

# Addendum to ACP Annual Evaluation Report for 2019-20

for the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

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.

The COVID-19 pandemic, which caused the shut-down and/or switch to remote learning in Wisconsin schools beginning in March 2020, prevented WEC evaluators from conducting planned case studies in the Spring of 2020 as part of its ACP evaluation. In the Fall of 2020, WEC resumed these case studies in several Wisconsin school districts, focusing on ACP implementation and on the impact of COVID-19 on ACP. WEC also examined data on participation in certain ACP activities during the 2018-19 school year. The addendum to the 2019-20 annual evaluation report focuses on this work and brings several additional findings and recommendations to light.

## Finding: Development of virtual activities

Distance, remote, and virtual opportunities during the pandemic were discovered by many of the case study districts to be worthwhile activities in an overall comprehensive ACP program, and may be used to provide additional opportunities to students, particularly in remote

areas, even after the pandemic. As in previous years, school personnel indicated that sharing information between districts was particularly useful and desirable; thus, the topic of virtual implementation presents an important area of focus for collaboration and dissemination. During the pandemic, DPI and CESAs have developed considerable resources pertaining to virtual ACP experiences, activities, and strategies, as well as the monthly ACP Community of Practice webinars, which were repeatedly cited as valuable. Virtual activities, however, do need to be thoughtfully implemented to provide opportunities for students to interact and learn from each other.

**Students reported that doing Xello activities “in school” and “in a class” where they can “interact with people” about their findings would be far more valuable than “just doing it by themselves.” This finding appears to underscore the importance of reflecting upon and discussing Xello activities with peers, and that this sort of learning is not as individually focused as one might assume.**

**Recommendation:** Continue to share and promote the many tools and resources connected to virtual and distance ACP implementation, activities, and professional learning, and develop additional resources as needed.

## Mixed-Methods Evaluation



Case Studies



School & Student Outputs



Student Outcome Data



School Level Survey

## Finding: Interest in ACP evaluation supports

Districts expressed interest in evidence-based means for evaluating, refining, and otherwise improving their ACP programs, including guidance on how to implement a system-wide approach to ACP, how to improve management processes for intensive programs such as capstone projects and career academies, and how to develop a K-12 ACP program, among other needs. As the state's overall implementation of ACP grows, demand for this type of guidance will likely grow, as well. While these sorts of complex and context-sensitive resources may be more challenging for DPI to develop, it may be beneficial to note that these needs reflect the growth and maturation of ACP across the state, and thus a source of pride for DPI, CESAs, and the many partners who have labored to bring this about.

**Recommendation:** Continue to develop, communicate and disseminate resources related to local-level ACP evaluation and refinement, particularly those that address more advanced needs such as management processes and systems approaches.

**“One area we focused on more this year is the ability to persevere and to overcome. We’ve been teaching it across the board. (...) If we look at all the skills you’re learning through all of this, you’re learning how to persevere, you’re learning how to adapt, you’re learning how to be flexible, you’re learning how to use new resources. We have been taking some of the time we’d normally have for ACP in conversations teaching kids how to persist and persevere and overcome.”**

**-High school counselor**

## Findings from 2019-20 ACP evaluation report

In the full 2019-20 ACP evaluation report, WEC investigated the extent of implementation, varieties of ACP infrastructure and activities, and stakeholder perceptions. The findings and recommendations from [that report](#) are as follows:

1. Implementation continues to grow across the state; some schools are still in the initiating phase. Case study data show that less-ingrained programs tended to suffer most during the disruptions brought on by the pandemic.
2. Job Shadowing continues to grow in implementation and enthusiasm. While the pandemic forced the use of virtual job shadows in many cases, these practices often allowed for more flexibility for students and employers.
3. Outputs data show evidence of gaps in participation.

### Wisconsin Center for Education Research

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](mailto:robin.worth@wisc.edu), or Grant Sim at [grant.sim@wisc.edu](mailto:grant.sim@wisc.edu). Full report available at <https://dpi.wi.gov/acp/quality>