

**HORRY COUNTY SCHOOLS
MONITORING REPORT – OE-12**

I certify that the information in this report is true.

Signed:  Date: 6/3/21
Rick Maxey, Superintendent

Disposition of the Board:

☐ In compliance
☐ Not in compliance
☐ Compliance with exception

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Ken Richardson, Board Chair

Comments: _____

	Supt	Supt	Bd	Bd
	In compliance	Not in compliance	In compliance	Not in compliance
OE-12 – The superintendent shall establish and maintain a learning environment that is safe, respectful and conducive to effective learning.	X			

Interpretation: I interpret this policy to mean that the District will establish and maintain a safe learning environment that promotes respect, encourages high student achievement, and works collaboratively with parents and other agencies to support students who may be having difficulty with behavioral issues.

Evidence of Status of Compliance:

We are in full compliance of this policy. Evidence is listed below:

- K-12 HCS Virtual

The HCS K-12 Virtual program allows students in grades K-12 to enroll and participate in a full-time virtual program. Students in the program remain enrolled in their base schools, but they do not attend classes on the school campus. Teachers from across the District provide instruction and assignments through a District-supported learning management system and communicate through video conferencing and other digital communication tools. Families are responsible for providing a supportive environment for online learning.

Participation in this program requires a semester commitment. Parents or guardians may

request to transfer their students back to the brick-and-mortar school at the change of the semester.

- **Comprehensive Guidance Program**

Each school in the District implements the Comprehensive Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program developed by the South Carolina Department of Education. The guidance program consists of structured developmental experiences presented systematically through individual activities, classroom activities, and small group activities in pre-kindergarten through grade twelve. The guidance program provides students at all levels with knowledge of personal, social, academic, and career development to promote their mental health and to assist them in acquiring and using life skills. School counselors work in collaboration with school and District staff in determining priorities consistent with school and District goals in order to assist with maintaining an effective learning environment for all students. Consultation services are provided for students, parents, teachers, and administrators concerning student behavior, social and family issues, and academic progress. Referrals to other professionals in the school District or to agencies and institutions outside the District are made as required or requested.

Beginning with the 2017-18 school year, career counseling sessions, either individually or in a group setting, were held with students in grades 3 – 7. For these counseling sessions, an online career awareness program was utilized and the results were shared with parents. In previous years, Individual Graduation Plans (IGP) and career inventories were only required of students in grades 8 – 12.

Throughout the year, counselors from all 3 school levels are provided with the opportunity to participate in District, state, and national professional development training.

- **Grief Counseling Team**

The District has a Grief Counseling Team established that incorporates the utilization of school counselors, school psychologists, and RBHS counselors. Grief counseling services cannot be fully planned in advance due to the unexpected nature of such incidents. However, all school counselors and administrators are given specific contact information and procedures for activating the team in the event the school does have a tragedy. The specific number of personnel brought into a school to assist with a tragedy is determined by District staff and school administration, and is based on the needs of the school and school community at the time of the incident. The assistance team that comes in is for the assistance of the school and fall under the direction of the school administration. District staff also assists in the organization and supervision as needed during any incident. Counselors are given specific information in the organization of a school grief kit for the team in the event it is needed.

- **Rehabilitative Behavioral Health Services**

A school-centered, goal-directed, family supportive counseling service provided to students who have emotional and behavioral characteristics that interfere with their ability to function at their highest academic and social levels. Services are based on student's needs and may include Behavior Modification, Group Psychotherapy, Individual Psychotherapy, Family Psychotherapy, Family Support, Psychosocial Rehabilitative Services, and Crisis Management. The overall goals of services to students are to help them understand the meaning of their behavior so that they begin to address emotional needs and

responses, and make positive changes, as well as to teach them to channel anxiety and aggression or other negative emotions appropriately and constructively. The students learn new skills and to monitor and adjust their own behavior and interactions with others, achieving greater gains academically and socially, with resulting increased achievement and attendance. In addition, family support and guidance is provided to educate the caregivers about the effects of their attitudes and behaviors on their children and to give the families a stronger understanding of what is happening with their child. Families are aided in finding successful ways to interact with their severely emotionally and behaviorally challenged children.

Staff members are present in the schools five days a week during the school hours, and beyond, if needed. Staff are an integral part of the school community and are involved in meetings regarding students (e.g., IEP, BIP, MDR), crisis situations that may involve children not involved with the program (as school administration expresses the need), and other non-academic programs (assemblies, special teams). Throughout the year, counselors and behavior interventionists are provided with the opportunity to participate in clinical professional development training.

During the 2020-2021 school year, RBHS provided the above listed services regularly in 55 schools and programs. As part of a school team, RBHS staff assisted with the completion of threat and suicide assessments on a regular basis. The RBHS staff were called upon to provide homebased services to several students. Three Master of Social Work Interns from the University of South Carolina and one from Simmons College completed their field placements in the RBHS program. The RBHS Coordinators work closely with South Carolina Department of Education and Department of Health and Human Services to ensure compliance with state Medicaid standards.

Due to the ramifications of the Coronavirus-COVID, virtual services were rendered to students and their families as appropriate. Contact was made via phone, e-mail, and virtual meeting technology.

- Therapeutic Learning Center (TLC)

TLC is a therapeutic educational facility that offers a comprehensive system of individual, family and group treatment services provided within a small and highly structured educational setting. The program operates as a rehabilitative behavioral health services program which is designed to improve a student's ability to function independently as provided for by South Carolina state law. The program serves students with severe emotional needs and students who are capable of benefitting from counseling and complex behavior support systems. The purpose of the program is to provide services to students with challenges which impede their academic progress, despite multiple intensive educational and behavioral interventions. Placement is designed with the expectation that the student will benefit from the program and move towards the goal of returning to the base school. The program presently serves students in grades K-12.

TLC also provides Rehabilitative Behavioral Health Services (RBHS) for students who would have required Clinical Day Services and/or out-of-District placement to meet the educational and behavioral/emotional needs of these students. The Therapeutic Learning Center allows students to remain in District and live at home and be provided a quality education and counseling services that would otherwise have to be provided by outside agencies, typically at the expense of the District.

- Crisis Management Plans

The District and each school have Crisis Management Plans which outline response procedures in the event of an emergency. Included in the plans are roles and responsibilities of the District and school teams when responding to multiple kinds of emergencies. Plans are updated annually and, at minimum, no less than four emergency drills are to be held each school year. Two of these drills must be armed intruder/lockdown drills which are to be held within the first three weeks of each new semester. Additionally, state law requires two weather-related drills during a school year. Horry County Schools participates in state and regional drills pertaining to earthquakes and tornadoes to meet this objective. All campuses participate in monthly fire drills as required by law. All drills are documented in each school's monthly safety report. Traditional drill schedules are now subject to modification during an emergency to ensure that public safety and/or health guidelines are followed.

Additional guidance pertaining to crisis management protocols are contained within the Administrator's Handbook.

During the 2020-21 school year, all employees were asked to complete additional training modules within the SafeSchools curriculum to accommodate active shooter training recommendations provided by the SCDE.

Plans to deploy a new Standard Response Protocol (SRP) to all school administrators in a "train-the-trainer" format has been scheduled for the 2021 summer A-Team meeting. This training, which was originally scheduled for summer 2020, was rescheduled due to circumstances associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Risk Assessment Protocol

During the 2018-2019 school year, the District began utilizing a Risk Assessment Protocol, which was developed by a team of District staff members from Guidance, RBHS, Special Education, and Health Services. This protocol, which is closely aligned with South Carolina Department of Education guidelines, allows a school team to determine what level of risk a student is considered to be, in regards to his/her danger to self or others. This protocol has been instrumental in the determination of our students' risk level, but also in allowing us to work with parents/guardians to provide the appropriate assistance necessary to meet our students' needs. All necessary staff members are trained on the use of the protocol, and received updated information as needed.

- Bullying Prevention/Intervention

Each school in the District has a bullying team with one member of the team serving as the lead representative. This representative, and/or associated team members, is tasked with the following responsibilities: investigation, documentation of findings, conflict resolution, and following up to ensure anti-bullying initiatives are effective. All schools have in place a bullying plan that includes, but is not limited to, the following components:

1. Highly visible administrative leadership and commitment
2. Clearly defined behaviors for direct and indirect bullying
3. Published specific school rules with consistent sanctions for bullying
4. Operational guidelines for staff via training and resources
5. Reporting system with direct and anonymous channels

6. Review of data
7. Supervision enhanced in trouble spots
8. Intensive support to victims of bullying
9. Social skills behavior training for bullies
10. Ongoing system for training and validation which includes the requirement that each school is expected to review their anti-bullying plan at least one time annually

Horry County Schools provides avenues for parties to report suspected incidents of bullying/harassment which supplement measures in place at each campus. Examples of these reporting conduits are:

1. The "tip line"
2. The bullying reporting utility which is incorporated into the "Horry Mobile" app
3. The online reporting form, which when submitted is sent directly to Student Affairs

Horry County Schools has also developed resources for parents, students, teachers, and community members in an effort to prevent bullying. All resources may be found on the HCS website. Grade level appropriate posters, developed by our Communications Department, were provided to every school.

- Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)

AVID, which stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination, is a college readiness program designed to help students develop the skills they need to be successful in college. The program places special emphasis on growing writing, critical thinking, teamwork, organization and reading skills.

Early College High School and Conway High School continue to implement and sustain certification in AVID, a school-wide College Readiness System focusing on school transformation through leadership, systems, instruction and school culture. Early College High School is an AVID School-wide Site of Distinction. This achievement represents the highest level of AVID implementation fidelity demonstrating excellence in instructional practice and the promotion of college readiness school-wide. As part of the certification, both sites report the following:

1. The school's mission and vision are aligned with AVID's mission and vision for college readiness, which serve as a foundation for decision-making, are integrated throughout school documents such as the School Improvement Plan.
2. Community/college awareness activities promote a culture of college readiness.
3. The school implements a system of grade-level vertical and horizontal articulation that helps ensure AVID students are college ready.
4. The school implements academic support structures and rigorous instructional practices to help ensure AVID Elective students, students of AVID Site Team members, and students instructed in core academic courses develop deeper levels of understanding in rigorous work.
5. AVID students set goals and monitor their grades to ensure that they are college ready.
6. Students in the AVID Elective class receive instruction in writing-to-learn strategies and spend time at least weekly writing reflections of learning and/or completing learning logs.
7. Students in the AVID Elective class receive instruction in the critical reading process to access increasingly more rigorous text in AVID and in other academic courses.
8. AVID students ask higher-level questions during tutorials, class discussions, and problem-solving activities to promote critical thinking.
9. AVID students routinely participate and lead discussions using structures for inquiry such as Socratic Seminars and Philosophical Chairs.

10. AVID students model leadership skills while collaborating in the AVID Elective class, in other academic classes, and in activities on campus or in the community.

- CCU Mentoring/Tutoring Program

Coastal Carolina University and Horry County Schools collaborate to implement the Dalton and Linda Floyd Family Mentoring Program. Coastal Carolina University provides students to serve as mentors and/or tutors through experiential learning courses or as volunteers. A staff member hired by Horry County Schools and housed at CCU recruits, trains, places and monitors students in Horry County Schools. Elementary and middle school principals designate a staff member as a school liaison for mentors. Schools determine which children could benefit from having a mentor. Mentors are placed based on the requests of participating schools.

- Waccamaw Center for Mental Health

A school-based counseling service for students who have emotional, social and behavioral problems is a creative solution for providing services to at-risk students within the school setting to assist in ensuring that students remain in the classrooms where they can receive high quality instruction. Students who display behaviors which disrupt relationships with other people, affect their school performance, or cause the student personal distress may benefit from counseling provided by WCMH counselors. Services provided include Individual Therapy, Family Therapy, Group Therapy, Crisis Intervention and Psychiatric Consultation. Services can be individualized for a student, classrooms of students, or a specialized program for an entire school. The students involved have the opportunity to learn new ways to approach problems and talk about their perceptions, helping them to be successful in overcoming obstacles. School Based Services staff work cooperatively with staff in schools to create a safe learning environment, promote increased school attendance, academic performance, improved behavioral control and to enhance positive parent and community support.

During the 2020-21 school year, WCMH provided 7 mental health counselors to the District providing treatment services in 8 schools. Schools receiving these services are: Conway High, Socastee High, St. James High, Black Water Middle, Myrtle Beach Middle, Myrtle Beach Elementary, Myrtle Beach Primary School, and Socastee Elementary.

- School Security Officers/School Resource Officers

All middle and high schools within the municipalities have a sworn School Resource Officer assigned on a full time basis. Middle and high schools located in the unincorporated areas of Horry County as well as elementary schools, regardless of their location, have armed civilian security officers assigned to their campuses which are referred to as School Security Officers. Coverage is also provided at the Conway Education Center and the District Office.

- Other Resources

We also maintain a safe environment which is conducive to effective learning by:

1. Utilizing the services of School Security Officers, Security Guards, and SROs;
2. Utilizing the services of a narcotics K-9 to randomly search campuses. Searches are routinely conducted by a private contracted vendor, and occasionally by law enforcement agencies with appropriate jurisdiction when conditions warrant;

3. Walk-Through Metal Detectors and Hand-Held Wands;
4. A visitor management screening system is in effect for all schools;
5. Providing an application for mobile devices which facilitates anonymous reporting of bullying and harassment to school officials;
6. Security cameras in all schools and on all busses;
7. Keyless locks;
8. Installation of a remote activated entry system at all school campuses;
9. Provision of a proximity card reader override code for first responders during tactical critical incidents;
10. Implementation of a false alarm reduction program;
11. Mandating monthly safety inspections by each school's administration; and all campuses participate in self-assessment activities that require monthly safety inspections which meet or exceed mandates issued by the South Carolina Fire Marshal.
12. Linked resources for students, parents, and educators on the Student Affairs web page which addresses a variety of safety-related topics ranging from anti-bullying initiatives to emergency preparedness.
13. All campuses have a comprehensive School Emergency Management Plan which is reviewed on routine basis and modified as needed.
14. All schools participate in a variety of emergency drills that meet or exceed state mandates.