**U.S. Department of Education**

**Office of Safe and Healthy Schools**

**Monitoring/Technical Assistance Report**

**Report Date:** September 29, 2014

**Date of Review:** September 26, 2014

**Grantee Name:** Northern Kentucky Cooperative for Educational Services, KY

**Project Monitored:** Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program

**Project Number:** S215E120422

**Award:** $1,173,783 (3 year project)

**Project Director:** Curtis Hall

**Review Staff:** Loretta McDaniel

**Program Officer:** Loretta McDaniel

**Areas Requiring Corrective Action or Recommendations for Improvement:**

Administration and Management □

Fiscal Operations □

Program Activities and Evaluation X

**Instructions**

The checked areas contain a finding for which there is a required action. The specific problem and required action is described under each section below. Please review and respond to each specific required action in order to bring the project into compliance with the law and regulations governing the program.

The report may offer recommendations in addition to the required action to assist you in addressing the identified problem.

If “None” is checked, the reviewer identified no findings that required corrective action.

The report may also contain findings and recommendations without any required actions. In this case no response is required.

**Summary**

The Northern Kentucky Cooperative for Educational Services (NKCES) was awarded a discretionary grant in 2012 under the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Safe and Healthy Schools (OSHS) Elementary and Secondary School Counseling (ESSC) program.

Loretta McDaniel, Program Officer for your grant project, conducted a program review by phone on September 26, 2014. This review addressed the operations of the grant from October 2013 through September 2014. Review of fiscal records, program implementation procedures, and staff interviews were conducted.

ESSC Project Staff:

Curtis Hall, NKCES Executive Director and Grant Project Director

Project Coordinator, Dr. Bret Zyromski, Northern Kentucky Center for Education Excellence

Project Evaluator, Dr. Jennifer Stansbury-Koenig, Northern Kentucky Center for Education Excellence

NKCES Bookkeeper, Patti Dischar

Glen Miller, Campbell County District Superintendent

Jay Brewer, Dayton Independent District Superintendent

Dr. Kathy Burkhardt, Erlanger-Elsmere Independent District Superintendent

Anthony Strong, Pendleton County District Superintendent

Schools participating in the ESSC project:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **School Name** | **Enrollment** | **Grade Configuration** | **Counselors Hired** | **Grant Funds (FTE)** |
| Campbell County High School | 1484 | Grades 9-12 | Staci Kolkmeier | .5 FTE |
| Dayton High School | 325 | Grades 7-12 | Jennifer Montgomery, Brett Newton | .5 FTE each |
| Phillip Sharp Middle School | 570 | Grades 6-8 | Julie Wood | .5 FTE |
| Tichenor Middle School | 471 | Grades 6-8 | Jennifer Downey, Scott Kimberlin | .5 FTE each |

The dedication and belief in the program by staff have contributed to the successful implementation of the initiative. The fiscal management of the grant is documented and detailed. The support of the ESSC program by district and school administrators has acted as a catalyst to enable implementation in the schools. Several of the partner districts have increased local funds to enable the .5 FTE to become 1.0 FTE. The services provided by partners like the Northern Kentucky Center for Education Excellence, which are key components to the success of the program, are of excellent quality and are closely monitored by the project director. Dr. Zyromski provided training to the schools on the American School Counselors Association (ASCA) model program. Overall, successful implementation and evaluation of the ESSC initiative by the NKCES has been accomplished.

**1. Administration/Management**

The administration of the ESSC program is commendable. The line of authority was clearly defined. The Project Director, Curtis Hall, has oversight of all grant activities and has sufficient authority to manage the project. Mr. Hall has detailed knowledge of the program and works closely with the district superintendents, school administration, mental health and teaching staff, among others, to implement and oversee the program. They are implementing the Student Success curriculum to reduce discipline referrals and increase student achievement.

The NKCES also created a grant oversight committee to oversee all grants. The partnership with the Northern Kentucky Center for Education Excellence has provided training to grant schools on the American School Counseling Association (ASCA) Model program. As a result of their work one of the schools has been certified as a Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP) and the remaining schools are also applying for recognition. The national designation recognizes a school that delivers a comprehensive, data-driven school counseling program. A school must earn 54 out of a possible 60 points to earn RAMP designation. Only two schools in Kentucky currently hold the designation of RAMP certified and one of those schools is an ESSC grant school (Tichenor Middle School). The completion of the Student Success Skills curriculum in each school has helped to increase the number of parent offerings, such as, college and career readiness, and other current initiatives. On average each school offers parent nights at least two to four times per year.

***Required Action:***

None.

***Recommended Action:***

It is recommended that the NKCES showcase their national recognition status at school board meetings, PTA meetings, district website, social media, and utilize other opportunities to share the positive achievements of the program.

It is recommended that the NKCES conduct surveys that are inclusive of the entire school community, i.e., bus drivers and cafeteria workers, etc. to help increase buy in of the program and determine program impact across a broader variety of stakeholders.

**2. Fiscal Operations**

The financial management system and financial controls for grant expenditures of NKCES are satisfactory. Detailed procedures for approval of grant expenditures ensure proper oversight. The Executive Director (Curtis Hall) approves all requests for payment of program staff, materials, and supplies. Scheduled drawdowns on the 15th of each month are processed with Mr. Hall’s approval. Patti Dischar, fiscal bookkeeper is responsible for managing grant funds and payments.

***Required Action:***

None.

***Recommended Action:***

None.

**3. Program Activities and Evaluation**

Program Activities

Currently around 2850 students are currently receiving the ESSC programming. They are using the Student Success Skills curriculum and the ASCA model program.

The Counselors have noticed an improvement in the children’s overall behavior and a change in the number of students referred for discipline reasons. Counseling staff meet monthly to discuss challenges within their schools that are either administrative in nature or student/family focused with the goal of developing or accessing strategies to address the challenges. Counselors work with ESC Specialist to develop IDPs for those students that identify a language other than English in their homes within 30 days of admission as required by the district. The district superintendents all serve on the board for the NKCES.

The teachers in the grant schools have noticed a decrease in the number of classroom disruptions which translates to increased opportunities for learning.

The participation in parent night activities and training increased in the number of offerings as well as the number of parents and families that attend the trainings and activities. Each grant school offers between two to four different trainings each year.

***Required Action:***

None.

***Recommended Action:***

Recommend parent evaluation of each training or activity to determine program effectiveness.

Evaluation

Dr. Jennifer Koenig is in charge of the evaluation of the grant. The evaluation is proceeding as planned for the grant. Dr. Koenig has a variety of local measures she is evaluating for the NKCES. In addition, the Statewide Student Information Management System is used to gather data to will be used to address the grant project measures. Her pre and post tests have shown a marked improvement in how the district responds to the mental health needs of its students.

***Required Action:***

None.

***Recommended Action:***

Formal survey of school-wide community would help expand awareness of the program as well as gain feedback from a broader audience of the impact of the program.