



**Kentucky Department of Education  
School Counselor Advisory Council  
September 26, 2024, 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.  
Virtual Meeting  
Summary**

**ATTENDANCE:** Completed on spreadsheet

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Alecia Bush, Rachel Caswell, Strauzie Collins, Julie Link, Karla McCarty, Kari McGrath, Antonio Melton, Santina Plottner, & Jalina Wheeler

**SUMMARY:** Previous minutes were approved by 1. Mindy Rose & 2. Kristyn Williamson Dr. Sircy began the meeting with a greeting and group connection Mindful Minute activity through chat. Dr. Tucker welcomed us on behalf of KDE and thanked us for everything that we do as school counselors. Stephanie Bunge presented on Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Judi Vanderharr, Ph.D. and Leslie McKinney presented on Chronic Absenteeism, and our final presenters were Alexis Jackson and Jaclyn Hodges on HB 142 Vaping Resources and School Support. We ended each session with feedback time and discussion. Our next meeting is set for December 12, 2024, at 10:00 AM.

**Agenda Item:** KDE Welcome

**Presenters:** Dr. Sircy & Dr. Turner

**Summary of Discussion:** Minute Meeting Activity with Dr. Sircy and Council members through chat.

Dr. Tucker welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked us for the work we are doing within our buildings. He stated that the feedback and discussions from these meetings are used to make change. He discussed the importance of school counselors and how we are the schools welcoming centers and relationship builders.

**Agenda Item:** Youth Risk Behavior Survey

**Presenter:** Stephanie Bunge

**Summary of Discussion:** Explanation of what the YRBS data does and how it is administered. Discussed the 2023 YRBS survey summaries. Data level is only returned at a state level because the sampling is random and small. Discussed the demographics from the survey. Looked over the 2021 and 2023 differences from the data that was collected. The data was reviewed and the increase in percentages was possible due to COVID time and limitations on what the students were able to participate in and being around peers. Provided the link to all data that could be

viewed on their website.

Looked over the mental health data - reviewed the percentages of middle school and high school students who thought about harming/killing themselves, data on students who have attempted suicide, vaping data, as well all absenteeism data due to missing school because of a mental health concern. Finally, we discussed dietary behavior and physical activity data and how it can relate to mental health as well as the data points on violence, relationship violence, race and ethnicity, and sleep.

**Agenda Item:** Chronic Absenteeism

**Presenters:** Judi Vanderhaar, Ph.D. & Leslie McKinney

**Summary of Discussion:** Throughout the presentation they discussed that chronic absenteeism is students missing more than 10% of school. They looked at the data from pre & post pandemic. We examined the differences in grade-level data, but a significant difference and concern is the increase in elementary students missing a significant amount of school. Schools all across Kentucky are looking at much larger numbers. We discussed contributing factors and how the state is focusing on the misconception of the importance of school. They want to shift the mindset back from pre-pandemic and focus on the stance that school is the best place to be. They also are taking a deeper look at mental health and its effects on absenteeism not only with students, but families and school personnel. After the initial discussion and data reflection, we were given strategies for tiered support to help with attendance concerns. Insights on Infinite Campus were presented and discussed as an imperative resource with identification. It provides multiple dashboards to analyze the data and commonalities within the attendance category. Relationship mapping strategies were also discussed. Maslow before blooms and the Chronic Absenteeism Website was linked in the chat. It was stated that here we can find more resources through the toolkits online.

**Agenda Item:** HB 142 Vaping Resources & School Support

**Presenters:** Alexis Jackson & Jaclyn Hodges

**Summary of Discussion:** Shared recommendations and resources through a QR code, bitly website, and link in the chat. Discussed the history of the bill, its progression over time, and the policies across the state. The importance is getting resources out to students and parents. Discussed evidence-based curriculum, materials, and presentations that can be utilized in grades K-4 and 5-12. Discussed the importance of school employees reinforcing the policies. PD and training are available to ensure this expectation is being followed. Discussed the progressive discipline model and provided policy language schools and districts can use when setting their own policies.

**Upcoming Meetings**

December 12, 2024

February 27, 2025

May 29, 2025