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BILL ANALYSIS



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House Bill 4181 (Substitute H-1 as passed by the House)
Sponsor: Representative Brett Roberts
House Committee: Workforce and Talent Development
Senate Committee: Education

Date Completed: 9-19-17

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Revised School Code to prohibit the Department of Education, beginning two years after the bill's effective date, from renewing an individual's school counselor credential unless the Department determined that the individual had completed Department-approved professional development, including professional development covering college preparation and selection counseling and professional development covering career counseling.

Under the Code, the board of a school district or intermediate school district (ISD) may not allow an individual to serve in a counseling role in the district unless he or she meets one or more of the following:

- Holds a valid teaching certificate with a school counseling endorsement.
- Holds a master's degree after completing an approved school counselor program that includes specified skills and content areas; has successfully completed the Department's guidance counselor exam; and has been recommended by an approved school counselor education program to provide services as a school counselor.
- Has successfully completed the Department's guidance counselor exam, and has at least five years of successful experience in a school counselor role in another state within the previous seven-year period.

Under the bill, beginning two years after its effective date, the Department could not renew an individual's school counselor credential unless the Department determined that, since the credential was issued or last renewed, whichever was more recent, the individual had completed both of the following:

- At least 25 hours of professional development approved by the Department covering counseling about the college preparation and selection process.
- At least 25 hours of professional development approved by the Department covering career counseling.

The bill specifies that, for this purpose, career counseling would include exploration of the skilled trades as well as other careers and pathways that lead to industry credentials awarded in recognition of an individual's attainment of measurable technical or occupational skills necessary to obtain employment or advance within an occupation.

The hours of professional development required by the bill would be a part of and not in addition to professional development requirements under Department rule.

An individual could complete the professional development hours as part of the professional development provided by a school district, ISD, public school academy (PSA), or nonpublic

school under Section 1527, if the content and curriculum provided under that section were approved by the Department, as described below. (Section 1527 requires the board of each school district, ISD, or PSA to provide at least five days of teacher professional development each school year, and allows a State-approved nonpublic school to provide teacher professional development for nonpublic school teachers.)

The Department would be required to approve the professional development for purposes of the bill. The Department could approve a professional development program only if it determined that the content and curriculum met standards developed by the Department in consultation with the Department of Talent and Economic Development and groups representing school counselors, college admissions professionals, financial aid officers, employers, and others as the Department of Education determined appropriate. The Department would have to facilitate the involvement of these groups in the development of the standards, which the Department would have to develop by December 1, 2017.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction would be required to promulgate or modify rules as necessary to implement the bill.

Currently, if a school board or intermediate school board chooses to employ an individual who does not hold a valid teaching certificate to serve in a counseling role, the board must comply with Sections 1230 and 1230a of the Code to the same extent as required for employing an individual with a teaching certificate to serve as a teacher. (Those sections require all school employees and people working under a contract at a school to undergo criminal background checks.) The bill would delete this provision.

The bill would take effect 90 days after it was enacted.

MCL 380.1233

Legislative Analyst: Suzanne Lowe

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have an indeterminate, yet minimal cost to the Department of Education, school districts, and intermediate school districts. The Department would experience administrative costs in researching, coordinating, and approving the various professional development opportunities available for school counselors to receive professional development. This would involve the Professional Preparation Services and Career and Technical Education units within the Department. The Department also would experience administrative costs to ensure that school counselors were meeting the minimum professional development requirements. This would involve the Professional Preparation Services and Information Technology units. At this time, these administrative costs are indeterminate, but would likely be minimal.

It is unlikely that the Department of Talent and Economic Development would experience additional costs outside of normal operation as a result of being consulted by the Department of Education.

School districts and ISDs could experience administrative costs from creating, modifying, or expanding professional development opportunities for school counselors. Given the various differences in services provided by school districts and ISDs throughout the State, these costs are indeterminate, but would likely be minimal.

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.