

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY CHECKLIST

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE:	Yes	05/19/2025 05/23/2025
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S1784 (1R)

INTRODUCED BILL: (Includes sponsor(s) statement)	Yes	
REPRINT(S):	Yes	SBA 6/26/25 1R
TECHNICAL REVIEW OF BILL:	Yes	SED 9/30/24 TR
COMMITTEE STATEMENT:	ASSEMBLY:	No
	SENATE:	Yes Education Budget & Appropriations

(Audio archived recordings of the committee meetings, corresponding to the date of the committee statement, *may possibly* be found at www.njleg.state.nj.us)

FLOOR AMENDMENT STATEMENT:	No	
LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE:	Yes	06/26/2025

VETO MESSAGE:	No
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GOVERNOR'S PRESS RELEASE ON SIGNING:	Yes
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LEGISLATOR STATEMENT:	Yes
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FOLLOWING WERE PRINTED:

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REPORTS:	No
HEARINGS:	No
NEWSPAPER ARTICLES:	No

CL/MMcB

Title 18A
Chapter 6
Article 4A (New)
School
Counselors
§§1-4
C.18A:6-44.1
to 18A:6-44.4
§5
C.18A:26-2.17a
§6
C.18A:4-35.3

P.L. 2025, CHAPTER 133, *approved August 21, 2025*
Assembly, No. 3424 (*First Reprint*)

- 1 **AN ACT** concerning school counselors and supplementing Title 18A
2 of the New Jersey Statutes.
3
- 4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*
6
- 7 1. The Legislature finds and declares that ¹**the Department of**
8 Education’s guidance document on the reopening of schools during
9 the COVID-19 pandemic, “The Road Back: Restart and Recovery
10 Plan,” directs school districts to consider the impact of social
11 isolation on both educators and students, and recommends that
12 school district reopening plans include the use of social and
13 emotional learning and multi-tiered systems of support to address
14 the social and emotional needs of students. The Legislature further
15 finds that¹ **school counselors are vital to the effort to ensure that**
16 **school districts¹, charter schools, and renaissance school projects¹**
17 **are able to adequately address ¹these¹ student needs and to**
18 **implement appropriate programming.**
19
- 20 2. As used in sections 3 and 4 of this act, “school counselor”
21 means an individual who holds ¹**and works under the authority of¹** a
22 New Jersey standard educational services certificate with a school
23 counselor endorsement.
24
- 25 3. a. It shall be the role of a school counselor to:
26 (1) recognize and respond to the need for mental health services
27 that promote social and emotional wellness and development for all
28 students; and

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **thus** in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.
Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:
¹Assembly AAP committee amendments adopted May 15, 2025.

1 (2) design and deliver a comprehensive program for school
2 counseling that promotes the achievement of students.

3 b. Each school counselor employed by a ¹ **board of education**
4 **in a public elementary, middle, or high school** school district,
5 charter school, or renaissance school project¹ shall provide
6 appropriate school counseling services that shall include, but not be
7 limited to:

8 (1) addressing needs relating to the academic, career, social, and
9 emotional development of all students;

10 (2) individual student academic planning and goal setting;

11 (3) school counseling classroom lessons based on student
12 success standards;

13 (4) short-term counseling of students;

14 (5) referrals for long-term services and supports;

15 (6) collaboration with families, teachers, administrators, and
16 community members that fosters student success;

17 (7) ¹ **advocacy for students at** attending, when appropriate,¹
18 individualized education program (IEP) meetings and other student-
19 focused meetings; and

20 (8) data analysis to identify student issues, needs, and
21 challenges.

22

23 4. The State Board of Education shall establish professional
24 development requirements for school counselors. The State board
25 shall require, as part of the professional development requirements,
26 that each school counselor complete professional development
27 training in areas related to the duties of a school counselor
28 including, but not limited to, the promotion of mental health
29 awareness¹ **;** suicide prevention¹ **;** crisis-intervention¹ **;**
30 trauma-informed counseling practices¹ **;** cultural competency
31 and responsiveness¹ **;** the New Jersey Tiered System of
32 Supports, ¹ which includes the systematic delivery of interventions
33 and supports to students demonstrating academic, behavioral,
34 mental health, emotional, and other needs;¹ delivery of social and
35 emotional learning programming¹ **;** and college and career
36 readiness.

37

38 5. In addition to any other requirements adopted by the State
39 Board of Education for school counseling programs, the State board
40 shall require that a school counseling program at ¹ **a regionally**
41 an¹ accredited college or university leading to a standard
42 educational services certificate with a school counselor
43 endorsement incorporate the following:

44 a. the American School Counselor Association's national
45 model for comprehensive school counseling programs or a State-
46 approved model; and

1 b. training in the delivery of social and emotional learning
2 programming as well as postsecondary and career planning.

3
4 6. a. The Commissioner of Education shall appoint a State
5 School Counselor Liaison. The State School Counselor Liaison
6 shall hold a New Jersey standard educational services certificate
7 with a director of school counseling services endorsement and have
8 experience in the delivery of social and emotional learning
9 programming as well as postsecondary and career advisement. The
10 State School Counselor Liaison shall work with school districts¹,
11 charter schools, renaissance school projects,¹ and school counselors
12 to facilitate best practices by advancing comprehensive school
13 counseling services that address the mental and behavioral health
14 and wellness of all students. The State School Counselor Liaison,
15 in performing the duties of the position, shall collaborate with other
16 State agencies and associated stakeholders.

17 b. It shall be the duty of the State School Counselor Liaison to:
18 (1) serve as a liaison and resource expert in school counseling
19 and comprehensive school counseling services for New Jersey
20 certificated school counselors and the Department of Education;
21 (2) foster and promote professional development for school
22 counselors, which may include planning, coordinating, or providing
23 educational guidance, and networking with universities, the New
24 Jersey School Counselor Association, and other providers of
25 continuing education to meet identified needs;
26 (3) monitor, interpret, synthesize, and disseminate relevant
27 information associated with changes in school counseling practices,
28 legislation, and legal issues that impact school counselors; and
29 (4) initiate, participate in, and utilize research studies related to
30 school counseling practices, the mental health needs of children and
31 youth, and related issues.

32 c. The State School Counselor Liaison shall report annually to
33 the Governor and, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164
34 (C.52:14-19.1), the Legislature. The report shall include a summary
35 of the activities of the State School Counselor Liaison during the
36 year and any specific recommendations deemed appropriate and
37 necessary concerning school counseling services and
38 comprehensive school mental health services.

39 d. As used in this section, “school counselor” means an
40 individual who holds ¹and works under the authority of¹ a New
41 Jersey standard educational services certificate with a school
42 counselor endorsement.

43
44 7. The State Board of Education shall adopt, in accordance
45 with the “Administrative Procedures Act,” P.L.1968, c.410
46 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), rules and regulations as may be necessary to
47 implement the provisions of this act.

1 8. This act shall take effect immediately.

2

3

4

5

6 Establishes certain program requirements for school counselor
7 certification; outlines role and duties of school counselor; requires
8 professional development for school counselors; establishes
9 position of School Counselor Liaison in DOE.

CHAPTER 133

AN ACT concerning school counselors and supplementing Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

C.18A:6-44.1 Findings, declarations.

1. The Legislature finds and declares that school counselors are vital to the effort to ensure that school districts, charter schools, and renaissance school projects are able to adequately address student needs and to implement appropriate programming.

C.18A:6-44.2 "School counselor" defined.

2. As used in sections 3 and 4 of this act, "school counselor" means an individual who holds and works under the authority of a New Jersey standard educational services certificate with a school counselor endorsement.

C.18A:6-44.3 Role of school counselor.

3. a. It shall be the role of a school counselor to:

(1) recognize and respond to the need for mental health services that promote social and emotional wellness and development for all students; and

(2) design and deliver a comprehensive program for school counseling that promotes the achievement of students.

b. Each school counselor employed by a school district, charter school, or renaissance school project shall provide appropriate school counseling services that shall include, but not be limited to:

(1) addressing needs relating to the academic, career, social, and emotional development of all students;

(2) individual student academic planning and goal setting;

(3) school counseling classroom lessons based on student success standards;

(4) short-term counseling of students;

(5) referrals for long-term services and supports;

(6) collaboration with families, teachers, administrators, and community members that fosters student success;

(7) attending, when appropriate, individualized education program (IEP) meetings and other student-focused meetings; and

(8) data analysis to identify student issues, needs, and challenges.

C.18A:6-44.4 Professional development requirements for school counselors.

4. The State Board of Education shall establish professional development requirements for school counselors. The State board shall require, as part of the professional development requirements, that each school counselor complete professional development training in areas related to the duties of a school counselor including, but not limited to, the promotion of mental health awareness; suicide prevention; crisis-intervention; trauma-informed counseling practices; cultural competency and responsiveness; the New Jersey Tiered System of Supports, which includes the systematic delivery of interventions and supports to students demonstrating academic, behavioral, mental health, emotional, and other needs; delivery of social and emotional learning programming; and college and career readiness.

C.18A:26-2.17a School counseling program, standard educational services certificate requirements.

5. In addition to any other requirements adopted by the State Board of Education for school counseling programs, the State board shall require that a school counseling program at an accredited college or university leading to a standard educational services certificate with a school counselor endorsement incorporate the following:

- a. the American School Counselor Association's national model for comprehensive school counseling programs or a State-approved model; and
- b. training in the delivery of social and emotional learning programming as well as postsecondary and career planning.

C.18A:4-35.3 State School Counselor Liaison, report to Governor, Legislature.

6. a. The Commissioner of Education shall appoint a State School Counselor Liaison. The State School Counselor Liaison shall hold a New Jersey standard educational services certificate with a director of school counseling services endorsement and have experience in the delivery of social and emotional learning programming as well as postsecondary and career advisement. The State School Counselor Liaison shall work with school districts, charter schools, renaissance school projects, and school counselors to facilitate best practices by advancing comprehensive school counseling services that address the mental and behavioral health and wellness of all students. The State School Counselor Liaison, in performing the duties of the position, shall collaborate with other State agencies and associated stakeholders.

b. It shall be the duty of the State School Counselor Liaison to:

(1) serve as a liaison and resource expert in school counseling and comprehensive school counseling services for New Jersey certificated school counselors and the Department of Education;

(2) foster and promote professional development for school counselors, which may include planning, coordinating, or providing educational guidance, and networking with universities, the New Jersey School Counselor Association, and other providers of continuing education to meet identified needs;

(3) monitor, interpret, synthesize, and disseminate relevant information associated with changes in school counseling practices, legislation, and legal issues that impact school counselors; and

(4) initiate, participate in, and utilize research studies related to school counseling practices, the mental health needs of children and youth, and related issues.

c. The State School Counselor Liaison shall report annually to the Governor and, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), the Legislature. The report shall include a summary of the activities of the State School Counselor Liaison during the year and any specific recommendations deemed appropriate and necessary concerning school counseling services and comprehensive school mental health services.

d. As used in this section, "school counselor" means an individual who holds and works under the authority of a New Jersey standard educational services certificate with a school counselor endorsement.

7. The State Board of Education shall adopt, in accordance with the "Administrative Procedures Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), rules and regulations as may be necessary to implement the provisions of this act.

8. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved August 21, 2025.

ASSEMBLY, No. 3424

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 1, 2024

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman VERLINA REYNOLDS-JACKSON

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

Assemblywoman MICHELE MATSIKLOUDIS

District 21 (Middlesex, Morris, Somerset and Union)

Co-Sponsored by:

**Assemblywomen Katz, Morales, Hall, Assemblyman Miller,
Assemblywoman Dunn, Assemblyman Sampson, Assemblywomen
Peterpaul, Donlon and Carter**

SYNOPSIS

Establishes certain program requirements for school counselor certification; outlines role and duties of school counselor; requires professional development for school counselors; establishes position of School Counselor Liaison in DOE.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/20/2025)

1 AN ACT concerning school counselors and supplementing Title 18A
2 of the New Jersey Statutes.

3

4 BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

6

7 1. The Legislature finds and declares that the Department of
8 Education's guidance document on the reopening of schools during
9 the COVID-19 pandemic, "The Road Back: Restart and Recovery
10 Plan," directs school districts to consider the impact of social
11 isolation on both educators and students, and recommends that
12 school district reopening plans include the use of social and
13 emotional learning and multi-tiered systems of support to address
14 the social and emotional needs of students. The Legislature further
15 finds that school counselors are vital to the effort to ensure that
16 school districts are able to adequately address these student needs
17 and to implement appropriate programming.

18

19 2. As used in sections 3 and 4 of this act, "school counselor"
20 means an individual who holds a New Jersey standard educational
21 services certificate with a school counselor endorsement.

22

23 3. a. It shall be the role of a school counselor to:

24 (1) recognize and respond to the need for mental health services
25 that promote social and emotional wellness and development for all
26 students; and

27 (2) design and deliver a comprehensive program for school
28 counseling that promotes the achievement of students.

29 b. Each school counselor employed by a board of education in a
30 public elementary, middle, or high school shall provide appropriate
31 school counseling services that shall include, but not be limited to:

32 (1) addressing needs relating to the academic, career, social, and
33 emotional development of all students;

34 (2) individual student academic planning and goal setting;

35 (3) school counseling classroom lessons based on student success
36 standards;

37 (4) short-term counseling of students;

38 (5) referrals for long-term services and supports;

39 (6) collaboration with families, teachers, administrators, and
40 community members that fosters student success;

41 (7) advocacy for students at individualized education program
42 (IEP) meetings and other student-focused meetings; and

43 (8) data analysis to identify student issues, needs, and challenges.

44

45 4. The State Board of Education shall establish professional
46 development requirements for school counselors. The State board
47 shall require, as part of the professional development requirements,
48 that each school counselor complete professional development training

1 in areas related to the duties of a school counselor including, but not
2 limited to, the promotion of mental health awareness, suicide
3 prevention, crisis-intervention, trauma-informed counseling practices,
4 cultural competency and responsiveness, the New Jersey Tiered
5 System of Supports, delivery of social and emotional learning
6 programming, and college and career readiness.

7
8 5. In addition to any other requirements adopted by the State
9 Board of Education for school counseling programs, the State board
10 shall require that a school counseling program at a regionally
11 accredited college or university leading to a standard educational
12 services certificate with a school counselor endorsement incorporate
13 the following:

14 a. the American School Counselor Association's national model
15 for comprehensive school counseling programs or a State-approved
16 model; and

17 b. training in the delivery of social and emotional learning
18 programming as well as postsecondary and career planning.

19
20 6. a. The Commissioner of Education shall appoint a State
21 School Counselor Liaison. The State School Counselor Liaison
22 shall hold a New Jersey standard educational services certificate
23 with a director of school counseling services endorsement and have
24 experience in the delivery of social and emotional learning
25 programming as well as postsecondary and career advisement. The
26 State School Counselor Liaison shall work with school districts and
27 school counselors to facilitate best practices by advancing
28 comprehensive school counseling services that address the mental
29 and behavioral health and wellness of all students. The State
30 School Counselor Liaison, in performing the duties of the position,
31 shall collaborate with other State agencies and associated
32 stakeholders.

33 b. It shall be the duty of the State School Counselor Liaison to:

34 (1) serve as a liaison and resource expert in school counseling
35 and comprehensive school counseling services for New Jersey
36 certificated school counselors and the Department of Education;

37 (2) foster and promote professional development for school
38 counselors, which may include planning, coordinating, or providing
39 educational guidance, and networking with universities, the New
40 Jersey School Counselor Association, and other providers of
41 continuing education to meet identified needs;

42 (3) monitor, interpret, synthesize, and disseminate relevant
43 information associated with changes in school counseling practices,
44 legislation, and legal issues that impact school counselors; and

45 (4) initiate, participate in, and utilize research studies related to
46 school counseling practices, the mental health needs of children and
47 youth, and related issues.

1 c. The State School Counselor Liaison shall report annually to
2 the Governor and, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164
3 (C.52:14-19.1), the Legislature. The report shall include a summary
4 of the activities of the State School Counselor Liaison during the
5 year and any specific recommendations deemed appropriate and
6 necessary concerning school counseling services and
7 comprehensive school mental health services.

8 d. As used in this section, “school counselor” means an
9 individual who holds a New Jersey standard educational services
10 certificate with a school counselor endorsement.

11
12 7. The State Board of Education shall adopt, in accordance
13 with the “Administrative Procedures Act,” P.L.1968, c.410
14 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), rules and regulations as may be necessary to
15 implement the provisions of this act.

16
17 8. This act shall take effect immediately.

18
19
20 STATEMENT

21
22 This bill establishes certain requirements specific to school
23 counselors and school counseling programs at institutions of higher
24 education and establishes the position of State School Counselor
25 Liaison in the Department of Education (DOE).

26 Under this bill, the State Board of Education is to require school
27 counseling programs at regionally accredited colleges and
28 universities that lead to a school counseling certificate to
29 incorporate the following: (a) the American School Counselor
30 Association’s national model for school counseling programs or
31 another State-approved model, and (b) training in the delivery of
32 social and emotional learning programming as well as
33 postsecondary and career planning.

34 The bill outlines the role of a school counselor, which is defined
35 as an individual who holds a New Jersey standard educational
36 services certificate with a school counselor endorsement.

37 The bill directs the State board to establish professional
38 development requirements for school counselors and, as part of the
39 professional development requirements, require that each school
40 counselor complete professional development training in areas
41 related to the duties of a school counselor including, but not limited
42 to, the promotion of mental health awareness, suicide prevention,
43 crisis-intervention, trauma-informed counseling practices, cultural
44 competency and responsiveness, the New Jersey Tiered System of
45 Supports, delivery of social and emotional learning programming,
46 and college and career readiness.

47 Finally, this bill directs the Commissioner of Education to
48 appoint a State School Counselor Liaison to work with school

1 districts and school counselors to facilitate best practices by
2 advancing comprehensive school counseling services that address
3 the mental and behavioral health and wellness of all students. The
4 person appointed to the position is required to hold a standard
5 educational services certificate with a director of school counseling
6 services endorsement and possess experience in the delivery of
7 social and emotional learning programming as well as
8 postsecondary and career advisement. The State School Counselor
9 Liaison is to collaborate with other State agencies and associated
10 stakeholders and perform the following duties:

- 11 • serve as a liaison and resource expert in school
12 counseling and comprehensive school counseling
13 services;
- 14 • foster and promote professional development for school
15 counselors;
- 16 • monitor, interpret, synthesize, and disseminate relevant
17 information associated with changes in school counseling
18 practices, legislation, and legal issues that impact school
19 counselors; and
- 20 • initiate, participate in, and utilize research studies related
21 to school counseling practices, the mental health needs of
22 children and youth, and related issues.

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 3424

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 1, 2024

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman VERLINA REYNOLDS-JACKSON

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

Assemblywoman MICHELE MATSIKOUDIS

District 21 (Middlesex, Morris, Somerset and Union)

Senator ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT

District 31 (Hudson)

Senator SHIRLEY K. TURNER

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

Co-Sponsored by:

**Assemblywomen Katz, Morales, Hall, Assemblyman Miller,
Assemblywoman Dunn, Assemblyman Sampson, Assemblywomen
Peterpaul, Donlon, Carter, Assemblyman Stanley, Assemblywoman Lopez
and Senator Gopal**

SYNOPSIS

Establishes certain program requirements for school counselor certification; outlines role and duties of school counselor; requires professional development for school counselors; establishes position of School Counselor Liaison in DOE.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Assembly Appropriations Committee on May 15, 2025, with amendments.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 5/22/2025)

1 AN ACT concerning school counselors and supplementing Title 18A
2 of the New Jersey Statutes.

3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

6

7 1. The Legislature finds and declares that ¹**the Department of**
8 Education’s guidance document on the reopening of schools during
9 the COVID-19 pandemic, “The Road Back: Restart and Recovery
10 Plan,” directs school districts to consider the impact of social
11 isolation on both educators and students, and recommends that
12 school district reopening plans include the use of social and
13 emotional learning and multi-tiered systems of support to address
14 the social and emotional needs of students. The Legislature further
15 finds that ¹**school counselors are vital to the effort to ensure that**
16 **school districts¹, charter schools, and renaissance school projects¹**
17 are able to adequately address ¹**these** student needs and to
18 implement appropriate programming.

19

20 2. As used in sections 3 and 4 of this act, “school counselor”
21 means an individual who holds ¹**and works under the authority of¹ a**
22 New Jersey standard educational services certificate with a school
23 counselor endorsement.

24

25 3. a. It shall be the role of a school counselor to:

26 (1) recognize and respond to the need for mental health services
27 that promote social and emotional wellness and development for all
28 students; and

29 (2) design and deliver a comprehensive program for school
30 counseling that promotes the achievement of students.

31 b. Each school counselor employed by a ¹**board of education**
32 **in a public elementary, middle, or high school** school district,
33 charter school, or renaissance school project¹ shall provide
34 appropriate school counseling services that shall include, but not be
35 limited to:

36 (1) addressing needs relating to the academic, career, social, and
37 emotional development of all students;

38 (2) individual student academic planning and goal setting;

39 (3) school counseling classroom lessons based on student
40 success standards;

41 (4) short-term counseling of students;

42 (5) referrals for long-term services and supports;

43 (6) collaboration with families, teachers, administrators, and
44 community members that fosters student success;

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹Assembly AAP committee amendments adopted May 15, 2025.

(7) ¹**advocacy for students at** attending, when appropriate,¹
individualized education program (IEP) meetings and other student-
focused meetings; and

(8) data analysis to identify student issues, needs, and
challenges.

4. The State Board of Education shall establish professional
development requirements for school counselors. The State board
shall require, as part of the professional development requirements,
that each school counselor complete professional development
training in areas related to the duties of a school counselor
including, but not limited to, the promotion of mental health
awareness¹**[,]**¹ suicide prevention¹**[,]**¹ crisis-intervention¹**[,]**¹
trauma-informed counseling practices¹**[,]**¹ cultural competency
and responsiveness¹**[,]**¹ the New Jersey Tiered System of
Supports, ¹which includes the systematic delivery of interventions
and supports to students demonstrating academic, behavioral,
mental health, emotional, and other needs;¹ delivery of social and
emotional learning programming¹**[,]**¹ and college and career
readiness.

5. In addition to any other requirements adopted by the State
Board of Education for school counseling programs, the State board
shall require that a school counseling program at ¹**[a regionally]**
¹an¹ accredited college or university leading to a standard
educational services certificate with a school counselor
endorsement incorporate the following:

a. the American School Counselor Association's national
model for comprehensive school counseling programs or a State-
approved model; and

b. training in the delivery of social and emotional learning
programming as well as postsecondary and career planning.

6. a. The Commissioner of Education shall appoint a State
School Counselor Liaison. The State School Counselor Liaison
shall hold a New Jersey standard educational services certificate
with a director of school counseling services endorsement and have
experience in the delivery of social and emotional learning
programming as well as postsecondary and career advisement. The
State School Counselor Liaison shall work with school districts¹,
charter schools, renaissance school projects,¹ and school counselors
to facilitate best practices by advancing comprehensive school
counseling services that address the mental and behavioral health
and wellness of all students. The State School Counselor Liaison,
in performing the duties of the position, shall collaborate with other
State agencies and associated stakeholders.

b. It shall be the duty of the State School Counselor Liaison to:

- 1 (1) serve as a liaison and resource expert in school counseling
- 2 and comprehensive school counseling services for New Jersey
- 3 certificated school counselors and the Department of Education;
- 4 (2) foster and promote professional development for school
- 5 counselors, which may include planning, coordinating, or providing
- 6 educational guidance, and networking with universities, the New
- 7 Jersey School Counselor Association, and other providers of
- 8 continuing education to meet identified needs;
- 9 (3) monitor, interpret, synthesize, and disseminate relevant
- 10 information associated with changes in school counseling practices,
- 11 legislation, and legal issues that impact school counselors; and
- 12 (4) initiate, participate in, and utilize research studies related to
- 13 school counseling practices, the mental health needs of children and
- 14 youth, and related issues.
- 15 c. The State School Counselor Liaison shall report annually to
- 16 the Governor and, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164
- 17 (C.52:14-19.1), the Legislature. The report shall include a summary
- 18 of the activities of the State School Counselor Liaison during the
- 19 year and any specific recommendations deemed appropriate and
- 20 necessary concerning school counseling services and
- 21 comprehensive school mental health services.
- 22 d. As used in this section, "school counselor" means an
- 23 individual who holds ¹and works under the authority of¹ a New
- 24 Jersey standard educational services certificate with a school
- 25 counselor endorsement.
- 26
- 27 7. The State Board of Education shall adopt, in accordance
- 28 with the "Administrative Procedures Act," P.L.1968, c.410
- 29 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), rules and regulations as may be necessary to
- 30 implement the provisions of this act.
- 31
- 32 8. This act shall take effect immediately.

ASSEMBLY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 3424

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 10, 2025

The Assembly Education Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 3424.

This bill establishes certain requirements specific to school counselors and school counseling programs at institutions of higher education and establishes the position of State School Counselor Liaison in the Department of Education (DOE).

Under this bill, the State Board of Education is to require school counseling programs at regionally accredited colleges and universities that lead to a school counseling certificate to incorporate the following: (a) the American School Counselor Association's national model for school counseling programs or another State-approved model, and (b) training in the delivery of social and emotional learning programming as well as postsecondary and career planning.

The bill outlines the role of a school counselor, which is defined as an individual who holds a New Jersey standard educational services certificate with a school counselor endorsement.

The bill directs the State board to establish professional development requirements for school counselors and, as part of the professional development requirements, require that each school counselor complete professional development training in areas related to the duties of a school counselor including, but not limited to, the promotion of mental health awareness, suicide prevention, crisis-intervention, trauma-informed counseling practices, cultural competency and responsiveness, the New Jersey Tiered System of Supports, delivery of social and emotional learning programming, and college and career readiness.

Finally, this bill directs the Commissioner of Education to appoint a State School Counselor Liaison to work with school districts and school counselors to facilitate best practices by advancing comprehensive school counseling services that address the mental and behavioral health and wellness of all students. The person appointed to the position is required to hold a standard educational services certificate with a director of school counseling services endorsement and possess experience in the delivery of social and emotional learning programming as well as postsecondary and career advisement. The State School Counselor Liaison is to collaborate with other State agencies and associated stakeholders and perform the following duties:

- serve as a liaison and resource expert in school counseling and comprehensive school counseling services;
- foster and promote professional development for school counselors;
- monitor, interpret, synthesize, and disseminate relevant information associated with changes in school counseling practices, legislation, and legal issues that impact school counselors; and
- initiate, participate in, and utilize research studies related to school counseling practices, the mental health needs of children and youth, and related issues.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

This bill was introduced in the 2022-2023 legislative session as Assembly Bill No. 1516. The Assembly Education Committee reported the bill on September 22, 2022. The Assembly Community Development and Affairs Committee reported the bill with committee amendments on June 5, 2023 and it was referred to the Assembly Appropriations Committee where no further action was taken.

ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 3424

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 15, 2025

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 3424.

As amended, this bill establishes certain requirements specific to school counselors and school counseling programs at institutions of higher education and establishes the position of State School Counselor Liaison in the Department of Education (DOE).

Under the amended bill, the State Board of Education is to require school counseling programs at accredited colleges and universities that lead to a school counseling certificate to incorporate the following: (a) the American School Counselor Association's national model for school counseling programs or another State-approved model, and (b) training in the delivery of social and emotional learning programming as well as postsecondary and career planning.

The amended bill outlines the role of a school counselor, which is defined as an individual who holds and works under the authority of a New Jersey standard educational services certificate with a school counselor endorsement.

The amended bill directs the State board to establish professional development requirements for school counselors and, as part of the professional development requirements, require that each school counselor complete professional development training in areas related to the duties of a school counselor, including the promotion of mental health awareness; suicide prevention; crisis-intervention; trauma-informed counseling practices; cultural competency and responsiveness; the New Jersey Tiered System of Supports, which includes the systematic delivery of interventions and supports to students demonstrating academic, behavioral, mental health, emotional, and other needs; delivery of social and emotional learning programming; and college and career readiness.

Finally, the amended bill directs the Commissioner of Education to appoint a State School Counselor Liaison to work with school districts, charter schools, renaissance school projects, and school counselors to facilitate best practices by advancing comprehensive school counseling services that address the mental and behavioral health and wellness of all students. The person appointed to the position is required to hold a standard educational services certificate with a

director of school counseling services endorsement and possess experience in the delivery of social and emotional learning programming as well as postsecondary and career advisement. The State School Counselor Liaison is to collaborate with other State agencies and associated stakeholders and perform the following duties:

- serve as a liaison and resource expert in school counseling and comprehensive school counseling services;
- foster and promote professional development for school counselors;
- monitor, interpret, synthesize, and disseminate relevant information associated with changes in school counseling practices, legislation, and legal issues that impact school counselors; and
- initiate, participate in, and utilize research studies related to school counseling practices, the mental health needs of children and youth, and related issues.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to:

- update the legislative findings and declaration section to remove reference to the Department of Education's COVID-19 pandemic guidance;
- update the definition of school counselor;
- apply the provisions of the bill to school counselors employed by a charter school and renaissance school project in addition to those employed by a school district;
- apply the provisions of the bill concerning school counseling programs to those at an accredited college or university rather than a regionally accredited college or university.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Fiscal information for this bill is currently unavailable.

SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 3424

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 26, 2025

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 3424 (1R).

Under the bill, the State Board of Education is to require school counseling programs at accredited colleges and universities that lead to a school counseling certificate to incorporate the following: (a) the American School Counselor Association's national model for school counseling programs or another State-approved model; and (b) training in the delivery of social and emotional learning programming as well as postsecondary and career planning.

The bill outlines the role of a school counselor, which is defined as an individual who holds and works under the authority of a New Jersey standard educational services certificate with a school counselor endorsement.

The bill directs the State board to establish professional development requirements for school counselors and, as part of the professional development requirements, require that each school counselor complete professional development training in areas related to the duties of a school counselor, including the promotion of mental health awareness; suicide prevention; crisis-intervention; trauma-informed counseling practices; cultural competency and responsiveness; the New Jersey Tiered System of Supports, which includes the systematic delivery of interventions and supports to students demonstrating academic, behavioral, mental health, emotional, and other needs; delivery of social and emotional learning programming; and college and career readiness.

Finally, the bill directs the Commissioner of Education to appoint a State School Counselor Liaison to work with school districts, charter schools, renaissance school projects, and school counselors to facilitate best practices by advancing comprehensive school counseling services that address the mental and behavioral health and wellness of all students. The person appointed to the position is required to hold a standard educational services certificate with a director of school counseling services endorsement and possess experience in the delivery of social and emotional learning programming as well as postsecondary and career advisement. The State School Counselor

Liaison is to collaborate with other State agencies and associated stakeholders and perform the following duties:

- serve as a liaison and resource expert in school counseling and comprehensive school counseling services;
- foster and promote professional development for school counselors;
- monitor, interpret, synthesize, and disseminate relevant information associated with changes in school counseling practices, legislation, and legal issues that impact school counselors; and
- initiate, participate in, and utilize research studies related to school counseling practices, the mental health needs of children and youth, and related issues.

As reported by the committee, Assembly Bill No. 3424 (1R) is identical to Senate Bill No. 1784, which was amended and reported by the committee on this date.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services finds that this bill would result in an indeterminate annual expenditure increase for the Department of Education associated with the establishment of the position of State School Counselor Liaison.

If the department hires a new employee for the liaison position, annual compensation costs could be in the range of \$75,000 to \$100,000, plus benefits.

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE
ASSEMBLY, No. 3424
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
221st LEGISLATURE

DATED: MAY 19, 2025

SUMMARY

- Synopsis:** Establishes certain program requirements for school counselor certification; outlines role and duties of school counselor; requires professional development for school counselors; establishes position of School Counselor Liaison in DOE.
- Type of Impact:** Annual expenditure increase to the State.
- Agencies Affected:** Department of Education.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	<u>Annual</u>
State Cost Increase	Indeterminate

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) finds that this bill would result in an indeterminate annual expenditure increase for the Department of Education associated with the establishment of the position of State School Counselor Liaison.
- If the department hires a new employee for the liaison position, annual compensation costs could be in the range of \$75,000 to \$100,000, plus benefits.

BILL DESCRIPTION

The bill establishes the position of State School Counselor Liaison in the Department of Education. The liaison would be responsible for working with school districts and school counselors to facilitate best practices for addressing the mental and behavioral health and wellness of all students. The liaison would serve as a resource expert in school counseling for New Jersey certified school counselors and the Department of Education and would foster and promote professional development for school counselors. The liaison would be required to report annually to the Governor and the Legislature, including a summary of the activities of the liaison during the year and any recommendations deemed appropriate concerning school counseling services.

The bill directs the State Board of Education to establish professional development requirements for school counselors that include a requirement that each school counselor complete professional development training in areas related to the duties of a school counselor.

In addition to any other requirements adopted by the State Board of Education for school counseling programs, the bill requires that school counseling programs at regionally accredited colleges or universities that lead to a standard educational services certificate with a school counselor endorsement incorporate: the American School Counselor Association’s national model for comprehensive school counseling programs or a State-approved model; and training in the delivery of social and emotional learning programming as well as postsecondary and career planning.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS finds that this bill would result in an indeterminate annual expenditure increase for the Department of Education primarily associated with the appointment of a State School Counselor Liaison.

The bill requires the department to appoint a School Counselor Liaison to work with school counselors, school districts, and the Department of Education on matters related to school counseling services. The bill does not specify whether the liaison will be an existing employee of the department or whether the department can hire a new employee for the position. The State would incur annual cost increases if the department hires a new employee to act as State School Counselor Liaison. Assuming that a newly hired employee would receive an annual salary of between \$75,000 and \$100,000 for this role, the annual State personnel costs would be between \$122,850 and \$163,800 when factoring in the State’s fringe benefit rate. If a current employee is appointed for this role, the associated State costs to implement the requirements of the bill will be lower.

The bill may also result in marginal State cost increases associated with the development, to the extent that it does not already exist, of professional development training for school counselors and the potential creation of a State-approved model for comprehensive school counseling programs at certain State institutions of higher education. School districts may also incur indeterminate, likely marginal, annual workload increases related to the school counselor training required under the bill. Similarly, to the extent that public institutions of higher education offering certain school counseling programs need to modify those programs to reflect the requirements of the bill, these institutions may experience cost increases.

Section: Education
Analyst: Abigail Chambers
Associate Fiscal Analyst
Approved: Thomas Koenig
Legislative Budget and Finance Officer

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

FE to A3424

3

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 3424

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

DATED: MAY 23, 2025

SUMMARY

- Synopsis:** Establishes certain program requirements for school counselor certification; outlines role and duties of school counselor; requires professional development for school counselors; establishes position of School Counselor Liaison in DOE.
- Type of Impact:** Annual expenditure increase to the State.
- Agencies Affected:** Department of Education.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	<u>Annual</u>
State Cost Increase	Indeterminate

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) finds that this bill would result in an indeterminate annual expenditure increase for the Department of Education associated with the establishment of the position of State School Counselor Liaison.
- If the department hires a new employee for the liaison position, annual compensation costs could be in the range of \$75,000 to \$100,000, plus benefits.

BILL DESCRIPTION

The bill establishes the position of State School Counselor Liaison in the Department of Education. The liaison would be responsible for working with school districts, charter schools and renaissance school projects, and school counselors to facilitate best practices for addressing the mental and behavioral health and wellness of all students. The liaison would serve as a resource expert in school counseling for New Jersey certified school counselors and the Department of Education and would foster and promote professional development for school counselors. The liaison would be required to report annually to the Governor and the Legislature, including a summary of the activities of the liaison during the year and any recommendations deemed appropriate concerning school counseling services.

The bill directs the State Board of Education to establish professional development requirements for school counselors that include a requirement that each school counselor complete professional development training in areas related to the duties of a school counselor.

In addition to any other requirements adopted by the State Board of Education for school counseling programs, the bill requires that school counseling programs at regionally accredited colleges or universities that lead to a standard educational services certificate with a school counselor endorsement incorporate: the American School Counselor Association's national model for comprehensive school counseling programs or a State-approved model; and training in the delivery of social and emotional learning programming as well as postsecondary and career planning.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS finds that this bill would result in an indeterminate annual expenditure increase for the Department of Education primarily associated with the appointment of a State School Counselor Liaison.

The bill requires the department to appoint a State School Counselor Liaison to work with school counselors, school districts, charter schools, renaissance school projects, and the Department of Education on matters related to school counseling services. The bill does not specify whether the liaison will be an existing employee of the department or whether the department can hire a new employee for the position. The State would incur annual cost increases if the department hires a new employee to act as State School Counselor Liaison. Assuming that a newly hired employee would receive an annual salary of between \$75,000 and \$100,000 for this role, the annual State personnel costs would be between \$128,588 and \$171,450 when factoring in the State's fringe benefit rate. If a current employee is appointed for this role, the associated State costs to implement the requirements of the bill will be lower.

The bill may also result in marginal State cost increases associated with the development, to the extent that it does not already exist, of professional development training for school counselors and the potential creation of a State-approved model for comprehensive school counseling programs at certain State institutions of higher education. School districts, charter schools, and renaissance school projects may also incur indeterminate, likely marginal, annual workload increases related to the school counselor training required under the bill. Similarly, to the extent that public institutions of higher education offering certain school counseling programs need to modify those programs to reflect the requirements of the bill, these institutions may experience cost increases.

Section: *Education*

Analyst: *Abigail Chambers*
 Associate Fiscal Analyst

Approved: *Thomas Koenig*
 Legislative Budget and Finance Officer

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).

SENATE, No. 1784

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
221st LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2024 SESSION

Sponsored by:
Senator ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT
District 31 (Hudson)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes certain program requirements for school counselor certification; outlines role and duties of school counselor; requires professional development for school counselors; establishes position of School Counselor Liaison in DOE.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 **AN ACT** concerning school counselors and supplementing Title 18A
2 of the New Jersey Statutes.

3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

6

7 1. The Legislature finds and declares that the Department of
8 Education’s guidance document on the reopening of schools during
9 the COVID-19 pandemic, “The Road Back: Restart and Recovery
10 Plan,” directs school districts to consider the impact of social
11 isolation on both educators and students, and recommends that
12 school district reopening plans include the use of social and
13 emotional learning and multi-tiered systems of support to address
14 the social and emotional needs of students. The Legislature further
15 finds that school counselors are vital to the effort to ensure that
16 school districts are able to adequately address these student needs
17 and to implement appropriate programming.

18

19 2. As used in sections 3 and 4 of this act, “school counselor”
20 means an individual who holds a New Jersey standard educational
21 services certificate with a school counselor endorsement.

22

23 3. a. It shall be the role of a school counselor to:

24 (1) recognize and respond to the need for mental health services
25 that promote social and emotional wellness and development for all
26 students; and

27 (2) design and deliver a comprehensive program for school
28 counseling that promotes the achievement of students.

29 b. Each school counselor employed by a board of education in a
30 public elementary, middle, or high school shall provide appropriate
31 school counseling services that shall include, but not be limited to:

32 (1) addressing needs relating to the academic, career, social, and
33 emotional development of all students;

34 (2) individual student academic planning and goal setting;

35 (3) school counseling classroom lessons based on student success
36 standards;

37 (4) short-term counseling of students;

38 (5) referrals for long-term services and supports;

39 (6) collaboration with families, teachers, administrators, and
40 community members that fosters student success;

41 (7) advocacy for students at individualized education program
42 (IEP) meetings and other student-focused meetings; and

43 (8) data analysis to identify student issues, needs, and challenges.

44

45 4. The State Board of Education shall establish professional
46 development requirements for school counselors. The State board
47 shall require, as part of the professional development requirements,
48 that each school counselor complete professional development training

1 in areas related to the duties of a school counselor including, but not
2 limited to, the promotion of mental health awareness, suicide
3 prevention, crisis-intervention, trauma-informed counseling practices,
4 cultural competency and responsiveness, the New Jersey Tiered
5 System of Supports, delivery of social and emotional learning
6 programming, and college and career readiness.

7
8 5. In addition to any other requirements adopted by the State
9 Board of Education for school counseling programs, the State board
10 shall require that a school counseling program at a regionally
11 accredited college or university leading to a standard educational
12 services certificate with a school counselor endorsement incorporate
13 the following:

14 a. the American School Counselor Association's national model
15 for comprehensive school counseling programs or a State-approved
16 model; and

17 b. training in the delivery of social and emotional learning
18 programming as well as postsecondary and career planning.

19
20 6. a. The Commissioner of Education shall appoint a State
21 School Counselor Liaison. The State School Counselor Liaison
22 shall hold a New Jersey standard educational services certificate
23 with a director of school counseling services endorsement and have
24 experience in the delivery of social and emotional learning
25 programming as well as postsecondary and career advisement. The
26 State School Counselor Liaison shall work with school districts and
27 school counselors to facilitate best practices by advancing
28 comprehensive school counseling services that address the mental
29 and behavioral health and wellness of all students. The State
30 School Counselor Liaison, in performing the duties of the position,
31 shall collaborate with other State agencies and associated
32 stakeholders.

33 b. It shall be the duty of the State School Counselor Liaison to:

34 (1) serve as a liaison and resource expert in school counseling
35 and comprehensive school counseling services for New Jersey
36 certificated school counselors and the Department of Education;

37 (2) foster and promote professional development for school
38 counselors, which may include planning, coordinating, or providing
39 educational guidance, and networking with universities, the New
40 Jersey School Counselor Association, and other providers of
41 continuing education to meet identified needs;

42 (3) monitor, interpret, synthesize, and disseminate relevant
43 information associated with changes in school counseling practices,
44 legislation, and legal issues that impact school counselors; and

45 (4) initiate, participate in, and utilize research studies related to
46 school counseling practices, the mental health needs of children and
47 youth, and related issues.

1 districts and school counselors to facilitate best practices by
2 advancing comprehensive school counseling services that address
3 the mental and behavioral health and wellness of all students. The
4 person appointed to the position is required to hold a standard
5 educational services certificate with a director of school counseling
6 services endorsement and possess experience in the delivery of
7 social and emotional learning programming as well as
8 postsecondary and career advisement. The State School Counselor
9 Liaison will collaborate with other State agencies and associated
10 stakeholders and perform the following duties: (1) serve as a liaison
11 and resource expert in school counseling and comprehensive school
12 counseling services; (2) foster and promote professional
13 development for school counselors; (3) monitor, interpret,
14 synthesis, and disseminate relevant information associated with
15 changes in school counseling practices, legislation, and legal issues
16 that impact school counselors; and (4) initiate, participate in, and
17 utilize research studies related to school counseling practices, the
18 mental health needs of children and youth, and related issues.

[First Reprint]
SENATE, No. 1784

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
221st LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2024 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Senator ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT

District 31 (Hudson)

Senator SHIRLEY K. TURNER

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

Co-Sponsored by:

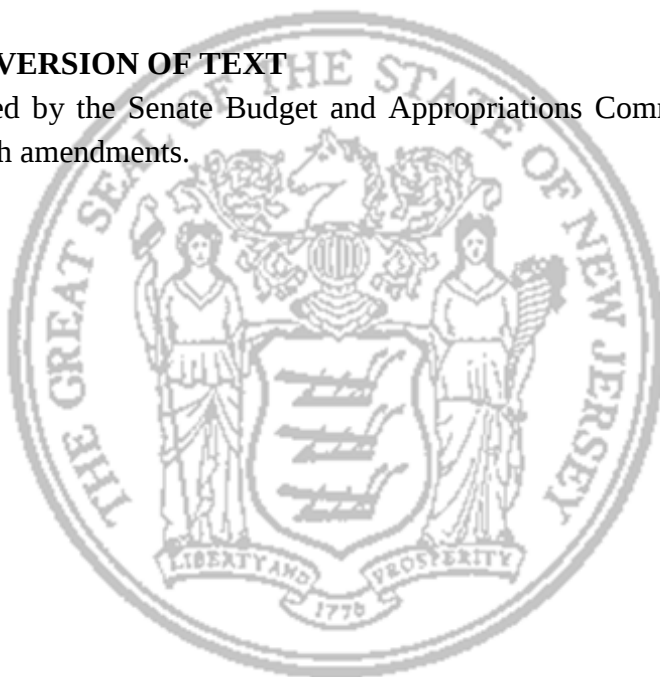
Senator Gopal

SYNOPSIS

Establishes certain program requirements for school counselor certification; outlines role and duties of school counselor; requires professional development for school counselors; establishes position of School Counselor Liaison in DOE.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee on June 26, 2025, with amendments.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/30/2025)

1 **AN ACT** concerning school counselors and supplementing Title 18A
2 of the New Jersey Statutes.

3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

6

7 1. The Legislature finds and declares that ¹**the Department of**
8 Education’s guidance document on the reopening of schools during
9 the COVID-19 pandemic, “The Road Back: Restart and Recovery
10 Plan,” directs school districts to consider the impact of social
11 isolation on both educators and students, and recommends that
12 school district reopening plans include the use of social and
13 emotional learning and multi-tiered systems of support to address
14 the social and emotional needs of students. The Legislature further
15 finds that ¹**school counselors are vital to the effort to ensure that**
16 school districts¹, charter schools, and renaissance school projects¹
17 are able to adequately address ¹**these**¹ student needs and to
18 implement appropriate programming.

19

20 2. As used in sections 3 and 4 of this act, “school counselor”
21 means an individual who holds ¹and works under the authority of¹ a
22 New Jersey standard educational services certificate with a school
23 counselor endorsement.

24

25 3. a. It shall be the role of a school counselor to:

26 (1) recognize and respond to the need for mental health services
27 that promote social and emotional wellness and development for all
28 students; and

29 (2) design and deliver a comprehensive program for school
30 counseling that promotes the achievement of students.

31 b. Each school counselor employed by a ¹**board of education**
32 in a public elementary, middle, or high school **school district,**
33 charter school, or renaissance school project¹ shall provide
34 appropriate school counseling services that shall include, but not be
35 limited to:

36 (1) addressing needs relating to the academic, career, social, and
37 emotional development of all students;

38 (2) individual student academic planning and goal setting;

39 (3) school counseling classroom lessons based on student
40 success standards;

41 (4) short-term counseling of students;

42 (5) referrals for long-term services and supports;

43 (6) collaboration with families, teachers, administrators, and
44 community members that fosters student success;

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

 Matter underlined thus is new matter.

 Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹Senate SBA committee amendments adopted June 26, 2025.

(7) ¹ **advocacy for students at** attending, when appropriate,¹
individualized education program (IEP) meetings and other student-
focused meetings; and

(8) data analysis to identify student issues, needs, and
challenges.

4. The State Board of Education shall establish professional
development requirements for school counselors. The State board
shall require, as part of the professional development requirements,
that each school counselor complete professional development
training in areas related to the duties of a school counselor
including, but not limited to, the promotion of mental health
awareness¹ **;** ¹ suicide prevention¹ **;** ¹ crisis-intervention¹ **;** ¹
trauma-informed counseling practices¹ **;** ¹ cultural competency
and responsiveness¹ **;** ¹ the New Jersey Tiered System of
Supports, ¹ which includes the systematic delivery of interventions
and supports to students demonstrating academic, behavioral,
mental health, emotional, and other needs;¹ delivery of social and
emotional learning programming¹ **;** ¹ and college and career
readiness.

5. In addition to any other requirements adopted by the State
Board of Education for school counseling programs, the State board
shall require that a school counseling program at ¹ **a regionally**
an¹ accredited college or university leading to a standard
educational services certificate with a school counselor
endorsement incorporate the following:

a. the American School Counselor Association's national
model for comprehensive school counseling programs or a State-
approved model; and

b. training in the delivery of social and emotional learning
programming as well as postsecondary and career planning.

6. a. The Commissioner of Education shall appoint a State
School Counselor Liaison. The State School Counselor Liaison
shall hold a New Jersey standard educational services certificate
with a director of school counseling services endorsement and have
experience in the delivery of social and emotional learning
programming as well as postsecondary and career advisement. The
State School Counselor Liaison shall work with school districts¹,
charter schools, renaissance school projects,¹ and school counselors
to facilitate best practices by advancing comprehensive school
counseling services that address the mental and behavioral health
and wellness of all students. The State School Counselor Liaison,
in performing the duties of the position, shall collaborate with other
State agencies and associated stakeholders.

b. It shall be the duty of the State School Counselor Liaison to:

1 (1) serve as a liaison and resource expert in school counseling
2 and comprehensive school counseling services for New Jersey
3 certificated school counselors and the Department of Education;

4 (2) foster and promote professional development for school
5 counselors, which may include planning, coordinating, or providing
6 educational guidance, and networking with universities, the New
7 Jersey School Counselor Association, and other providers of
8 continuing education to meet identified needs;

9 (3) monitor, interpret, synthesize, and disseminate relevant
10 information associated with changes in school counseling practices,
11 legislation, and legal issues that impact school counselors; and

12 (4) initiate, participate in, and utilize research studies related to
13 school counseling practices, the mental health needs of children and
14 youth, and related issues.

15 c. The State School Counselor Liaison shall report annually to
16 the Governor and, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164
17 (C.52:14-19.1), the Legislature. The report shall include a summary
18 of the activities of the State School Counselor Liaison during the
19 year and any specific recommendations deemed appropriate and
20 necessary concerning school counseling services and
21 comprehensive school mental health services.

22 d. As used in this section, “school counselor” means an
23 individual who holds ¹and works under the authority of¹ a New
24 Jersey standard educational services certificate with a school
25 counselor endorsement.

26
27 7. The State Board of Education shall adopt, in accordance
28 with the “Administrative Procedures Act,” P.L.1968, c.410
29 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), rules and regulations as may be necessary to
30 implement the provisions of this act.

31
32 8. This act shall take effect immediately.

SENATE, No. 1784

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 221st LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2024 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Senator ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT

District 31 (Hudson)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senator Gopal

SYNOPSIS

Establishes certain program requirements for school counselor certification; outlines role and duties of school counselor; requires professional development for school counselors; establishes position of School Counselor Liaison in DOE.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Senate Education Committee with technical review.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/3/2025)

1 **AN ACT** concerning school counselors and supplementing Title 18A
2 of the New Jersey Statutes.

3
4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

6
7 1. The Legislature finds and declares that the Department of
8 Education’s guidance document on the reopening of schools during
9 the COVID-19 pandemic, “The Road Back: Restart and Recovery
10 Plan,” directs school districts to consider the impact of social
11 isolation on both educators and students, and recommends that
12 school district reopening plans include the use of social and
13 emotional learning and multi-tiered systems of support to address
14 the social and emotional needs of students. The Legislature further
15 finds that school counselors are vital to the effort to ensure that
16 school districts are able to adequately address these student needs
17 and to implement appropriate programming.

18
19 2. As used in sections 3 and 4 of this act, “school counselor”
20 means an individual who holds a New Jersey standard educational
21 services certificate with a school counselor endorsement.

22
23 3. a. It shall be the role of a school counselor to:

24 (1) recognize and respond to the need for mental health services
25 that promote social and emotional wellness and development for all
26 students; and

27 (2) design and deliver a comprehensive program for school
28 counseling that promotes the achievement of students.

29 b. Each school counselor employed by a board of education in a
30 public elementary, middle, or high school shall provide appropriate
31 school counseling services that shall include, but not be limited to:

32 (1) addressing needs relating to the academic, career, social, and
33 emotional development of all students;

34 (2) individual student academic planning and goal setting;

35 (3) school counseling classroom lessons based on student success
36 standards;

37 (4) short-term counseling of students;

38 (5) referrals for long-term services and supports;

39 (6) collaboration with families, teachers, administrators, and
40 community members that fosters student success;

41 (7) advocacy for students at individualized education program
42 (IEP) meetings and other student-focused meetings; and

43 (8) data analysis to identify student issues, needs, and challenges.

44
45 4. The State Board of Education shall establish professional
46 development requirements for school counselors. The State board
47 shall require, as part of the professional development requirements,
48 that each school counselor complete professional development training

1 in areas related to the duties of a school counselor including, but not
2 limited to, the promotion of mental health awareness, suicide
3 prevention, crisis-intervention, trauma-informed counseling practices,
4 cultural competency and responsiveness, the New Jersey Tiered
5 System of Supports, delivery of social and emotional learning
6 programming, and college and career readiness.

7
8 5. In addition to any other requirements adopted by the State
9 Board of Education for school counseling programs, the State board
10 shall require that a school counseling program at a regionally
11 accredited college or university leading to a standard educational
12 services certificate with a school counselor endorsement incorporate
13 the following:

14 a. the American School Counselor Association's national model
15 for comprehensive school counseling programs or a State-approved
16 model; and

17 b. training in the delivery of social and emotional learning
18 programming as well as postsecondary and career planning.

19
20 6. a. The Commissioner of Education shall appoint a State
21 School Counselor Liaison. The State School Counselor Liaison
22 shall hold a New Jersey standard educational services certificate
23 with a director of school counseling services endorsement and have
24 experience in the delivery of social and emotional learning
25 programming as well as postsecondary and career advisement. The
26 State School Counselor Liaison shall work with school districts and
27 school counselors to facilitate best practices by advancing
28 comprehensive school counseling services that address the mental
29 and behavioral health and wellness of all students. The State
30 School Counselor Liaison, in performing the duties of the position,
31 shall collaborate with other State agencies and associated
32 stakeholders.

33 b. It shall be the duty of the State School Counselor Liaison to:

34 (1) serve as a liaison and resource expert in school counseling
35 and comprehensive school counseling services for New Jersey
36 certificated school counselors and the Department of Education;

37 (2) foster and promote professional development for school
38 counselors, which may include planning, coordinating, or providing
39 educational guidance, and networking with universities, the New
40 Jersey School Counselor Association, and other providers of
41 continuing education to meet identified needs;

42 (3) monitor, interpret, synthesize, and disseminate relevant
43 information associated with changes in school counseling practices,
44 legislation, and legal issues that impact school counselors; and

45 (4) initiate, participate in, and utilize research studies related to
46 school counseling practices, the mental health needs of children and
47 youth, and related issues.

1 c. The State School Counselor Liaison shall report annually to
2 the Governor and, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164
3 (C.52:14-19.1), the Legislature. The report shall include a summary
4 of the activities of the State School Counselor Liaison during the
5 year and any specific recommendations deemed appropriate and
6 necessary concerning school counseling services and
7 comprehensive school mental health services.

8 d. As used in this section, "school counselor" means an
9 individual who holds a New Jersey standard educational services
10 certificate with a school counselor endorsement.

11

12 7. The State Board of Education shall adopt, in accordance
13 with the "Administrative Procedures Act," P.L.1968, c.410
14 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), rules and regulations as may be necessary to
15 implement the provisions of this act.

16

17 8. This act shall take effect immediately.

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 1784

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

The Senate Education Committee favorably reports Senate Bill No. 1784.

This bill establishes certain requirements specific to school counselors and school counseling programs at institutions of higher education and establishes the position of State School Counselor Liaison in the Department of Education (DOE).

Under this bill, the State Board of Education is to require school counseling programs at regionally accredited colleges and universities that lead to a school counseling certificate to incorporate the following: (a) the American School Counselor Association's national model for school counseling programs or another State-approved model, and (b) training in the delivery of social and emotional learning programming as well as postsecondary and career planning.

The bill outlines the role of a school counselor, which is defined as an individual who holds a New Jersey standard educational services certificate with a school counselor endorsement.

The bill directs the State board to establish professional development requirements for school counselors and, as part of the professional development requirements, require that each school counselor complete professional development training in areas related to the duties of a school counselor, including the promotion of mental health awareness, suicide prevention, crisis-intervention, trauma-informed counseling practices, cultural competency and responsiveness, the New Jersey Tiered System of Supports, delivery of social and emotional learning programming, and college and career readiness.

Finally, this bill directs the Commissioner of Education to appoint a State School Counselor Liaison to work with school districts and school counselors to facilitate best practices by advancing comprehensive school counseling services that address the mental and behavioral health and wellness of all students. The person appointed to the position is required to hold a standard educational services certificate with a director of school counseling services endorsement and possess experience in the delivery of social and emotional learning programming as well as postsecondary and career advisement. The State School Counselor Liaison is to collaborate with other State agencies and associated

stakeholders and perform the following duties: (1) serve as a liaison and resource expert in school counseling and comprehensive school counseling services; (2) foster and promote professional development for school counselors; (3) monitor, interpret, synthesize, and disseminate relevant information associated with changes in school counseling practices, legislation, and legal issues that impact school counselors; and (4) initiate, participate in, and utilize research studies related to school counseling practices, the mental health needs of children and youth, and related issues.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2024-2025 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.

SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 1784

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 26, 2025

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 1784.

As amended and reported, this bill establishes certain requirements specific to school counselors and school counseling programs at institutions of higher education and establishes the position of State School Counselor Liaison in the Department of Education (DOE).

Under the bill, the State Board of Education is to require school counseling programs at accredited colleges and universities that lead to a school counseling certificate to incorporate the following: (a) the American School Counselor Association's national model for school counseling programs or another State-approved model; and (b) training in the delivery of social and emotional learning programming as well as postsecondary and career planning.

The bill outlines the role of a school counselor, which is defined as an individual who holds and works under the authority of a New Jersey standard educational services certificate with a school counselor endorsement.

The bill directs the State board to establish professional development requirements for school counselors and, as part of the professional development requirements, require that each school counselor complete professional development training in areas related to the duties of a school counselor, including the promotion of mental health awareness; suicide prevention; crisis-intervention; trauma-informed counseling practices; cultural competency and responsiveness; the New Jersey Tiered System of Supports, which includes the systematic delivery of interventions and supports to students demonstrating academic, behavioral, mental health, emotional, and other needs; delivery of social and emotional learning programming; and college and career readiness.

Finally, the bill directs the Commissioner of Education to appoint a State School Counselor Liaison to work with school districts, charter schools, renaissance school projects, and school counselors to facilitate best practices by advancing comprehensive school counseling services that address the mental and behavioral health and wellness of all students. The person appointed to the position is required to hold a

standard educational services certificate with a director of school counseling services endorsement and possess experience in the delivery of social and emotional learning programming as well as postsecondary and career advisement. The State School Counselor Liaison is to collaborate with other State agencies and associated stakeholders and perform the following duties:

- serve as a liaison and resource expert in school counseling and comprehensive school counseling services;
- foster and promote professional development for school counselors;
- monitor, interpret, synthesize, and disseminate relevant information associated with changes in school counseling practices, legislation, and legal issues that impact school counselors; and
- initiate, participate in, and utilize research studies related to school counseling practices, the mental health needs of children and youth, and related issues.

As amended and reported by the committee, Senate Bill No. 1784 is identical to Assembly Bill No. 3424 (1R), which was reported by the committee on this same date.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to:

(1) update the legislative findings and declaration section to remove reference to the Department of Education's COVID-19 pandemic guidance;

(2) update the definition of school counselor;

(3) apply the provisions of the bill to school counselors employed by a charter school and renaissance school project in addition to those employed by a school district; and

(4) apply the provisions of the bill concerning school counseling programs to those at an accredited college or university rather than a regionally accredited college or university.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services finds that this bill would result in an indeterminate annual expenditure increase for the Department of Education associated with the establishment of the position of State School Counselor Liaison.

If the department hires a new employee for the liaison position, annual compensation costs could be in the range of \$75,000 to \$100,000, plus benefits.

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE
SENATE, No. 1784
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
221st LEGISLATURE

DATED: JUNE 26, 2025

SUMMARY

- Synopsis:** Establishes certain program requirements for school counselor certification; outlines role and duties of school counselor; requires professional development for school counselors; establishes position of School Counselor Liaison in DOE.
- Type of Impact:** Annual expenditure increase to the State.
- Agencies Affected:** Department of Education.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	<u>Annual</u>
State Cost Increase	Indeterminate

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) finds that this bill would result in an indeterminate annual expenditure increase for the Department of Education associated with the establishment of the position of State School Counselor Liaison.
- If the department hires a new employee for the liaison position, annual compensation costs could range from \$75,000 to \$100,000, plus benefits.

BILL DESCRIPTION

The bill establishes the position of State School Counselor Liaison in the Department of Education. The liaison would be responsible for working with school districts and school counselors to facilitate best practices for addressing the mental and behavioral health and wellness of all students. The liaison would serve as a resource expert in school counseling for New Jersey certified school counselors and the Department of Education and would foster and promote professional development for school counselors. The liaison would be required to report annually to the Governor and the Legislature, including a summary of the activities of the liaison during the year and any recommendations deemed appropriate concerning school counseling services.

The bill directs the State Board of Education to establish professional development requirements for school counselors that include a requirement that each school counselor complete professional development training in areas related to the duties of a school counselor.

In addition to any other requirements adopted by the State Board of Education for school counseling programs, the bill requires that school counseling programs at regionally accredited colleges or universities that lead to a standard educational services certificate with a school counselor endorsement incorporate: the American School Counselor Association's national model for comprehensive school counseling programs or a State-approved model; and training in the delivery of social and emotional learning programming as well as postsecondary and career planning.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS finds that this bill would result in an indeterminate annual expenditure increase for the Department of Education primarily associated with the appointment of a State School Counselor Liaison.

The bill requires the department to appoint a State School Counselor Liaison to work with school counselors, school districts, and the Department of Education on matters related to school counseling services. The bill does not specify whether the liaison will be an existing employee of the department or whether the department can hire a new employee for the position. The State would incur annual cost increases if the department hires a new employee to act as State School Counselor Liaison. Assuming that a newly hired employee would receive an annual salary of between \$75,000 and \$100,000 for this role, the annual State personnel costs would be between \$128,588 and \$171,450 when factoring in the State's fringe benefit rate. If a current employee is appointed for this role, the associated State costs to implement the requirements of the bill will be lower.

The bill may also result in marginal State cost increases associated with the development, to the extent that it does not already exist, of professional development training for school counselors and the potential creation of a State-approved model for comprehensive school counseling programs at certain State institutions of higher education. School districts may also incur indeterminate, likely marginal, annual workload increases related to the school counselor training required under the bill. Similarly, to the extent that public institutions of higher education offering certain school counseling programs need to modify those programs to reflect the requirements of the bill, these institutions may experience cost increases.

Section: Education

Analyst: Christopher Myles
Senior Fiscal Analyst

Approved: Thomas Koenig
Legislative Budget and Finance Officer

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Takes Action on Legislation

Posted on - 08/21/2025

TRENTON – Today, Governor Murphy signed the following bills into law:

S-3773/A-5506 (Lagana, Wimberly/Verrelli) - Concerns requirements to report separations from employment under employee leasing agreements

S-3944/A-5125 (Sarlo, Gopal/Calabrese, Carter) - Provides that certain non-profit corporation alcoholic beverage theater licensees include disregarded entities of such corporations; allows certain community theaters to sell alcoholic beverages

S-3992/A-5844 (Singleton/Lopez, Stanley, McCoy) - Modifies capital reserve funding requirements for certain planned real estate developments

A-3424/S-1784 (Reynolds-Jackson, Matsikoudis/McKnight, Turner) - Establishes certain program requirements for school counselor certification; outlines role and duties of school counselor; requires professional development for school counselors; establishes position of School Counselor Liaison in DOE

A-5792/S-4590 (Freiman, Drulis, Hutchison, Quijano/Lagana, Scutari) - Provides for workers' compensation coverage of certain counseling services for first responders and provides that certain mental health related communications are confidential

Governor Phil Murphy

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609-292-6000

Posted on: August 26, 2025

McKnight, Turner Bill Supporting School Counselors in Their Essential Roles Signed into Law

TRENTON – Governor Murphy signed into law a bill sponsored by Senator Angela V. McKnight and Senator Shirley K. Turner that clarifies the role of school counselors and sets program and professional development standards for counselors in higher education.

“The job of school counselors spans from college and career prep to academic and social-emotional support to students,” said Senator McKnight (D-Hudson) who introduced the bill in 2022 as an Assemblywoman. “By clarifying the duties of a school counselor and requiring holistic professional development standards, counselors will be better equipped to provide the most comprehensive skills and services to their designated students, parents and fellow staff.”



The bill, S-1784, defines a school counselor as responsible for recognizing and responding to all students' academic, social, and emotional wellness and designing and executing a comprehensive program that promotes student achievement.

This includes, but is not limited to, individual academic planning and goal setting, short-term counseling, referrals for long-term services and support, and data analysis to identify and address student needs. Collaboration with families, teachers, administrators, and community members to foster student success is identified as another essential aspect of a school counselor's job.

The bill also directs the State Board of Education (BOE) to establish professional development requirements for school counselors that address mental health needs and college and career readiness. It also requires that the BOE require school counseling programs at accredited colleges to adopt the American School Counselor Association's (ASCA) national model for certification.

Finally, the bill requires the Commissioner of Education to appoint a State School Counselor Liaison (Liaison). The Liaison is responsible for working with school districts and school counselors to facilitate up-to-date best practices and services that promote the wellness of all students.

Posted on: August 21, 2025 | Last Modified on: August 21, 2025

Bill That Establishes School Counseling Liaison Now Law

TRENTON, N.J. – Students continue to face mental health challenges that schools are increasingly tasked to address. A bill that establishes a state school counselor liaison in the state Department of Education and professional standards for school counselors to meet those challenges was signed into law Thursday.



“Five years later, students are still struggling with the effects of school closures and socialization limits that have negatively impacted their academic performances, social interactions and emotional needs. Families and educators are leaning more on counselors to address those struggles and help students be their best in and out of school,” Assemblywoman Michele Matsikoudis (R-Union), the bill’s sponsor, said.

School counselors must complete a master’s degree or higher with 48 graduate semester hours in counseling and related studies from an accredited college or university. This bill (S1784/A3424) requires that programs at regionally accredited institutions incorporate national- or state-recognized counseling models into that training.

Counseling has evolved from helping students navigate academic and post-secondary-school choices to dealing with mental health issues such as depression and anxiety, which can lead to self-harm, including suicide. The proposal to create a state school counselor liaison will see that person coordinating with local school counselors to implement mental health services in schools, such as suicide prevention, crisis-intervention, trauma-informed counseling practices, and cultural competency and responsiveness.

“It’s vital that school counselors ensure that these needs are adequately addressed, and programs are implemented that provide support while promoting a positive school climate,” Matsikoudis added.

Reynolds-Jackson Bill Regarding School Counseling Signed into Law

Bill establishes specific requirements for school counselors to help address mental health needs of students

(TRENTON) — Recognizing the need to address the social and emotional needs of New Jersey’s students, Bill A3424, sponsored by Assemblywoman Verlina Reynolds-Jackson, was signed into law last week. The bill recognizes that school counselors are the frontline mental health providers in our schools and sets professional standards for those counselors.



Under the bill, the State Board of Education is instructed to ensure that school counseling programs at colleges and universities incorporate the American School Counselor Association’s national model, along with training in social and emotional learning, postsecondary education, and career planning.

The legislation also establishes the position of State School Counselor Liaison in the State Department of Education to facilitate best practices at school districts across New Jersey.

“This legislation is not only timely but also essential, especially since student mental health challenges are increasing,” **said Assemblywoman Reynolds-Jackson, chair of the Assembly Education Committee (D-Hunterdon, Mercer).** “My bill ensures that the school counseling system is up-to-date and that our counselors have the necessary tools, training, and support to care for our students.”

The bill directs the State board to establish professional development requirements for school counselors, including mandatory training in areas related to their roles. This training includes promoting mental health awareness, suicide prevention, crisis intervention, trauma-informed counseling practices, cultural competency and responsiveness, social and emotional learning programs, and college and career readiness.