

Getting Started

RATIONALE/PURPOSE

Research shows a positive culture within a school can connect students to learning. Such things as a safe and respectful environment, supportive and personalized learning experiences that allow social and emotional development, and personal connections allow students to develop a connection with the school and attain educational success. They can also help reduce risky behavior and drop-outs. An effective advisory program can provide these elements and allow students to succeed.

“Students need to feel safe first (both physically and psychologically), feel like they belong, feel respected, and feel cared about to be successful in school.” – *The Advisory Guide*

Preparation

Planning is the most critical part of a successful advisory program. Without proper planning and support from all the partners – from parents to principals – a program will most likely fail. The real losers in this situation are the students!

What does a teacher advisor program provide?

- Education and career planning for all students with parental involvement
- Opportunities to focus on students’ plans and dreams
- A comprehensive plan to provide students with skills and background to make decisions about their education and career
- The components of a plan include:
 - ❑ self-awareness
 - ❑ option awareness
 - ❑ decision making

“Teachers as Advisors programs take time to plan, develop, and implement. What is best for students isn’t always easy for us!”

- unknown teacher

□ planning

- ✓ NOTE: An important activity in the plan is the annual parent/student/advisor conference to update the career portfolio and select classes for the next year.
- A process to help students improve their chances for long-term employment
- All students with a teacher advisor

Why should you want to have a Teacher Advisor Program?

- Organizes career development into a manageable time frame and team effort.
- Ensures consistent curriculum exposure to all students.
- Provides opportunity for shared responsibility for career and education development by including parents, students, teachers, and counselors.
- Enables students to gain skills and background necessary to make good educational and career decisions.
- Increases students' choices and access to jobs and postsecondary education through adequate knowledge. . . OPTION awareness.
- Encourages students to set career/educational goals and construct a plan to meet those goals.
- Improves relations between school, parents, business, industry, and other community members.

BENEFITS

Administration Benefits

- Provides better image/public relations for school
- Helps with scheduling
 - Facilitates school start - school can begin on first day
 - Allows a master schedule to be built around firm data from pre-enrollment
 - Course selection will provide the number of teachers to hire prior to the start of school.
- Can be implemented with little or no money – sustainability

Teacher Benefits

- Reduces scheduling changes
- Provides more appropriate placement
- Makes class selection more relevant
- Encourages a more personal relationship with students
- Allows broader understanding of total curriculum
- Allows broader knowledge of graduation requirements

Counselor Benefits

- Shortens time spent on paperwork
- Cuts down on number of schedule changes
- Allows more time with students and guidance program
- Organizes career development into a manageable time frame.
- Allows interaction with all teachers

Student Benefits

- Allows students to be active players in their own career planning
- Teaches responsibility for own career plan and educational goals
- Increases awareness of career and educational opportunities
- Provides better access to counselors and advisors
- Builds personal relationship with teacher advisor

Parent Benefits

- Increases involvement in child's education and career planning
- Promotes positive interaction with school staff and faculty
- Increases understanding of child and child's interests and abilities
- Increases knowledge of school and school system
- Increases knowledge of different options for student's education and career

Community/Employer Benefits

- Provides better prepared workforce
- Provides better placement of graduates
- Improves relationship between community/employer and school
- Builds awareness of career opportunities within the community

ACTION STEPS

✓ **NOTE:** There are examples of letters, activities, and ideas in each of the sections of this guide.

Obtain broad-based support for the program.

- Administrative support
 - ❑ Must have administration buy-in; it is crucial they have a stake in the program for it to be successful
- Board member support
- Parental support

Select a person to coordinate your program.

Set-up an advisory committee to develop, implement, and evaluate the program.

- Select participants from a variety of areas
 - ❑ A suggested committee mix might include representatives from the counseling department and administration, a parent, a student, a business person, the media specialist, a coach, and a teacher from each of the following areas: special education, academics, career and technology education
- Set committee meeting dates and post on calendar.
- Set steering committee meetings - should include representative from each school in the district and meet 2 - 3 times per year.
- Distribute calendars to the committee and to advisors.
 - ❑ This will allow advisors to address concerns, suggestions, new ideas with the committee
- Review the Teachers as Advisors Rubric.
- Tour a school that has implemented the program.

Develop a name, logo, or slogan for your program.

Complete needs assessment.

- Communicate results and program to parents, teachers, and students.

Determine time frame or calendar for implementing program.

- Set target date for second semester
- Begin preparation in August
- Set advisory committee times
- Set faculty training dates
- Assign student advisor session times
- Complete all program forms
- Set parent/teacher conference dates
- Determine enrollment dates
- Set date for evaluation of program
 - ❑ Final wrap-up with leader, advisors, and committee

Prepare teacher advisor notebook.

Determine how to hand grade repeaters and special needs students.

Assign students to advisors.

- ✓ **NOTE:** Be sure to include principal(s), counselor(s), media specialist, nurse, etc.
- Limit number of students per advisor to no more than 20.
- Assign advisees to advisors.
 - ❑ Have advisors select students through a draft process.
 - ❑ Divide the students alphabetically by last name and divide equally among advisors.
 - ❑ Match students' cluster interest with a knowledgeable advisor.
 - ❑ Separate males and females for gender-based groups.
- List advisement on student's schedule
- Students remain with same advisor until senior seminars begin or graduation.
- Decide when advisors will meet with advisees and place on calendar.
- Decide what time of the day meetings will take place (i.e., homeroom, abbreviated schedule, encore, floating schedule, first period, second period).
- Reserve a few teachers to use as substitutes when an advisor is absent.
- Each month, provide advisors with a list of students with career majors to shop adds/drops.

Schedule time to meet with students.

- Meet as often as possible to meet the student's needs
 - ❑ With the curriculum
 - ❑ With career pathways and planning
 - ❑ 1 to 2 hours per month is suggested

Implement advisor training workshop.

- Decide the time frame needed and the scope of your workshop.
- Decide who will deliver the workshop.
- Refer to the "Advisor Training" section for guideline and suggestions
- Train new teachers as they enter district.
- Provide compensation for teachers for attending.
 - ❑ Reward points
 - ❑ Pins
 - ❑ Certificates
 - ❑ Coupons

Plan initial parent conference.

- Refer to section 3, "Preparing for Parent Conference," for guidelines and examples.

Plan student activities.

- Plan the same career activity for all students in the same grade level.
- Begin small, start with one grade level.
- Add on each year.

Evaluate/review your program and make suggestions for changes.

- Survey teachers, parents, and students
- Collect data to substantiate need to continue the program.

Compensate teachers for extra work involved in program implementation

- Tokens of appreciation
- Luncheon

RESOURCES

Review video from Springdale, Arkansas.

Springdale High School
1103 West Emma
Springdale, AR 72764
(479) 750-8883

✓ **NOTE:** Oklahoma teachers can check out the video from the ODCTE Resource Center, 405-743-5162 www.okcareertech.org/resrc/default.htm. The title of the video is Career Action Planning, 371.425 car.

Review the Louisiana curriculum, Teachers as Educational Advisors and Mentors (TEAM) manual.

This curriculum may be downloaded from <http://www.louisianaschools.net/ide/uploads/4879.pdf>

More information may be obtained from:

TEAM Manual
Mervin Birdwell
LA Technical Resource Center
P.O. Box 1159
Natchitoches, LA 71458-1159
(318) 357-3155

Check Internet sites.

Use search words - teachers as advisor, teacher advisors.

“When I was growing up, I knew I wanted to be somebody. Now, I wish I had been a little more specific.”

Lily Tomlin, Comedian

PLAN/PROGRAM OF STUDY (POS) RUBRIC

Developed by Career and Support Services Team
Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education

Performance Element	1 Novice	2 Emerging	3 Developing
Recommended Requirements	High school graduation checklist	High school graduation checklist with a planned career cluster or blended academic and career/technical area of concentration.	High school, college, and postsecondary training entrance requirement checklist with a planned career cluster or blended academic and career/technical area of concentration.
Staff Involvement	Counselor or Carl Perkins staff	Counselor and/or Carl Perkins staff	Counselor and other school staff work together on school wide POS system.
Grade level Group or Individual Participation	All 8 th graders involved in an orientation process individually or in groups.	8th grade orientation and 9th grade follow-up conference.	Individual and/or group advisement sessions for 9th - 10th - 11th - 12th - grade students.
Review		Updated annually.	Reviewed and updated annually.
Parental Involvement	Enrollment and assessment information is sent home to parents.	Enrollment and assessment information is sent home to parents. Regularly scheduled Parent Teacher Conference days.	Enrollment and assessment information is sent home or students take information to parents and parent's signature required for enrollment purposes. Regularly scheduled Parent Teacher Conference days.
Academic and Interest Assessments	OK EPAS (EXPLORE and PLAN), or other assessments are administered/used.	OK EPAS or other interest inventories are used to begin career exploration process.	Student assessment results are given and interpreted to the students/parents.

✓ NOTE: Performance elements 4 and 5 are found on the following page.

Plan/Program of Study (POS) Rubric (cont.)

Performance Element	4 Meets Standard	5 Well Developed/Advanced
Recommended Requirements	School wide plan of study that includes high school, college, and postsecondary training entrance requirements with a planned career cluster or blended academic and career/technical area of concentration.	Students can speak about the options, requirements, and benefits of their POS. Students are expected to complete a rigorous academic core as well as rigorous career tech courses. A copy of the POS follows the student to the tech center.
Staff Involvement	Counselor and other school advisors/mentors work with assigned students on career planning to reach all students.	Counselor and other school advisors /mentors, and technology center or postsecondary (tech center, university/college, military) student services jointly plan and work with all students on career planning.
Grade level Group or Individual Participation	Teachers as Advisors Program available for grades 9-12 with individual advisement.	Teachers as Advisors Program available for grades 9-12 with individual advisement including a student/parent/advisor conference.
Review	Reviewed and updated annually.	Reviewed and updated twice annually.
Parental Involvement	All parents meet with student and school staff. (Parent - Teacher - Student Conferences during scheduled time) to develop plan of study. Parent's signature is required for enrollment purposes.	All parents meet with student and school staff to develop plan of study. A parent signature is required on POS for the student to be enrolled and before class changes can be made. Parent meets with student and school staff twice annually to review and update POS.
Academic and Interest Assessments	Student assessments/interest inventories and academic results are assessments/interest inventories and academic interpreted with parent/child to discuss life-career goals, course options, and hobby preferences. Assessment results are used in development of POS.	Student assessments/interest inventories and academic results are interpreted with parent and child to discuss life-career goals, course options, and hobby preferences to develop and review a POS.

Each level builds upon the previous level. It is assumed all services in the previous level are continued as the rubric works upward. This rubric is designed to assist in rating the current status of your school's implementation of student's Plan/Program of Study (POS). This self-rating tool assists school personnel in setting systemic goals. It can highlight what level is being implemented and it can be used as a benchmarking tool for improvement. Place a mark in the area that best describes your school's Plan/Program Of Study format. If you need assistance with strategies for program improvements, please contact our Guidance office for more information at www.okcareertech.ora/audiance or 1.800.522.5810 ext 159.