courses & skill preparation
- Behavioral & employability skill preparation

Career Exploration (EXPLORE)

- Middle School career exploration activities and opportunities
- High School career exploration activities and opportunities
- World of work and labor market needs
- Understanding and comparing different postsecondary education & training

Career Planning (PLAN)

- Planning skills
- The Middle School plan
- The High School plan

Career Management (GO)

- Executing the plan
- Updating the plan with new information & artifacts
- Conferencing & mentoring
- Transitioning ACP Components

ACP Components

The following table outlines the different components that comprise ACP and are aligned to ACP model. You may note that many of these components are already in place in your district. The shift will be systemic, toward a student-centered model that allows all students access to the components they need to meet their individual goals.

Self-Awareness Activities KNOW			**Exploration Activities EXPLORE**		**Career Planning Activities PLAN**			**Management Activities GO**
Writing Personal Reflections	Identifying Strengths	Identifying Needs	Career Interest Inventories	Setting Career Goals	Resume Builder		Cover Letters	Modify Academic Goals as Necessary
Setting Personal Goals	Reviewing Goals	Revising Goals	Career Cluster Exploration	Career Pathway Exploration	Investigate Post-Secondary Options		Campus Visits & Reflections	Modify Intentional Sequence of Courses as Necessary
Ability Profiler	Learning Style Assessment	Personality Assessment	Creation of Program of Study	Job Fair Participant & Reflection	Applications to Post-Secondary Options		Leadership Opportunities	Modify Personal Goals as Necessary
Academic Preparation			CTSO Participant & Reflection	Career Research	Personal Financial Literacy Concepts		Financial Plan	Modify Career Goals as Necessary
Graduation Requirements	Virtual Courses	AP or Advanced Courses	Interviews of Career Experts	Career Research Paper	Complete FAFSA Form		Scholarship Info	Update Regularly/ Quarterly
Elective Courses	CTE Courses	Dual Enrollment/ YO/CO	Job Shadowing	Work-based Learning	Gather Letters of Recommendation		Mock Interviews & Reflections	
International Baccalaureate Programs	Extra/Co-Curricular Involvement	Career Academics	Internship or Externship	Youth Apprenticeship	Choosing a Post-Secondary Option		Decision-Making Reflection	
Project Lead the Way	Industry or Technical Certifications	STEM	Service Learning Projects	Work Experience	**Academic Planning Activities**			
ASVAB	Forward ASPIRE ACT/ SAT Compass Accuplacer	WorkKeys	Volunteering	Labor Market Considerations	Setting Academic Goals	Intentional Sequence of Courses	On Track for Graduation	

INFRASTRUCTURE						
Leadership and Culture	Policy and Planning	Professional Development	Individualized ACP Support	Family Engagement	Community Partnerships	Access for All Students

WHY SHOULD I CARE?

Why ACP?

Wisconsin ranks highly in various measures of preparing students to be college and career ready. Wisconsin's composite ACT score is 20.5 for 2016 graduates, ranking fourth in the nati for "census testi states.

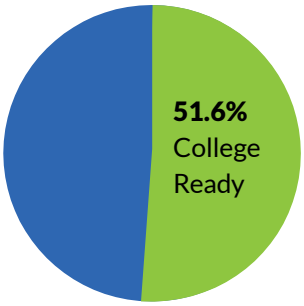
But averages and percentages don't tell the stories of individual students.

- What about those students who measure *not* ready? OR
- The ones who measure as ready *but* don't complete college?

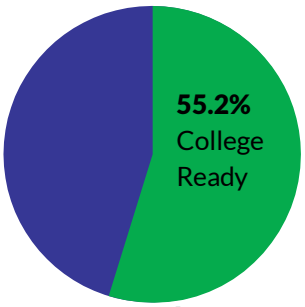
How Do We Determine College Readiness?

ACT has established college-readiness benchmark scores for each subject test. These scores represent a 75 percent chance of a student earning a "C" or better in credit-bearing college coursework. For both mathematics and reading, 41 percent of 2016 graduates earned benchmark scores. However, only 25 percent of graduates earned benchmark scores in all four subjects (English, math, reading, science)[8.] (ACT Benchmarks for Reading and Math)

College Readiness in Wisconsin



Reading



Math

58.2%

of Wisconsin high school graduates enter college in the fall after graduation (2014-2015)

2 Year Colleges

- 33% of total that enter college
- Average of 30% of total that enter complete a degree in three years
- Average cost: $42,745

4 Year Universities

- 65% of total that enter college
- Average of 59.5% of total that complete a degree in six years
- Average cost: $63,710

College and Career Readiness and Agenda 2017

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) released its statement on college and career readiness in 2015.

"All students in Wisconsin graduate from high school academically prepared and socially and emotionally competent by possessing and demonstrating…

- Knowledge. Proficiency in academic content,
- Skills. Application of knowledge through skills such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity, and
- Habits. Behaviors such as perseverance, responsibility, adaptability, and leadership.

These proficiencies and attributes come from rigorous, rich, and well-rounded public school experiences."

A quality, integrated ACP process can provide Wisconsin students with a road map for this readiness—both the process for recognizing and acquiring needed knowledge, skills, and habits, and the means to document interests and achievements for improved decision making and communication with school personnel, families, employers, postsecondary institutions, and other stakeholders.

Global Economy

In addition, over the last two decades, global competition and technological growth have radically changed the demands of the workplace and the hiring practices of businesses. Full-time living-wage jobs that require minimal training are being phased out as part of the increased competition and demand for flexibility on the part of U.S. corporations. Advanced knowledge, technical skills, education and training are required for an increasing proportion of American job openings.

Consequently, post-secondary education and training can mean many things for students depending on the path they choose. Career development plays a critical role in decision making about:

- paying for increasing costs of college tuition, fees, and housing,
- incurring student loan debt, such as those faced by more than half of students who borrow to finance college, and
- engaging in opportunities to develop 21st century skills such as communication, analysis, and leadership.

What ACP Can Do for Schools

National research has found that quality integrated implementation of the ACP process into a school's overall educational system can benefit schools in several ways:

Buhrke
s using his high
ool experiences to
are him for his
next steps.
Watch his video!

- provides a district-wide organizing iple for college and career readiness orts. An integrated district strategic n can help staff consider how all isting educational efforts align. This ig picture can help identify gaps n service provision and goals for mprovement.
- ACP supports individualized learning. ough ACP, schools can identify those l programs, supports, and interventions o support each individual student and then to align these in the most effective way possible for that specific student.
- ACP can help communicate information to teachers. ACP plans can give teachers and counselors access to information they might not otherwise have readily available: a student's grades and/or test scores across subjects, supplemental services, extracurricular activity participation, and aspirations and strengths. ACP plans provide a picture of the whole student.
- ACP offers a forum for family communication and involvement. The ACP planning process and the plan itself are opportunities for communication with families about students' interests, aptitudes, habits, goals, and performance. The ACP plan allows families to draw connections between school and future goals.
- ACP provides a framework for community partnerships. The connection between businesses and industries, local postsecondary institutions, workforce development, social services, economic development, and other community stakeholders begins with engaging partners in the planning phase. The focus on local or regional context can help stakeholders engage in helping prepare the district's students.

What ACP Can Do for Students

ACP activities hold great promise for ALL students, from those designated "Gifted and Talented" to those considered the most at risk of not graduating from high school. The majority of students graduate with an unclear direction for their future. Through the phases of ACP—self-exploration, career exploration, and career planning and management—students become informed consumers of the education and training required to meet their personal goals.

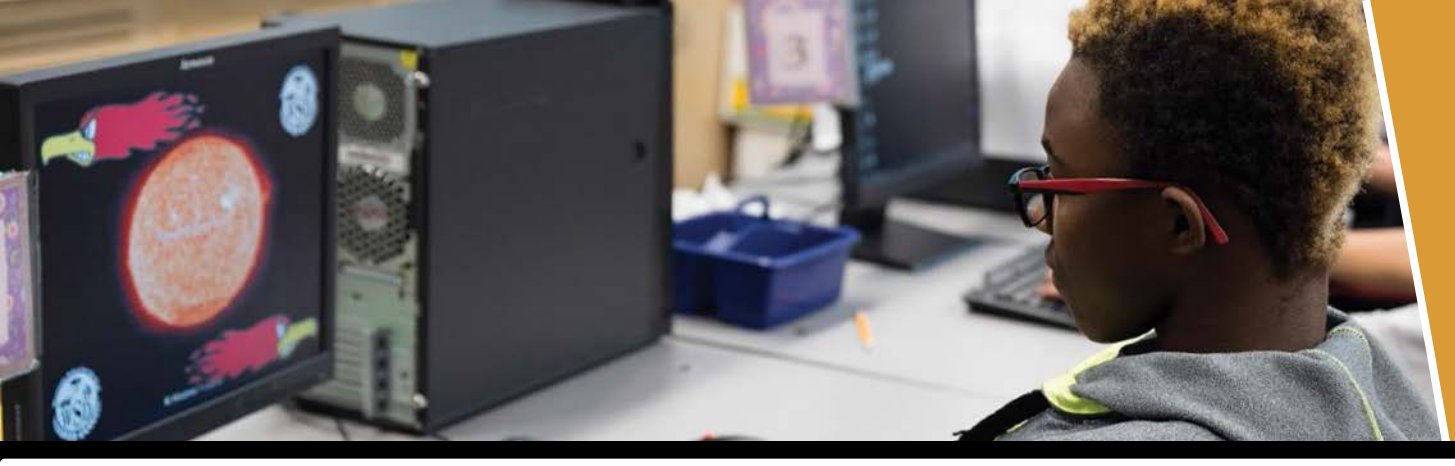
Connor Scherg is using ACPs to navigate school with an eye plans after high school. Watch his video!

Current national research indicates that activities that are part of the ACP process can have a number of positive outcomes for students, such as:

- Improving student motivation and engagement. Students who engage in high-quality ACP activities are more likely to persist in school and stay engaged in school activities as well as enjoy a greater overall sense of belonging and connectedness to school.
- Improving students' understanding of postsecondary options and long-term planning. Students who engage in early career and college exploration activities develop an understanding of the range of options available to them after high school and the decision-making skills to navigate those options.
- Improving school-family communication and engagement. Students, families, and educators have reported that participating in ACP activities led to improved engagement of families in their children's academic and career planning as well as deeper and more meaningful communication.
- Increasing students' awareness of their individual strengths and weaknesses. The process of developing learning plans can improve students' ability to reflect upon and understand their own skills and interests as well as areas for improvement.

- Helping students select courses relevant to their learning plans and goals. Students with greater access to ACP activities also report greater engagement in goal setting and more proactive efforts to engage in learning activities related to those goals.
- Reducing risk-taking behavior. Students who feel connected to their school are less likely to engage in substance use, violence, and other risk-taking behaviors. School connectedness also is a key protective factor against eating disorders and suicidal ideation.

While more research on the long-term effects of ACP on school and student outcomes is needed, it is clear that beginning with infrastructural changes that integrate and coordinate multiple initiatives provides a more consistent approach for launching students beyond high school.



WHY NOW?

The Path to ACP in Wisconsin

In 2012, a Wisconsin interim special legislative committee on Improving Educational Opportunities in High School recommended an act be created to support Academic and Career Planning. Concurrently, the Governor's Council on College and Workforce Readiness was tasked with "recommending policies and programs to improve student readiness for college or career in the State of Wisconsin." The Council expressed interest in advancing Academic and Career Planning (ACP) for all Wisconsin students and developed specific recommendations after reviewing current research nationally and in other states.

State Priorities

In early 2013, in anticipation of full legislative support for ACP, DPI identified and convened a Task Force consisting of sample representation from state agencies and schools to provide direction and input on state priorities for development and implementation of an ACP process.

Administrative Rule

On June 30, 2013, through Act 20, Wisconsin Statute 115.28(59) DPI was allocated $1.1 million dollars of General Purpose Revenue (GPR) in a new continuing appropriation by the legislature.

Administrative Rule PI 26 was revised and updated to outline components of a quality ACP program, while maintaining flexibility for design and delivery of the program by local school districts. The rule was published on December 1, 2015.

Changes to the rule impact school boards and districts in the following ways:

- Local control and accountability. Plans must be submitted to the district school board for approval, published on the district's website, and reviewed and updated each year.
- Collaboration and partnership. Plans must be developed with community stakeholders and include a strategy to engage businesses, postsecondary education institutions, and workforce development organizations.
- Family engagement. Several new pieces of the rule require schools to communicate regularly with families about their students' ACP activities and plan.
- Personalization and individualized supports. PI 26 includes language about the connection between careers and students' interests and skills as well as requirements for individual ACP support from school staff.
- Access for all students. PI 26 includes specific language requiring ACP plans to be provided to IEP teams for students with disabilities and requires all students to have access to a software tool for individual exploration and planning.

ACP Implementation Timeline

2013 - 2014	Advisory council created Administrative rule development Software system research
2014 - 2015	Guidance, training, and support materials development Software system procurement Administrative rule input and review
2015 - 2016	Pilot process Guidance, training, and technical assistance Materials revision
2016 - 2017	Early implementation refinement process Guidance, training, technical assistance, and materials refinement
2017 - 2018	Statewide implementation of ACP process Process monitoring, evaluation, improvement, and enhancement Process updates and annual training
2018+	Data collection, analysis, and evaluation for process improvement Research and share best practices Build inter-district network connections Integrate partnerships across regions with Business and Industry, Institutions of Higher Educations, Economic Development Corporations, and Workforce Development Boards

HOW DO I DO IT?

Make the Connections in EVERY Classroom!

Academic and Career Planning (ACP) supports, and is supported by, existing practices in Wisconsin schools. Many Wisconsin high school students already participate in some aspects of ACP.

ACP is connected to:

- School Counseling
- Special Education
- Career and Technical Education (CTE)
- Response to Intervention (RtI)/Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS)
- Wisconsin Educational Opportunity Programs (WEOP)
- Higher Education and Dual Credit
- Work-based Learning

School Counseling Connections

- Wisconsin Comprehensive School Counseling Model standards apply to school counseling and curriculum in Academic, Career, and Personal/Social Domains.
- Many counselors have been trained on the three levels of ILP (Individualized Learning Plan) implementation.

Special Education Connections

- Under the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Special Education addresses individual differences and needs of students through an annual IEP (Individualized Education Program) while gaining technical skills and training necessary to explore and succeed in careers.
- Beginning at age 14, a PTP (Postsecondary Transition Plan) assesses an individual's needs and considers personal interventions to help learners achieve a higher level of self-sufficiency and success.
- Transition planning helps students with disabilities and their families think about life after high school and identify long-range goals.
- The IEP team helps design students' high school experience to ensure that they gain the skills and connections they need to achieve these goals.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Connections

- Career and Technical Education (CTE) programming provides students with the opportunity to apply academic skills and knowledge while gaining technical skills and training necessary to succeed in careers.
- CTE prepares learners for the world of work introducing them to workplace competenci e and making academic content more relevant to students by providing it in a hands-on context.
- CTE encompasses six broad occupational academic programs These areas are:
  - Agriculture and Natural Resources
  - Business and Information Technology
  - Family and Consumer Science including Culinary
  - Health Science
  - Marketing, Management, and Entrepren e
  - Technology and Engineering

96.8%

High school graduation rate for CTE concentrators in Wisconsin in 2014-2015

- Programs of Study (POS), a required component of CTE programming, is a district's suggested sequence of courses and activities that result in preparation for occupational areas.
- Through POS, districts foster rich partnerships with business and industry, supplement counseling programs to implement academic and career-planning activities, and support partnerships with higher education.

Response to Intervention (RtI) and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) Connections

- The Wisconsin RtI Center and the Wisconsin PBIS Network assist Wisconsin schools to implement and sustain systems to support the behavioral and academic needs of ALL students.
- High quality instruction, balanced assessment, and collaboration systematically interact within a multilevel system of support to provide the structures to increase success for all students.
- Schools employ these three elements at varying levels of intensity based upon student responsiveness to instruction and intervention.

Wisconsin Educational Opportunity Programs (WEOP) Connections

WEOP supports specific student groups to pursue higher educational opportunities by providing college and career readiness programs and resources. Students may qualify for support under several programs:

- State Talent Search Program (High School Seniors and Adults),
- Talent Incentive Program Grant (First time college students),
- Precollege Scholarship Program (Grades 6-12),
- Early Identification Program (Grades 8-12),
- GEAR UP Program (Grades 6-12),
- Federal Talent Search Program (Grades 6-12), and
- Upward Bound Program (Grades 9-12).

WEOP is located in seven offices in Ashland, Eau Claire, Green Bay, Madison, Milwaukee, Racine, and Wausau.

Higher Education and Dual Credit Connections

Academic and career planning can help students become aware of dual credit opportunities that are aligned with their interests and postsecondary plans. High school students can currently earn college credit in a variety of ways:

- Advanced Placement
- International Baccalaureate
- Youth Options
- Course Options
- College Credit in High School through the University of Wisconsin System (UW System), and
- Transcripted or Advanced Standing credit through the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS).

Work-based Learning Connections

Work-based learning programming comprises a variety of different educational experiences through a planned s of activities, supervised by licensed school personnel, designed to enable learners to acquire attitudes, skills, and knowledge for work and other life roles by participating in actual or simulated work settings related to in-school instructional programs." Programs can include:

See the ACP website at dpi.wi.gov/ACP!

- Service Learning and Volunteering
- Job Shadowing
- Internships
- Cooperative Education
- Employability Skills Certificate
- Cooperative Education Skills Standards Certificate
- Youth Apprenticeship
- School-Based Enterprise
- Youth Leadership

Getting Started

Academic and career planning efforts should not be implemented in isolation of other school and district strategic initiatives. ACP aligns well with most initiatives and can act as an organizer and bring cohesion to multiple initiatives by incorporating corresponding data and focusing efforts more appropriately for each student.

Assembling the Pieces

Implementing ACP requires a thoughtful approach that will most likely challenge current thinking, while preparing school staff to support the effort. Teachers, parents, and various partners assist in this process by:

- Helping students deepen their knowledge of themselves,
- Improving their understanding of postsecondary options,
- Better connecting their goals to educational coursework and career interests, and
- Taking part in long-term planning for life after high school.

Follow these steps to get started using these planning tools!

1. Assess readiness for ACP implementation. Reflective Questions Sheet. Begin with reflective questioning so that individuals and teams can consider critical conversations that need to occur.
2. Sign up and follow ACP with the DPI ACP social media tools.
   - Subscribe to the email list. Scroll to bottom to sign up.
   - Follow us on Twitter @WisDPI_ACP
   - ACP G+ Community (WI DPI Academic & Career Planning)
3. Assess current ACP system and service offerings for gaps and overlaps. Focus on Infrastructure Self-Assessment strengths and barriers before addressing actual services and opportunities offered.
   - Leadership and Culture
   - Policy and Planning
   - Professional Development
   - Individual ACP Support

- Family Engagement
- Community Partnerships
- Access for All Students

4. Prepare and plan for ACP implementation.
   - Define your local ACP implementation needs.
   - Set SMART goals and plan strategies to achieve those goals- BOTH short term and long term.
   - Outline an initial grade level sequence.
   - Outline an initial scope and sequence of content and activities to deliver ACP.
   - Outline resources on hand and resources needed.
   - Build in an evaluative cycle.

Tools to use:

- Planning Template. Districts and schools, like students, are unique in multiple ways. It's important to understand the climate and conceptual readiness to implement and make a commitment to ACP.
- SMART Goals Sheet. Through the planning process, districts set goals and their priority level relative to other initiatives and activities.
- Timeline Template. Once goals are set, districts can begin coordinating action items.
- Roles & Responsibilities Outline. Working toward the necessary levels of commitment for effective ACP implementation will require reflection and informed dialogue with all stakeholders to determine who should be involved. The ACP Implementation Team should include a variety of stakeholders including representation from:
  - Administration
  - School Counseling
  - Special Education
  - CTE

- Core Academics
- Students
- Parents
- Higher Educations
- Business, Workforce, Community

A note about curriculum and student activities

There are many well-researched and published career development curricular materials available. Flexibility in the ACP Administrative Rule allows for comparing and choosing the curricular activities that

best fit your local and regional resources. DPI encourages developing robust local partnerships and the use of the ACP Google + Community to share and network with others!

5. Communicate your efforts!
   - Acknowledge strengths and obstacles.
   - Build your brand and gain support.
   - Reach all stakeholders.
   - Celebrate successes and milestones.
   - Share and post your district's ACP/PI-26 plan on your website.

Implementation

Implementing and delivering ACP services in schools in an integrated manner requires that all school staff know and understand their roles and responsibilities. Training provided by CESA partner trainers and ACP team leadership trainers, either in person or through web site accessible formats, focuses on staff learning their roles in ACP service delivery.

Training and lessons for staff working directly with students to deliver ACP focus on the following staff competencies:

- Understand and Communicate about Academic and Career Plans
- Support Student Growth Toward Goals
- Develop Supportive Relationships with Students
- Understand the ACP Process and Tools
- Understand Student Secondary, Postsecondary and Pathway Options
- Support Students' College and Career-Ready Behaviors and Habits
- Engage Families in the ACP Process

Use the activities and materials online to train staff!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND ENDNOTES

Acknowledgments

The DPI ACP Team

Collaborative Partners

Resources

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