

History of Student Assistance in Pennsylvania

Date:	Event
1984	The Pennsylvania Department of Health's Office of Drug and Alcohol Programs provided a grant to pilot Student Assistance Programs throughout the School Districts in the Commonwealth and in collaboration with the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The focus of the SAP Program at this time was interventions for students at risk for use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.
1986	The Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services provided funding for the expansion of SAP to include intervention strategies for students at risk for suicide.
1988	The Pennsylvania Departments of Education, Public Welfare, and Health formed the Commonwealth SAP Interagency Committee. The purpose of this committee is to provide guidance to help meet the programming needs in Pennsylvania. The SAP Training system was instituted. (Commonwealth Approved Trainers)
1988	Elementary Student Assistance Program pilots began.
1990	Act 211 (P.S.§ 15-1547 of the PA School Code) was enacted which required each school district to establish and maintain a program to provide appropriate counseling and support services to students who experience problems related to the use of drugs, alcohol, and dangerous controlled substances. On April 19, 1991, the Secretary of Education named the Commonwealth Student Assistance Program (K-12) to fulfill the requirement to "...identify high risk students who are having problems due to alcohol or drug use, depression, or other mental health problems; and intervene and refer these students to appropriate community services."
1997-98	A Basic Education Circular (BEC) was issued by the Department of Education to address Act 211 of 1990 (P.S. § 15-1547 of the PA School Code). The BEC clarifies the mandates that every student K-12 receive instruction in alcohol, tobacco and other drug prevention every year; in-services for all those whose responsibilities include teaching alcohol, tobacco and other drug prevention curriculum; and drug and alcohol counseling and support services (SAP). There was a paradigm shift in the Pennsylvania Student Assistance Program Model that included partnering with parents (parental involvement); strength-based approach (resiliency) when working with students and their families; a focus on barriers to learning and school success; and referring students for assessment instead of treatment.
2006	Chapter 12 (PA School Code § 12.42) was amended to include the planning and provision of Student Assistance Programs for all public school entities.
2007	The Pennsylvania Network for Student Assistance Services began collaboration with the Pennsylvania Positive Behavioral Support Network

	around School Wide Positive Behavioral Supports and Interventions (SWPBIS).
2012	Pennsylvania Student Assistance Program Standards were revised and SAP certification became K-12.
2014	PA K-12 SAP Bridge Training was developed and offered to SAP team members with secondary or elementary SAP certificates (for a limited time) and approved for K-12 SAP training homework component.
2016	PA K-12 SAP Bridge training was made available to SAP team members with secondary or elementary SAP certificates through an online web tool.

Revised 7.27.2017