

Academic and Career Planning 2018-19 Evaluation Report

for the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction | September 2019

“It’s not about making kids choose a career that they’re going to do, but helping them realize that they have skills, that they all have things that they’re good at.”

– School Counselor

Academic & Career Planning is intended to equip students in grades 6-12 with the tools necessary to make informed, career-based choices about postsecondary education and training. It is part of DPI’s overall vision for every student to graduate from high school college- and career-ready. As part of its longitudinal, mixed-methods evaluation of ACP, WEC fielded a school-level survey and conducted 10 case studies in schools across the state to investigate the extent of implementation, varieties of ACP infrastructure and activities, and stakeholder perceptions. WEC also analyzed school and student outputs and outcomes data.

Powerful Practices

The 5 Powerful Practices identified in last year’s evaluation report (Final Projects, Job Shadowing, Mock Interviews, Resume-Building, and One-on-One Conferencing/Advising) continued to be named as particularly valuable in the ACP array of activities. As these activities grow and become institutionalized in many Wisconsin districts and schools, sharing specifics about implementation will be valuable,

as will creating professional development opportunities to help support best practices. This year’s evaluation focused on Final Projects to catalogue and describe variations on this activity, with all 10 case study districts reporting multiple benefits from implementation, typically:

Recognition: Allowing students to showcase their work/school experiences and plans.

Experience: Providing the opportunity for students to gain interview and/or presentation experience.

Accountability: A means to compel students to take ACP (and future planning) more seriously.

Relationship Building: Providing opportunities for and capitalizing on relationships between students, schools, teachers, families, community members, and employers.

Final projects are unlikely to function flawlessly in the first year(s) of implementation, but with a continuous improvement process in place, they can evolve to be a Powerful Practice that helps to address a number of important goals of ACP work.

Recommendation: DPI should continue to promote the Powerful Practices and share resources that pertain to them.

Mixed-Methods Evaluation



Case Studies



School & Student Outputs



Student Outcome Data



School Level Survey

School-Wide Cultures of ACP

Surveys, output data, and case studies all show growth in this area. Sharing the duties and responsibilities for ACP across all staff strengthens the ACP culture in a school. Although surveys show wide variation in dosage, more schools are allocating dedicated time to ACP in homerooms and advisory periods where students engage in Career Cruising activities and other curricular elements, leading to increased teacher participation, with implications for professional learning, particularly in the area of career advising. Finally, additional communication around the “big picture of ACP” will help all stakeholders connect the dots between individual activities and the greater philosophy and approach to ACP.

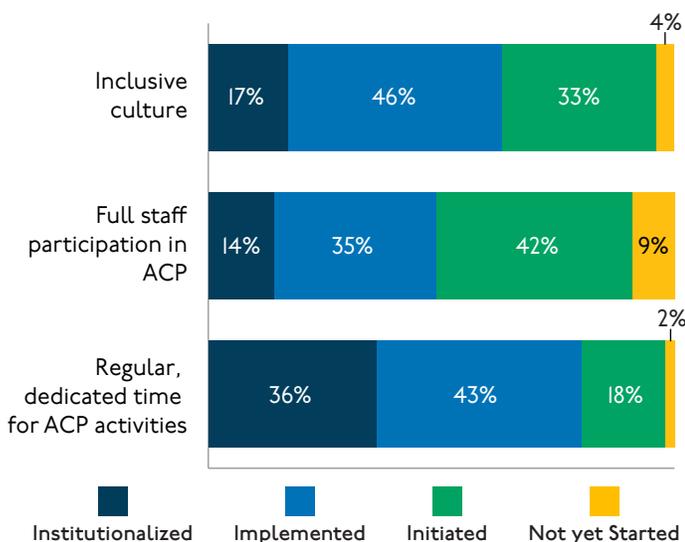
Recommendation: Consider developing and providing/ supporting professional learning opportunities for school staff, particularly those who become part of an all-staff advising approach, to participate effectively in supporting ACP. Such an effort may require additional research to inform the development of professional learning.

Recommendation: Continue investigation of ACP dedicated time.

Recommendation: Continue to leverage the Career Cruising/Xello platform to provide access to the activities that staff and students find valuable, and to monitor data to measure usage and other patterns.

Recommendation: Pursue additional investigation into student accountability measures related to ACP.

Implementation of ACP Inclusive Culture, ACP Staff Participation, and Regular, Dedicated Time for ACP Activities, 2018-19

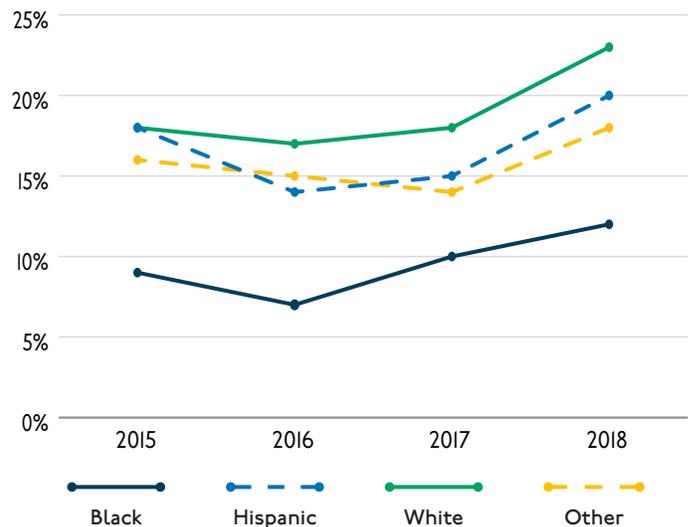


Gaps in Participation

Career and Technical Education Enrollment Reporting System (CTEERS) and other work-based learning data show gaps not only by various student subgroups but also by region. However, data of this nature are unable to identify the reasons for gaps. Only with additional types of research can attempts be made to understand these factors.

Recommendation: Pursue additional research into the equitable implementation of ACP in terms of access and participation gaps.

Percentage of Career and Technical Education Concentrators Participating in at Least One Work-Based Learning Activity by Race/ Ethnicity, 2014-15 through 2017-18



About the Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative

The Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative (WEC) is housed at the Wisconsin Center for Education Research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. WEC’s team of evaluators supports youth-serving organizations and initiatives through culturally responsive and rigorous program evaluation. Learn more at <http://www.wec.wceruw.org>. For questions regarding this report, please contact Robin Worth at robin.worth@wisc.edu, or Grant Sim at grant.sim@wisc.edu. Full report available at <https://dpi.wi.gov/acp/quality>