
Education Committee

HB 1265

Brief Description: Increasing student access to school counselors.

Sponsors: Representatives Ortiz-Self, Harris, Santos, Volz, Senn, Kilduff, Orwall, Riccelli, Frame, Dolan, Valdez, Steele, Lovick, Peterson, Reeves, Tarleton, Fitzgibbon, Walen, Sells, Doglio, Bergquist, Stanford, Appleton, Slatter, Thai, Wylie, Jenkins, Macri, Pollet, Goodman and Leavitt.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Phases in increased allocations for guidance counselors and a corresponding requirement that guidance counselors spend at least 80 percent of their time providing direct services to students by September 1, 2022.
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Hearing Date: 1/28/19

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

Background:

School Counselors.

The purpose and role of the school counselor is to plan, organize, and deliver a comprehensive school guidance and counseling program that personalizes education and supports, promotes, and enhances the academic, personal, social, and career development of all students, based on the national standards for school counseling programs of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). The ASCA national model recommends a student-to-school counselor ratio of 250:1, and that 80 percent or more of a school counselor's time be spent providing direct and indirect services to students.

Guidance Counselor Allocations.

The prototypical school funding model allocates general apportionment funding to school districts based on assumed levels of staff and other resources necessary to support "prototypical" elementary, middle, and high schools. These prototypical schools are assumed to have the

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following full-time student enrollments: 400 students for elementary school; 432 students for middle school; and 600 students for high school. School districts have discretion over how the allocations received under this model are spent, subject to some limits.

Regarding the allocation for "guidance counselors, a function that includes parent outreach and graduation," the following staff units are provided:

- 0.493 for a prototypical elementary school;
- 1.216 for a prototypical middle school; and
- 2.539 for a prototypical high school.

Summary of Bill:

Guidance Counselor Allocations.

Increased allocations for guidance counselors under the prototypical school funding model are phased in over three school years to:

- 0.800 for a prototypical elementary school; and
- 1.728 for a prototypical middle school.

Phase in for the allocations described above is according to the following schedule:

- for the 2019-20 school year, the schools identified as most in need of support using the state accountability framework;
- for the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years, schools identified as most in need of support using the state accountability framework and Title I schools not identified as most in need of support; and
- beginning in the 2022-23 school year, all schools.

During the phase in, school districts must distribute the additional guidance counselor allocations to the schools that generated them. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) must develop rules to implement these requirements.

Direct Student Services.

Once a school receives the new guidance counselor allocations, its school counselors must spend at least 80 percent of their time providing direct services to students. The OSPI must adopt a rule that defines "direct services," in a manner that is consistent with the ASCA national model. "Direct services" may not include the coordination of standardized testing.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 21, 2019.

Effective Date: This bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed, except for sections 2 and 4, relating to guidance counselor allocations and direct services requirements applicable to all schools, which take effect September 1, 2022.