

**SUMMARY MINUTES ARE DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED AT MARCH 25, 2021  
MEETING**



**KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
School Counselor Advisory Group  
SUMMARY**

**MEETING DATE: JAN. 28, 2021 AT 3 P.M. ET**

**ATTENDANCE:** Jessika Benson, Jack Breunig, Stephanie Bunge, Heather Bushelman, Karen Coleman, Karen Dodd, Eef Fontanez, Melina Gallagher, Jason Glass, Dana Goins, Lacy Gross, Jenni Larkins, Robin Loy, Megan Majors, Stephanie Mayberry, Paul Prater, Monica Raines, Jenny Ray, Michelle Sircy, Tara Steedly, Karen Swiney, Heather Wells, Thomas Woods-Tucker

**Agenda Item: Call to Order**

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Roll call and attendance taken

**Presenter:** Dr. Damien Sweeney, program coordinator for comprehensive school counseling, Office of Teaching and Learning, Kentucky Department of Education (KDE)

**Summary of Discussion:**

Sweeny introduced Dr. Jason Glass, Kentucky commissioner of education. Glass shared with the advisory council about the work Team KDE has been doing with Dr. Rodger Cleveland from Eastern Kentucky University and others in regards to anti-racism and equity work. Glass shared that there is work to be done in this area. Glass shared that discussions at KDE have begun for creating a toolkit for schools and districts to use that would align to what is best for schools and communities.

A question and answer session with Glass occurred. Questions asked were in regards to accountability and advocating for the role of school counselors to superintendents.

**Agenda Item: KDE Equality Updates**

**Presenters:** Damien Sweeney

Dr. Thomas Woods-Tucker, KDE chief equity officer

### **Summary of Discussion:**

Sweeney introduced Woods-Tucker.

Sweeney reviewed the “why” for diversity, equity and inclusion in our schools and KDE’s commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion in our schools. Sweeney shared that in a strategic plan the following were areas to focus on: equity, achievement, collaboration, integrity. In this strategic plan school counselors were named, as well as the framework of best practices and building comprehensive school counseling programs as well as working with interconnected systems framework and asset mapping.

Discussion was held about where we are now on this work and updates were given by Woods-Tucker and Sweeney. Woods-Tucker shared that the Kentucky Board of Education supports this work.

Woods-Tucker shared some thoughts on the importance of social emotional learning as well as suicide prevention. Woods-Tucker thanked school counselors for their work.

### **Agenda Item: State Assessments and Accountability Update**

**Presenter:** Jenny Larkins, KDE Division of Assessment and Accountability Support

#### **Summary of Discussion:**

Sweeney introduced Larkins.

Larkins shared with the advisory council an update as of Jan. 28, 2021 for state assessments and accountability update. Larkins shared that the Division of Assessment and Accountability Support is planning and preparing for testing. Larkins shared they have multiple plans and encouraged districts to have multiple plans as well. Larkins shared that a state assessment guidance document would be coming out with more specific guidance in regarding state assessment and accountability and this would be shared in the coming weeks in District Assessment Coordinators meeting.

Larkins shared the tentative 2021 assessment windows with the advisory council. Larkins shared they are waiting for more information from the Biden administration in regards to state assessment and accountability.

Larkins shared with the advisory council slides with the tentative testing window dates and information for those testing windows in regards to materials ordering, shipping and when scores would be available. Larkins shared this was tentative and to remain flexible.

Larkins shared with the advisory council about future assessment work which included resources on assessment, legislation introduced , partners in the future work.

Question and answer with Jennifer Larkins with the advisory council. Questions asked were in regards to assessment for virtual learning students and the form of testing paper/pencil or online.

### **Agenda Item: School Counselor Advocacy**

**Presenter:** Jenny Ray, KDE Office of Education Licensure and Effectiveness

#### **Summary of Discussion:**

Sweeney introduced Ray.

Ray asked a guiding question: How might school counselors advocate for their role with their principals?

Ray shared the Kentucky Framework for Teaching about how working with administrators there has to be a common language and common understanding for role criteria; role, responsibilities, and discussion language. Ray shared that when diving into this framework it is an “Ah-ah moment” for principals. Ray shared that this often opens up the conversation with administrators of what your school counseling is doing vs what they should be doing and how we can align best practices with the framework.

Ray shared feedback questions with focus on member roles, what do you wish principals knew. Discussion was held by advisory council members about advocating for their role within the school and district.

### **Agenda Item: Healthy At School Update**

**Presenters:** Stephanie Bungy, School Health Consultant, Office of Finance and Operations, Division of District Support, Kentucky Department of Education

#### **Summary of Discussion:**

Sweeney introduced Bungy.

Bungy shared that this is a grant funded by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention focusing on physical education, nutrition, health services, the whole child as well as social emotional learning. Bungy shared that her team has been working with educational cooperatives on Social and Emotional Learning and then supporting districts and schools. Bungy shared that staff wellness is something they have been working on as well and encouraged the advisory council to work with our physical education teachers to provide this for our staff.

### **Agenda Item: Comprehensive School Counseling Updates**

**Presenter:** Damien Sweeney

#### **Summary of Discussion:**

Sweeney shared a coping lesson that was created. He shared it was a Nearpod that could be shared with staff, students and a link would be shared as well as a follow up email with this. Sweeney shared that coping was a need identified by students on the Commissioner’s Advisory Council.

Sweeney shared that he has been working with the educational cooperatives across the state offering professional development and support. Sweeney shared a document with learning opportunities. Sweeney asked about which opportunity was most needed. Discussion was held by advisory council members building comprehensive school counseling programs, best practices framework and next steps. Sweeney shared that some thought and discussion is being held about asynchronous learning/courses for both topics. Sweeney would possibly be reaching out to members of the council for assistance with this or facilitating these conversations.

Sweeney led the discussion about how social emotional learning is everyone’s job and how we can communicate this. The advisory council had a discussion and shared ideas.

Sweeney shared closing remarks, next meeting dates were discussed and exit slip placed in the chat box to complete.

**Agenda Item: Adjournment**

**Presenter:** Damien Sweeney

**Next Meeting Date:**

March 25, 2021

May 13, 2021