



Kentucky Department of
EDUCATION

**KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL COUNSELOR ADVISORY COUNCIL
SUMMARY
Nov. 9, 2021**

PRESENT: Kaet Barron, Susan Brown, Camilla Distefano, Travis Kern, Loretta Dye, Tammy White, Whitney Peay, Nicole Fields, Ed.D., Lisa Kimbrell, Beth Duvall Fleming, Caryn Sceiding, Tammy Cole, Karla McCarty, Stacey Russell, Eef Fontanez, Heather Bushelman, Sarah Akin, Elizabeth Barnett, Malia Gibson

ABSENT: Calvin Brooks, Strauzie Collins, Amber Schmidt

SUMMARY

Agenda Item: Welcome

Presenter: Damien Sweeney, Ed.D., Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, KDE Office of Teaching and Learning

Summary of Discussion: Introductions, Purpose of Advisory Council

Agenda Item: Kentucky Department of Education Updates Regarding Social/Emotional Learning Framework, New Hires, Professional Developments, Technology Updates

Presenter: Damien Sweeney, Ed.D., Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, KDE Office of Teaching and Learning

Summary of Discussion: Sweeney said the state, along with stakeholders, is developing a statewide SEL framework. The workgroup has met twice and includes representation from across the state, including CASEL. The work will take 12-18 months to complete. The group already has established “big rocks.” This framework will highlight the importance and competencies of SEL, as well as implementation.

Sweeney discussed the recent education summit that was held last week in Louisville, which included a discussion of the lieutenant governor's mental health action summit. Kentucky students also shared about their own mental health.

Sweeney also discussed the new position of director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. He shared that the Kentucky Department of Education has submitted a name to human resources for the Program Coordinator for Comprehensive School Counseling position, and hope to formally announce the new hire very soon. Additionally, Sweeney shared this person will be a great resource and has presented state and nationwide training.

KDE and all educational cooperatives are partnering on a statewide professional learning event -. This will provide high-quality professional learning for all school counselors across the state, with the same message at the same time. Sweeney shared the topics: best practices framework for school counselors, LBGTQIA+ panel discussion, school counseling summit and the plan for next year.

Sweeney shared that Access of the Arts partnered with GSA to create a second campus for GSA to offer more students access to the arts.

Students taking the AP exam won't have to pay more than \$10. The state of Kentucky will pay for AP exams for students eligible for College Board fee waivers. The internal DEI KDE Team will consist of 2 people from each office and hold monthly meetings, and hopefully will be offering a summer professional learning opportunity at Harvard Summer Institute.

Sweeney discussed 11 districts that have hired DEI officers/coordinators. The officers/coordinators already have met and will be working together monthly. Every educational cooperative has hired or will hire a DEI coordinator; This will be the "boots on the ground" person in each region.

Hiring a DEI coordinator for the Office of Special Education is in the works.

Sweeney mentioned that the School Counselor Use of Time survey, due Nov.1, is still missing about 50 submissions. A discussion was held on whether advisory council members were involved in discussions with the superintendents or the individuals completing the survey about the data used. Some advisory council members had conversations with superintendents, and some had not.

Tracking time and how it was helpful was discussed, along with "lightbulb moments." It also was mentioned how direct and indirect services are listed, and some questions were asked about what would be considered direct and indirect services. Comments were made about how this survey brought to light what the duties are of school counselors and what they are not. Members detailed how a group of school counselors got together and went through the survey. This information was shared with their superintendent. Members said this use of time survey helped advocate for their role. Some council members said the use of time survey is confusing and a discussion of what should be considered appropriate or inappropriate activities for school counselors took place. Sweeney shared some tools that school counselors could use to help their practice which included:

- **Early Warning Tool** - Can help counselors identify where interventions might be needed;

- **High School Graduation Requirement Tracker** - Will help see if students are on track;
- **Dual Credit Tracker**;
- **Transient Student Report** - Counselors and others can quickly see if students are transient; and
- **Equity Dashboard** - Will be beneficial in taking a deeper dive into underserved student groups and providing more equity opportunities.

Sweeney discussed ILP and discussed what members are using and how it is working. Members commented that they are using the ILP Playbook, Tassel, Google Docs and Xello.

Agenda Item: Questions/concerns from the field

Presenter: Damien Sweeney, Ed.D., Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, KDE Office of Teaching and Learning

Summary of Discussion: Members shared concerns about adult mental health/wellness; illness due to COVID-19 and that which is not COVID-19-related; deaths by suicide; grief; and increases in behavior issues. Resources were shared by individuals in the group for those concerns.

Agenda Item: Celebrations

Presenter: Members

Members shared that teachers are into SEL and they are being proactive. Schools have hired more mental health counselors. Schools are giving SEL days, which include gratitude, mindfulness walks, yoga, etc.

The next meeting will take place on Feb. 10, 2022, at 2 p.m. ET.