



# Concord Community Schools

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## ***Elkhart County Comprehensive Counseling Initiative***

The seven school corporations in Elkhart successfully collaborated to win implementation grants for school counseling from the Lilly Endowment.

As part of the Lilly Endowment's Comprehensive Counseling Initiative, the Endowment approved 284 planning grants for Indiana districts that in turn resulted in 254 proposals for implementation grants. Fifty-seven public school corporations and charter schools received implementation grants totaling \$26.4 million. The Elkhart County districts received \$3.6 million of that total. Each school corporation's funding is based on \$100 times the total number of students enrolled in the district.

### **Elkhart County Comprehensive Counseling Coalition (ECCCC)**

All seven county school districts winning proposal to provide more consistent and effective counseling services for students. Several countywide counseling needs were identified through research:

- A comprehensive counseling curriculum
- Restructuring of counseling roles to optimize time and expertise
- Equal access to community resources
- Better use of data to drive practice

The seven districts will collaborate on some common initiatives, and each district was also able to meet some of its individual counseling needs through the implementation grant funding. The ECCCC will focus on three goals during the four years of the counseling project.

**Goal I** – Implement a countywide school counseling model aligned with the [American School Counselor Association \(ASCA\)](#) model that includes

- A social-emotional framework,
  - A college and career framework, and
  - Tiered academic and mental health interventions.
1. Districts will use data to shape counseling practices. All counselors in the county will participate in Hatching Results counseling training over the first three years of the project. The Hatching Results' training will lead to [RAMP](#) certifications through ASCA, and some basic aspects of counseling programs will be consistent across Elkhart County school corporations while others will be specific to individual district needs.
  2. Schools will use [Naviance](#) software to support and track students' college and career pathway planning. Student data will be shared across districts for consistency in tracking, support services, and programming for transfer students.
  3. The county will provide district-wide staff trainings for recognition and response to critical mental health issues.



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**Goal 2** – Strengthen countywide collaboration among school counselors to share best practices, identify effective student supports, and replicate and scale-up effective strategies.

All counselors across the county will meet to

- Develop comprehensive K-12 social-emotional and college and career readiness curricula;
- Identify resources and strategies for school-wide, classroom, small group and individual programming;
- Redefine counselor roles with a mission, vision, job description, and program handbook;
- Measure progress toward grant-defined outcomes; and
- Share results, improvements, and development of innovative solutions.

**Goal 3** – Create and sustain networks of community agencies and business partners working with counselors to support social-emotional development and college and career readiness skills.

- Maintain community partnerships to help provide students with full, wrap-around system supports and opportunities. The system would provide
  - ◇ Access to social-emotional community supports,
  - ◇ College and career connections such as work-based learning,
  - ◇ Work ethic certificates, and
  - ◇ Internships.

Administrators from each school corporation serve on the ECCCC Guiding Team. In addition, three work teams will be formed to accomplish the project activities. These work teams include Counselor Optimization, College and Career Readiness, and Social-Emotional Learning.

Concord Community Schools received an implementation grant totaling \$533,400. Besides the collaborative county-wide activities, Concord will purchase Naviance software for college-career readiness and the [Five Star](#) curriculum for the junior high school and later the elementary and high school levels. Counselors will participate in professional development activities and travel to counseling conferences and study visits. Student and parent engagement activities will be funded to provide business/industry tours, college visits, field trips, and events like [FAFSA](#) Night. Concord will add a College and Career Readiness Coordinator position. The district will also pilot the development of a Go Center that will assist students and families with college applications, financial aid guidance, and career development resources. Concord's Go Center will be the first of what is envisioned as a network of Go Centers around the county.

Individuals that would be interested in learning the aspects that other county schools are providing can contact Renee' Cocanower ([rcocanower@concord.k12.in.us](mailto:rcocanower@concord.k12.in.us)) or Denise Tahara ([dtahara@concord.k12.in.us](mailto:dtahara@concord.k12.in.us)) at the Concord Education Center.