



Utah School Counseling Utah Valley University Presentation

March 10, 2026
Bethany Marker, School Counseling Specialist

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Introduction



Bethany Marker
School Counseling Specialist

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Mission Statement

The Utah State Board of Education's (USBE) School Counseling specialist's mission is to support Utah's professional school counselors in the development, implementation and evaluation processes necessary to sustain high-quality K-12 school counseling programs that benefit students, families, educators and communities.

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Vision Statement

The USBE School Counseling Specialist's vision is for every school to have a high-quality, K-12 School Counseling Program that drives positive student outcomes and ensures postsecondary plans and pathways for all students.



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1988 Statewide USBE School Counseling Initiative

ASCA TIMELINE

1980s/1990s

The role and function of school counselors are of concern; many states adopt state models for school counseling programs.

- A new look at Utah school counselors
- Dr. Norm Gysbers
- Dr. Lynn Jensen
- District superintendents and Career and Technical Education (CTE) directors
- 11 pilot schools
 - Three-year commitment to change
 - Park City: summer training
 - Full team attends

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1994: A Milestone Year

Utah Model for Comprehensive School Counseling

- Funding allocated by the Utah State Legislature
- USBE Administrative Rules developed
 - [Board Rule R277-462](#)
- Funding formula created
- 53 secondary schools qualify to receive their share of \$1.5 million
- Program implementation across all parts of the state



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1996: A Milestone Year



- School counseling program emerges as a driving force for the SEOP
- SEOP becomes Utah Code Section [53A-1a-106](#)
- SEOP fulfills the individual planning component of the school counseling program
 - SOEP is a primary strategy for recognizing student accomplishments and strengths for planning, monitoring and managing education and career developments in grades 7-12
 - SOEP involves a planning process and a product for documentation

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Utah Code, Related Policies and Guidelines Regarding the Plan for CCR

[Utah Code Section 53E-2-304](#) states:

2(b) (i) As used in this title, “plan for college and career readiness” means a plan developed by a student and the student’s parent or guardian, in consultation with school counselors, teachers, and administrators that:

- (A) is initiated at the beginning of grade 7;
- (B) identifies a student’s skills and objectives;
- (C) maps out a strategy to guide a student’s course selection; and
- (D) links a student to post-secondary options, including higher education and careers

Board Rule R277-462-5: Planning for College and Career Readiness

[Board Rule R277-465-5](#)

An LEA shall ensure the implementation for a plan for college and career readiness is consistent with the LEA’s program goals and includes the following conference meetings:

- (a) at least one individual and one group conference meeting during:
 - (i) 7th and 8th grades: minimally one individual and one group conference during the two years;
 - (ii) 9th and 10th grades: minimally one individual conference and one group conference during the two years;
 - (iii) 11th and 12 graders: minimally one individual conference and one group conference during the two years; and
- (b) other meetings as needed

Plan for CCR Process

- School counseling programs shall establish plans for CCR for each student.
- Each student will be involved in planning for CCR by participating in individual and group meetings.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to attend CCR meetings.

Career Literacy and the CCR Plan

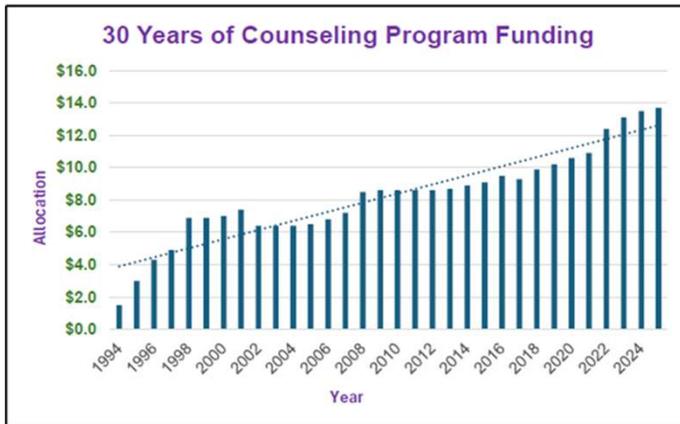
Career literacy provides students with the capacity to make informed decisions regarding their CCR plan. Through career development assistance, students will complete high school with the skills outlined in USBE's vision statement. Career literacy is also a component of the CCR process.

Career Literacy

Career development activities may include:

- Student interests and aptitudes (YouScience, Keys To Success, Naviance)
- Career exploration and character education in K-6
- Career awareness and exploration (career fairs, Reality Town)
- Job applications and interview skills
- Understanding of CTE pathways
- 1, 2, 3 or more years of postsecondary educational opportunities, apprenticeships, internships and/or certifications

Ongoing Funding = Statewide Commitment (2)



**30 years = \$264.3 million
Utah State Legislature**

**FUNDING FOR
REAL CHANGE**

Costly Counselor Plan Angers School Chiefs

[Article](#)

Published September 12, 2008

By Deseret News, Amy K. Stewart

School district superintendents are angry over a potentially expensive State Board of Education proposal that requires one counselor for every 350 secondary students.

Currently the ratio in some schools is as high as one counselor per 600 students. The state average is one counselor for every 395 students, according to the Utah State Office of Education.

The proposed rule, to be discussed by the board today, also states school counselors shouldn't do clerical work such as administering tests or changing class schedules.

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School Counselor to Student Ratios

To qualify for funding described in [Board Rule R277-462-4](#) a Local Education Agency (LEA) shall have at least one school counselor for every 350 students.

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Ongoing Funding = Statewide Commitment (1)

[Board Rule R277-462-7: Allowable Use of Distributed Funds](#)

- Collaborative classroom and small group curriculum
- Personnel costs, including clerical positions that support the plan for college and career readiness (CCR) process
- Career center equipment or materials such as computers, media equipment or occupational information
- Professional development for personnel involved in the program
- Expenses of extended hours which are required to run the program
- Membership in the Utah School Counselor Association (USCA), American School Counselor Association (ASCA), Utah Association for Career and Technical Education (UACTE) and Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) for one or more school counselors per school per year

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Compendium of Budget Information (COBI) Funding - School Counseling 2026

- Removes school counseling from the CTE add-on through legislation
- Changes the title of "Comprehensive Guidance" to "College and Career Counseling"
- Most likely will not change anything in our board rules as college and career counseling is already defined and supported in board rules
- Makes school counseling its own line item for funding instead of it being a part of CTE funding

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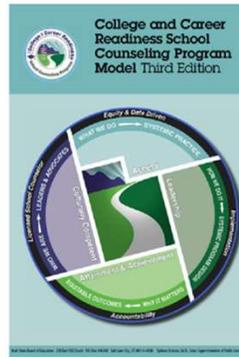
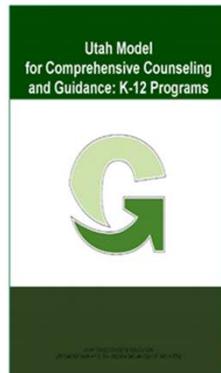
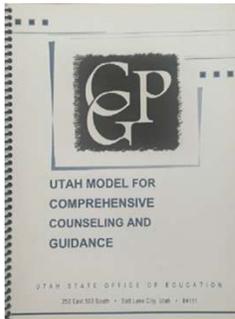
CCR Certificate Updates

- 2020 updates to Utah State Code require all school counselors (K-12) to be highly qualified in CCR
- Board Rule was updated in 2024 to match the change in law
- In July of 2026, USBE's licensing department will begin sending letters of non-compliance to LEAs
- The Utah state legislature wants Utah school counselors to be highly trained in supporting Utah students for CCR

Utah School Counselor Role Statement 2026

Utah School counselors are licensed educators who work to improve successful outcomes for all students. School counselors play a vital role in supporting students' academic, social, behavioral and college and career development by creating individualized CCR plans and delivering classroom lessons aligned with school improvement plans and goals. They provide short-term counseling services to promote students' overall health and well-being and connect students with appropriate resources for long-term support when needed. Through collaboration with families, teachers, administrators and community partners, school counselors advocate for students in all student-focused meetings and work to ensure equitable opportunities for success. Additionally, they analyze data to identify student needs and challenges, assess the effectiveness of the school counseling program, and act as agents of systemic change to improve achievement, attendance, access to opportunities, and positive behavior for all students.

Program Models



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The framework of the Utah K-12 Comprehensive School Counseling Program uses the ASCA National Model as a base and incorporates other competency-based programmatic approaches, meaning that, through it, students are provided with opportunities to develop the skills and attributes needed to achieve their future educational and career goals.

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Utah K-12 Comprehensive School Counseling Program Model Components

- [Utah K-12 Comprehensive School Counseling Program Model Components](#)
- In Utah, traditionally, school counseling has been thought to be a function of secondary education; however, comprehensive school counseling recognizes the importance of prevention and early intervention in elementary school. This framework is intended to support the design and implementation of systemic counseling programs for all grade levels.

Utah State Board of Education and Utah System of Higher Education 2024-25 Concurrent Enrollment Summary Data November 1, 2025

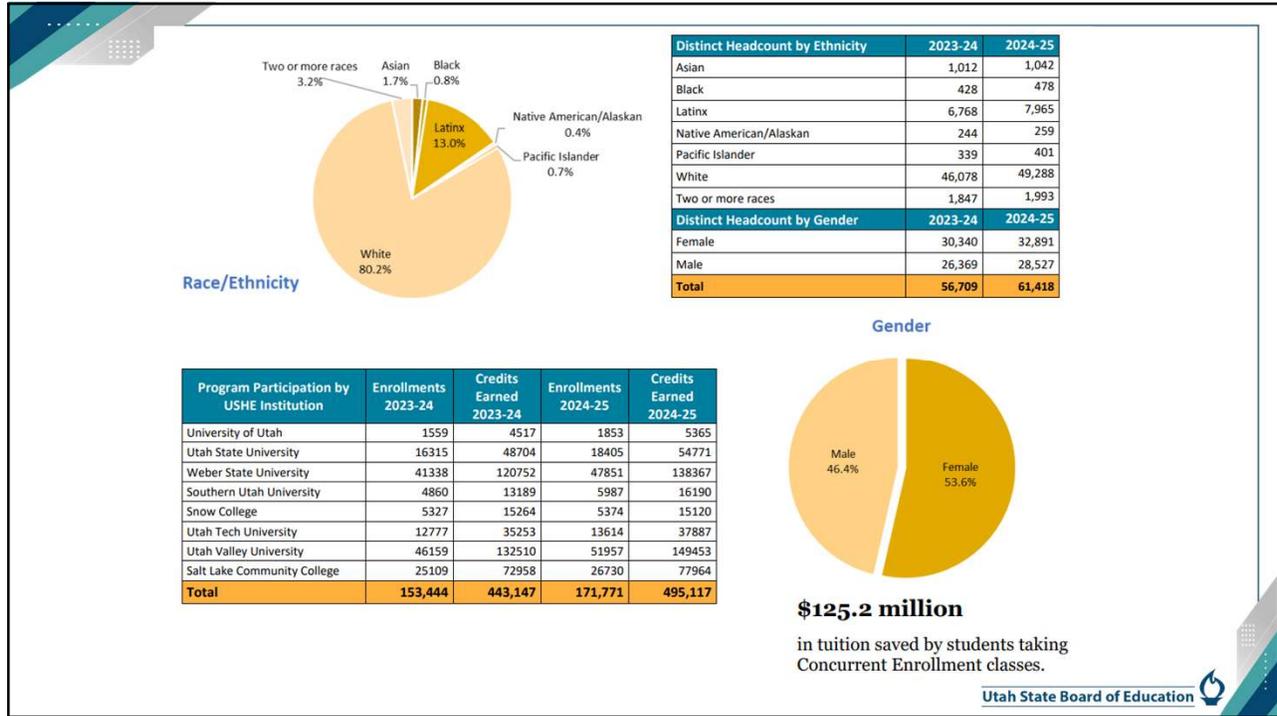


During the 2024–25-year, 218 public, charter, and alternative high schools participated in the Concurrent Enrollment program. Students from 41 districts and 41 charter schools earned concurrent credit. Below is the finalized end-of-year data. Final 2023-24 data is provided for comparison.

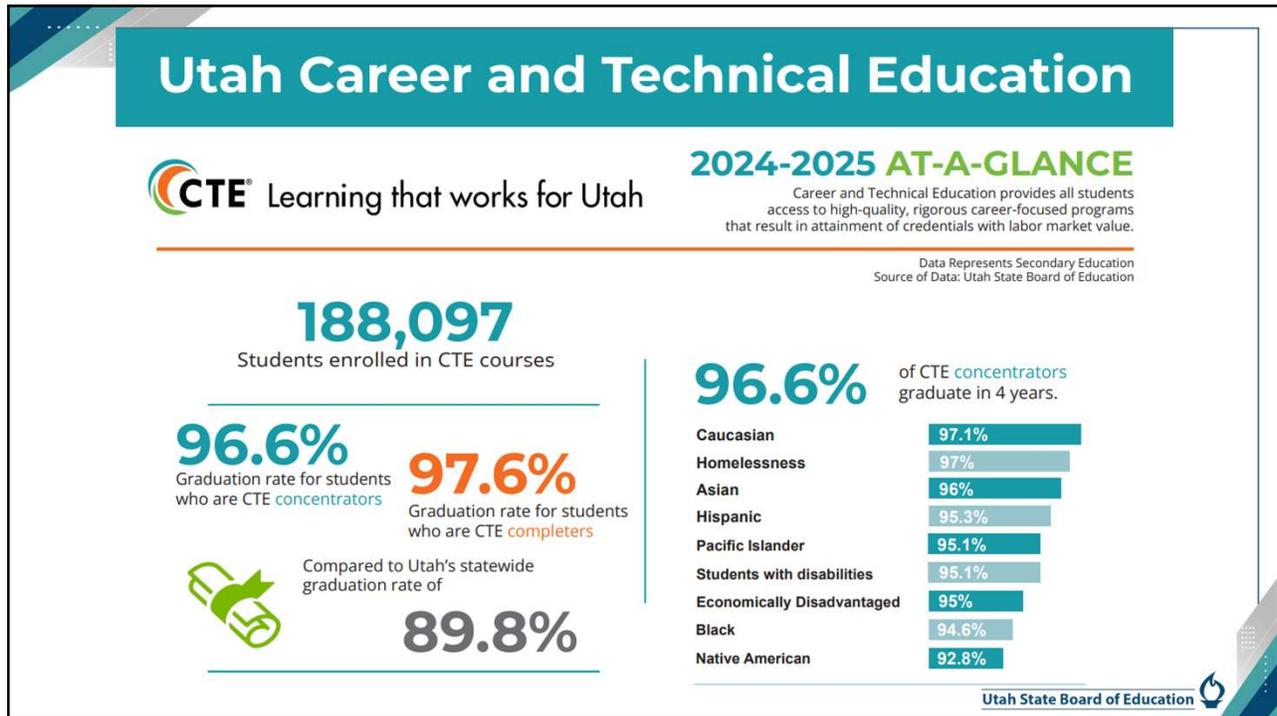
Student Participation	23-24	24-25	Change
Number of Students who participated in Concurrent Enrollment (<i>total distinct headcount</i>)	56,716	61,426	8.30%
Number of Credit Hours attempted	462,548	516,084	11.57%
Number of Credit Hours earned	443,147	495,117	11.73%

Type of Delivery (earned credit)	2023-24	2024-25	2023-24	2024-25
Credit Hours delivered Face-to-Face	402,517	450,074	Credit Hours taught by USHE faculty	48,452
Credit Hours delivered via Technology	40,630	45,043	Credit Hours taught by adjunct instructors (teachers)	394,695
				50,644

USHE / Credit Type Earned	2023-24		2024-25	
	No. Enrollments	Earned Credits	No. Enrollments	Earned Credits
General Education Courses TOTAL	117,134	340,568	128,670	373,168
<i>General Education Courses</i>		304,775		336,675
<i>CTE Courses that fulfill GenEd</i>		35,793		36,793
Other CTE Courses	34,324	96,988	40,422	114,535
Other Academic Courses	1,986	5,591	2,679	7,414
Total Registrations	153,444	443,147	171,771	495,117



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Utah Career and Technical Education

Top Pathways

Students completing a CTE Career Pathway are recognized by the state of Utah and their high school by receiving a CTE Secondary Pathway Completer recognition Award.

CTE Career Pathways with the Highest Completer Rates

- Health Science
- Business
- Programming and Software Development
- Engineering
- Broadcasting and Digital Media
- Graphic Design and Communication
- Business Information Management
- Pre-K: Early Childhood Education
- Dental Assistant

WORKPLACE and COLLEGE READINESS

9th-12th grade CTE concentrators who earned credit, at "C" grade or better, in (CE, or IB, or AP) OR who passed skill certification/third-party industry exams.



76.2%

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Career and Technical Student Organizations

36,152

students are members of a Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO).

■ Utah Members
■ National Members

Organization	Utah Members	National Members
DECA	4,050	294,310
ROCKWELL COLLEGE RISING	571	25,000
FBLA	2,910	210,947
FCCLA	2,816	260,219
FCI	17,257	1,027,273
hosa	3,670	330,923
SkillsUSA	2,727	441,000
ISA	2,111	300,531

Students who participate in school organizations in 10th grade have higher grade point averages and are more likely to be enrolled in college at 21 years of age than other students (ctsos.org).

50,376

students participated in

College & Career Awareness

College and Career Awareness is a middle school course, for grades 7-8, designed to increase awareness of college and career pathways. Students explore high school, college, and career options based on individual interests, abilities, and skills. Students investigate high-skill and/or in-demand jobs in the Utah labor market, while developing workplace skills.

Utah CTE classes are open to all qualified students without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age.

151,328

CTE Concurrent Enrollment (CE) credits earned

Students have opportunities to earn CE credits in CTE courses. CE provides prepared high school students with a challenging and rigorous college-level experience. Students in the program receive both college and high school credit.



Utah State Board of Education | 250 East 500 South | P.O. Box 144200 | Salt Lake City, UT 84114-4200
Molly Hart, Ed.D. State Superintendent of Public Instruction
Thalea Longhurst, State Director of Career and Technical Education

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Utah Code Sections 53G-9-901 and 902

- Utah Code Sections [53G-9-901](#) and [902](#) were formerly House Bill (H.B.) 281 during the 2025 legislative session
- Defines “restrictive services”
- As a result of this legislation, all school counselors have been asked to refer to themselves as “professional school counselors”

Data Projects



Background

- Outcome data in the areas of opportunity, achievement, attendance and behavior is a requirement of systemic practice for student success.
- All schools receiving school counseling program funds are required to submit a data project to USBE each year.
- The data project is completed by the school counseling team and submitted to their LEA leadership, who will then submit all data projects to a USBE school counseling program specialist via email by **June 15**.

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S.M.A.R.T. Goals

- Specific: concrete and tangible
- Measurable: an objective measure that is understandable
- Achievable: challenging but achievable with available resources
- Relevant: meaningfully contributes to overall mission
- Time-bound: has a deadline or timeline of progress milestone



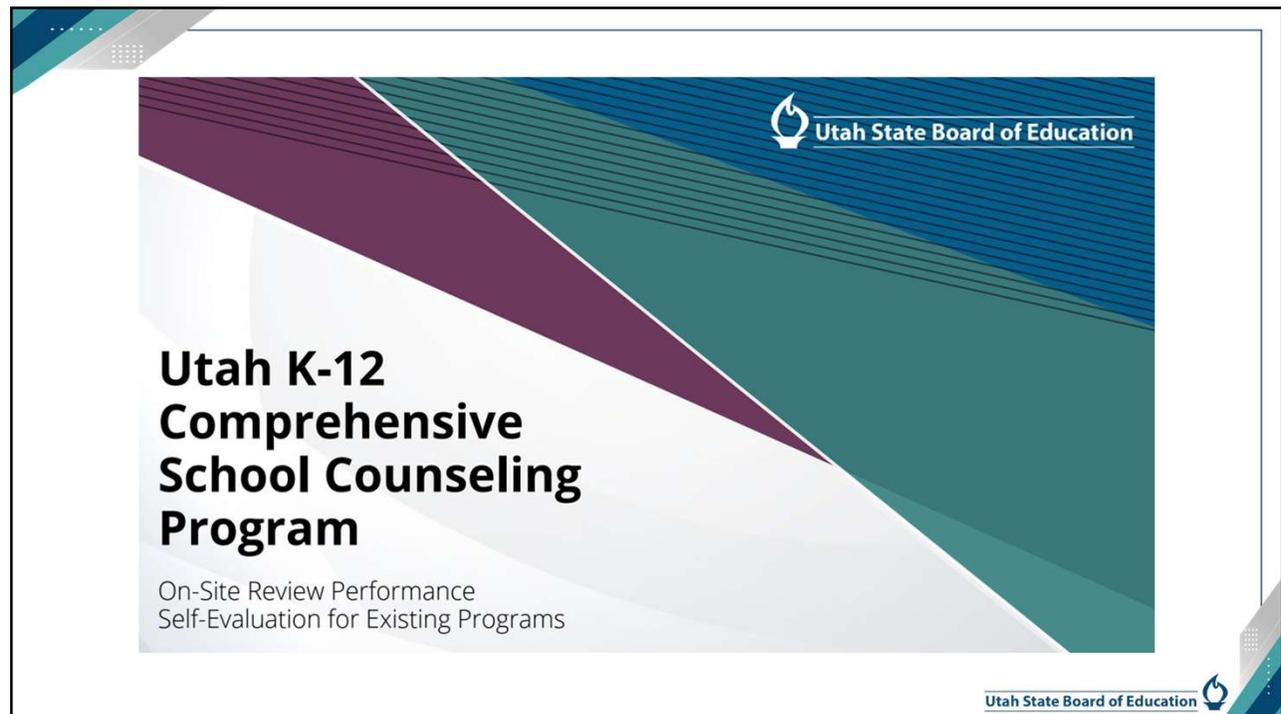
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Annual School Counseling Program Self Evaluation

An annual self-evaluation with the performance review document is required for all schools as part of the school counseling program funding process.

This document does not need to be submitted to a USBE school counseling program specialist. LEA leadership ensures that this process is occurs annually.

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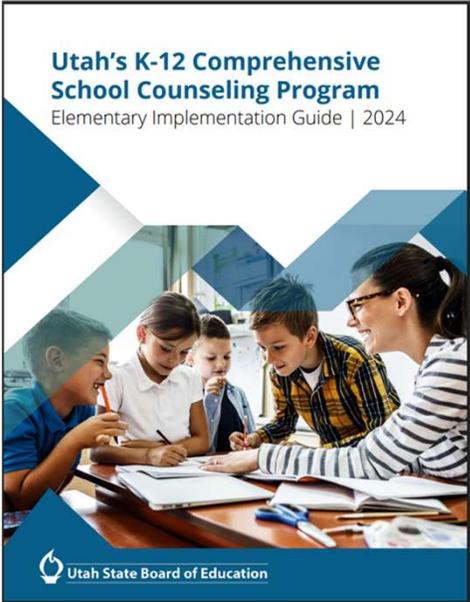
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Utah K-12 Comprehensive School Counseling Program

On-Site Review Performance
Self-Evaluation for Existing Programs

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Utah's K-12 Comprehensive
School Counseling Program
Elementary Implementation Guide | 2024

Elementary Implementation Guide

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Three-Year Interim Review

- The interim review (three-year) is structured at each LEA's discretion.
- Interim review reports are completed by the LEA and submitted via email to a USBE school counseling Program Specialist by **May 1**. The annual self-evaluation must be completed by schools participating in the interim review.

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Formal Six-Year School Counseling Review

The formal review (six-year) is conducted by a USBE school counseling program specialist. This process is developed within the Utah K-12 Comprehensive School Counseling Components framework to ensure that the school counseling team has implemented the program elements described in the review components.

The on-site review process serves to:

- celebrate the K-12 Comprehensive School Counseling Program Components;
- recognize program strengths and accomplishments;
- identify goals and areas for improvement;
- minimize identified gaps in the areas of achievement; attendance and protective factors, and
- ensure program implementation promotes academic, and career development as well as responsive services and supports for all students.

USBE School Counseling Program Website

The [USBE School Counseling Program website](#) includes:

- Templates
- Resources
- Professional learning information
- Licensing information
- Law and policy information
- School counseling program implementation and evaluation information

Please Provide Feedback



Please provide feedback using the QR code.

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Contact Me



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