

SHB 1377 - S COMM AMD

By Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education

OUT OF ORDER 02/28/2018

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the
2 following:

3 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that students'
4 unmet mental health needs pose barriers to learning and development,
5 and ultimately student success in school. The legislature further
6 finds that the need to identify and assist students struggling with
7 emotional and mental health needs has reached a serious level
8 statewide. In order to prioritize students' needs first, the
9 legislature finds that the persons most qualified in the school
10 setting to lead the effort in addressing this epidemic are the school
11 counselor, school social worker, and school psychologist. The
12 legislature further finds that the knowledge-levels and skill-levels
13 of these nonacademic professionals must be increased in order to
14 enhance mental health-related student support services.

15 (2) The legislature further finds that in chapter 175, Laws of
16 2007, appropriate acknowledgment was given to the fact that a
17 professional school counselor is not just a course and career
18 guidance professional, but a certificated educator with unique
19 qualifications and skills to address all students' academic,
20 personal, social, and career development needs, and that school
21 counselors serve a vital role in maximizing student achievement by
22 supporting a safe learning environment and addressing the needs of
23 all students through prevention and intervention programs that are
24 part of a comprehensive school counseling program. The legislature
25 finds, however, that despite the language in RCW 28A.410.043 that
26 appropriately recognizes that the role of the school counselor is
27 multifaceted, with a focus upon students' mental health needs as well
28 as career guidance needs, the reality in the schools is that
29 counselor staffing levels are well below the national recommendations
30 of one counselor to every two hundred fifty students. As a result,
31 there are not enough counselors in the schools and many school
32 counselors have been tasked primarily with course and career guidance

1 responsibilities at the expense of the mental health side of school
2 counseling. Similarly, school psychologist staffing levels are below
3 the national recommendations of one psychologist to every five
4 hundred to seven hundred students when providing comprehensive school
5 psychological services, and school social worker staffing levels are
6 below the national recommendations of one school social worker to
7 every two hundred fifty students, or one to every fifty students with
8 intensive needs.

9 (3) The legislature further finds that school counselors, social
10 workers, and psychologists interact with students on a daily basis,
11 thus putting them in a good position to recognize the signs of
12 emotional or behavioral distress and make appropriate referrals. The
13 legislature finds that individuals entering these professions need
14 proper preparation to respond to the mental health and safety needs
15 of students. The legislature further finds that they need ongoing
16 professional development to address students' mental health needs and
17 get students the help they need. The legislature further finds that
18 Engrossed Substitute House Bill No. 1336, which became chapter 197,
19 Laws of 2013, increased the capacity of school districts and their
20 personnel to recognize and respond to youth in need through
21 comprehensive planning and additional training, but that additional
22 opportunities for collaboration on a regular and ongoing basis are in
23 order. By providing professional collaboration opportunities with
24 local mental health service providers at the school district level to
25 school counselors, social workers, and psychologists, the legislature
26 intends to take the next step toward enabling these professionals to
27 recognize and respond with skill and confidence to the signs of
28 emotional or behavioral distress that they observe in students and
29 make the appropriate referrals to evidence-based behavioral health
30 services.

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.320
32 RCW to read as follows:

33 The school counselor works with developing and leading a
34 comprehensive guidance and counseling program to focus on the
35 academic, career, personal, and social needs of all students. School
36 psychologists carry out special education evaluation duties, among
37 other things. School social workers promote and support students'
38 health, academic, and social success with counseling and support, and
39 by providing and coordinating specialized services and resources. All

1 of these professionals are also involved in multitiered systems of
2 support for academic and behavioral skills. These professionals focus
3 on student mental health, work with at-risk and marginalized
4 students, perform risk assessments, and collaborate with mental
5 health professionals to promote student achievement and create a safe
6 learning environment. In order that school counselors, social
7 workers, and psychologists have the time available to prioritize
8 these functions, in addition to other activities requiring direct
9 student contact, responsibilities such as data input and data
10 tracking should be handled by nonlicensed, noncertified staff, where
11 possible.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.410
13 RCW to read as follows:

14 (1) A school psychologist is a professional educator who holds a
15 valid school psychologist certification as defined by the
16 professional educator standards board. Pursuant to the national
17 association of school psychologists' model for comprehensive and
18 integrated school psychological services, school psychologists
19 deliver services across ten domains of practice. Two domains permeate
20 all areas of service delivery: Data-based decision making; and
21 consultation and collaboration. Five domains encompass direct and
22 indirect services to children and their families: Student-level
23 services, interventions, and instructional supports to develop
24 academic skills; student-level interventions and mental health
25 services to develop social and life skills; systems-level school-wide
26 practices to promote learning; systems-level preventive and
27 responsive services; and systems-level family school collaboration
28 services. The three foundational domains include: Knowledge and
29 skills related to diversity in development and learning; research and
30 program evaluation; and legal and ethical practice.

31 (2) A school social worker is a professional in the fields of
32 social work and education who holds a valid school social worker
33 certification as defined by the professional educator standards
34 board. The purpose and role of the school social worker is to provide
35 an integral link between school, home, and community in helping
36 students achieve academic and social success. This is accomplished by
37 removing barriers and providing services that include: Mental health
38 and academic counseling, support for students and parents, crisis
39 prevention and intervention, professional case management,

1 collaboration with other professionals, organizations, and community
2 agencies, and advocacy for students and parents. School social
3 workers work directly with school administrators as well as students
4 and families, at various levels and as part of an interdisciplinary
5 team in the educational system, including at the building, district,
6 and state level. School social workers provide leadership and
7 professional expertise regarding the formation of school discipline
8 policies and procedures, and through school-based mental health
9 services, crisis management, the implementation of social-emotional
10 learning, and other support services that impact student academic and
11 social-emotional success. School social workers also facilitate
12 community involvement in the schools while advocating for student
13 success.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.320
15 RCW to read as follows:

16 (1) Within existing resources, beginning in the 2018-19 school
17 year, first-class school districts must provide a minimum of six
18 hours of professional collaboration per year, preferably in person,
19 for school counselors, social workers, and psychologists that focuses
20 on the following: Recognizing signs of emotional or behavioral
21 distress in students, including but not limited to indicators of
22 possible substance abuse, violence, and youth suicide, screening,
23 accessing current resources, and making appropriate referrals. This
24 professional collaboration must include at least one classroom
25 teacher, representing the district's teachers and selected by the
26 district superintendent, for the purpose of improving the partnership
27 between the district's teachers and educational staff associates.
28 School districts that have mental health centers in their area shall
29 collaborate with local licensed mental health service providers under
30 chapter 71.24 RCW. Those districts without a mental health center in
31 their area shall collaborate via telephone or other remote means that
32 allow for dialogue and discussion. By collaborating with local
33 providers in this manner, educational staff associates get to
34 collaborate in short but regular segments, in their own schools or
35 near school district facilities, and school districts are not put in
36 a position that they must obtain substitutes or otherwise expend
37 additional funds. This local connection will also help foster a
38 connection between school personnel and the mental health
39 professionals in the community to whom school personnel may make

1 referrals, in line with the legislative intent expressed throughout
2 Engrossed Substitute House Bill No. 1336, chapter 197, Laws of 2013,
3 to form partnerships with qualified health, mental health, and social
4 services agencies in the community to coordinate and improve support
5 for youth in need and the directive to the department of social and
6 health services with respect to the provision of funds for mental
7 health first-aid training targeted at teachers and educational staff.

8 (2) Second-class districts are encouraged, but not required, to
9 collaborate and provide the professional collaboration as provided in
10 subsection (1) of this section.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** (1) Subject to the availability of amounts
12 appropriated for this specific purpose, the professional
13 collaboration lighthouse grant program is established to assist
14 school districts with early adoption and implementation of mental
15 health professional collaboration time specified under section 4 of
16 this act.

17 (2) The superintendent of public instruction shall designate two
18 school districts as lighthouse school districts to serve as resources
19 and examples of best practices in designing and operating a
20 professional collaboration program for school counselors, school
21 social workers, school psychologists, and local licensed mental
22 health service providers. The program must focus on recognizing signs
23 of emotional or behavioral distress in students, for example
24 indicators of possible substance abuse, violence, and youth suicide,
25 screening, accessing current resources, and making appropriate
26 referrals.

27 (3) The superintendent shall award grants to:

28 (a) Each school district designated as a lighthouse district
29 under subsection (2) of this section; and

30 (b) At least four school districts wishing to implement mental
31 health professional collaboration time, as specified under section 4
32 of this act, in the 2017-18 school year. In awarding the grants, the
33 superintendent must prioritize an even mix of rural school districts
34 and urban or suburban school districts.

35 (4) Grant funds may be used for: Providing technical assistance
36 to school districts implementing a professional collaboration
37 program; designing and implementing a professional collaboration
38 program; developing approaches for accessing resources external to a
39 school district; collaborating with local licensed mental health

1 service providers; identifying successful methods of communicating
2 with students and parents; conducting site visits; and providing
3 supplemental materials.

4 (5) This section expires August 1, 2019.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** (1)(a) The Washington professional
6 educator standards board shall convene a task force on school
7 counselors, psychologists, and social workers, with members as
8 provided in this subsection.

9 (i) The majority leader in the senate shall appoint one member
10 from the early learning and K-12 education committee.

11 (ii) The speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint
12 one member from the education committee.

13 (iii) The governor shall appoint one member representing school
14 counselor, psychologist, and social worker preparation programs.

15 (iv) The superintendent of public instruction shall appoint one
16 member representing the office of the superintendent of public
17 instruction.

18 (v) The professional educator standards board shall appoint one
19 member representing the professional educator standards board.

20 (vi) The professional educator standards board shall appoint one
21 member each from associations representing: School counselors; school
22 psychologists; school social workers; educators; and principals.
23 Appointments made under this subsection (1)(a)(vi) must be from lists
24 of candidates provided by the associations.

25 (b) The professional educator standards board must provide staff
26 support for the task force.

27 (c) Appointments made under this section by the majority leader
28 in the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives must be
29 from different political parties.

30 (2) The task force shall review the following issues:

31 (a) The projected need of school districts for school counselors,
32 psychologists, and social workers;

33 (b) The current capacity of the state for meeting this need;

34 (c) Alternative certification routes for school counselors and
35 social workers; and

36 (d) School counselor, psychologist, and social worker preparation
37 programs to determine whether professionals completing these programs
38 have the proper preparation to respond to the mental health and

1 safety needs of students, and to provide students with necessary
2 social and emotional supports.

3 (3) The task force must, in accordance with RCW 43.01.036, report
4 its findings and recommendations to the appropriate committees of the
5 legislature, the professional educator standards board, the
6 superintendent of public instruction, and the governor by December 1,
7 2017.

8 (4) This section expires July 1, 2018.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** This act does not create any civil
10 liability on the part of the state or any state agency, officer,
11 employee, agent, political subdivision, or school district."

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By Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education

OUT OF ORDER 02/28/2018

12 On page 1, line 2 of the title, after "services;" strike the
13 remainder of the title and insert "adding new sections to chapter
14 28A.320 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28A.410 RCW; creating
15 new sections; and providing expiration dates."

EFFECT: Requires that the professional collaboration between
school counselors, social workers, and psychologists include at least
one classroom teacher, representing the district's teachers and
selected by the district superintendent, for the purpose of improving
the partnership between the district's teachers and educational staff
associates.

Requires the majority leader in the Senate, rather than the
President of the Senate, to appoint one member from the Early
Learning and K-12 Education Committee to a task force on school
counselors, psychologists, and social workers.

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