

Legislative Analysis



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR SCHOOL COUNSELORS

Phone: (517) 373-8080
<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

House Bill 4181 as introduced
Sponsor: Rep. Brett Roberts
Committee: Workforce and Talent Development
Complete to 3-13-17

SUMMARY:

House Bill 4181 would amend the Revised School Code (MCL 380.1233) to direct that 50 of the 150 required professional development (PD) hours for school counselors must be dedicated to the college preparation and selection process and career counseling.

Existing Professional Development requirements

Under the Code, individuals who wish to serve in a counseling role in a school district or intermediate school district (ISD) must either hold a teaching certificate with a school counseling endorsement or meet the requisite education or employment experience standards. In order to maintain licensure or endorsement, in addition to other requirements, a counselor must complete one of the following every five years: (1) 150 district-provided PD hours,¹ (2) 150 State Continuing Education Clock Hours, or (3) six credit hours.

New Professional Development requirements for schools

The bill would set more specific PD requirements for counselors wishing to renew their school counseling credentials, beginning January 1, 2019. Counselors would need to complete 25 hours of professional development for counseling on the college preparation and selection process, and 25 hours for counseling on career counseling, within their existing 150 hours of PD every five years. (For the purposes of the requirement, career counseling includes exploration of the skilled trades, and credentials for technical or occupational skills necessary to obtain employment or advance within an occupation.)

MDE must develop Professional Development standards

Under the bill, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), in consultation with the Department of Talent and Economic Development (TED) and groups representing school counselors, college admissions professionals, financial aid officers, employers, and other groups deemed appropriate by the MDE would be required to develop PD standards by December 1, 2017, which would consist of the college preparation and career counseling described above.

The MDE would approve PD programs or courses submitted by schools if it determines that the content and curriculum meets the MDE standards.

¹ R 390.1305 of the Teacher Certification Code actually requires "the completion of 6 semester hours of credit in an approved program or the 18 approved state board continuing education units [which equates to 180 hours], or a combination of both." A waiver issued by the MDE on June 13, 2014, lowered this requirement to 150 hours, so that it conformed with other departmental PD requirements.

The bill also removes a requirement that a school district or ISD which employs a person as a school counselor who does not have a teaching certificate must comply with certain contract and criminal history check requirements just as it would in employing a noncertificated teacher.

The bill would take effect 90 days after enactment.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill would have an indeterminate, yet minimal, fiscal impact for the Department of Education (MDE), and it could have an indeterminate, yet minimal, fiscal impact for local school districts, Intermediate School Districts (ISDs), or Public School Academies (PSAs).

The bill would increase administrative costs to the MDE and the Department of Talent and Economic Development (TED) to approve professional development for school counselor credentials. Currently, there is not an official working relationship between the two departments in creating school counselor credentials, and there would be an administrative cost in coordination, in addition to working with outside organizations such as groups representing school counselors, college admissions professionals, financial aid officers, employers, and others. There would also be an additional administrative cost, though likely minimal, to categorize and make sure the specifically required professional development—25 hours of college preparation and selection process and 25 hours of career counseling—is acquired.

The bill could increase administrative costs to local school districts and ISDs that offer professional development to school counselors. Since this bill would require the MDE to approve professional development for school counselor credentials, there could be administrative costs to implementing new or amended professional development as provided by school districts, ISDs, or PSAs.

Legislative Analyst: Jenny McInerney
Fiscal Analysts: Bethany Wicksall
Samuel Christensen

■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.