



The Challenge

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's (Wisconsin DPI's) [Academic & Career Planning \(ACP\) initiative](#) is intended to encourage students to take active ownership of their education and college or career goals. Wisconsin DPI anticipates that increased student engagement in postsecondary planning will improve graduation rates and college and career readiness. Wisconsin DPI requested support from the [Midwest Comprehensive Center \(MWCC\)](#) in implementing the ACP Initiative, including creating professional development competencies and a framework for project evaluation.



The Strategy

To inform Wisconsin DPI's statewide ACP implementation, MWCC **conducted a review of the literature on the effectiveness of individualized postsecondary plans and implemented policy scans of other states' practices.** MWCC also worked with professional development experts to provide Wisconsin DPI with information about best practices.

MWCC assisted Wisconsin DPI in creating professional development competencies.

As requested by Wisconsin DPI, MWCC acted as a thought partner, providing feedback on evaluation plans and guidance on professional development strategies.

To encourage collaboration, MWCC facilitated conversations about ACP implementation and guidance materials between Wisconsin DPI staff and external stakeholders.

Engagement meetings allowed stakeholders to provide input and remain informed about the ACP initiative's progress.



Immediate Impact

As a result of this work, Wisconsin DPI is **piloting ACP in 25 school districts in the 2015–16 school year**. A new administrative rule informs schools and districts about the state mandate for ACP implementation.

Wisconsin DPI has developed a **research-based logic model, competencies for professional development, and strong processes for gathering and incorporating stakeholder feedback**.

In addition, Wisconsin DPI has strengthened its relationships with key stakeholder groups, including cooperative educational service agencies, Wisconsin technical colleges, and the ACP Advisory Council.



System Change

Wisconsin DPI and MWCC are in the process of documenting the project management successes of the cross-divisional ACP team to **provide a model for future cross-divisional efforts**.

Wisconsin DPI also has the capacity to **incorporate stakeholder feedback** to encourage investment in the ACP program. Based on its collaboration with MWCC, Wisconsin DPI will have a strong foundation from which to conduct stakeholder meetings focused on improving other state education initiatives.



What's Next?

As Wisconsin DPI pilots the ACP initiative, MWCC will **help the department to identify effective methods to evaluate ACP outcomes**. MWCC will continue to support Wisconsin DPI's development and expansion of ACP guidance materials.

“The MWCC helped **improve our organizational skill** and have an understanding of who does what within [Wisconsin] DPI. The ACP project is bringing staff from across [Wisconsin] DPI to work together.”

–Wisconsin DPI staff member