

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2021

H.B. 837  
May 4, 2021  
HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK

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HOUSE BILL DRH40432-MTa-136

Short Title: Increase Student Access to School Counselors. (Public)

Sponsors: Representative Insko.

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO REQUIRE SCHOOL COUNSELORS TO BE EMPLOYED IN OR AVAILABLE  
3 TO ALL PUBLIC SCHOOL UNITS, REQUIRE ADDITIONAL TRAINING FOR  
4 SCHOOL COUNSELORS, AND APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR SCHOOL  
5 COUNSELORS.

6 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

7 **SECTION 1.1.(a)** Effective July 1, 2021, G.S. 115C-47 is amended by adding a new  
8 subdivision to read:

9 "(65) School Counselors. – Local boards of education shall comply with the  
10 requirements for school counselors provided in G.S. 115C-316.1, including  
11 the requirement to employ at least one full-time, permanent school counselor  
12 for every 300 high school students in the local school administrative unit."

13 **SECTION 1.1.(b)** Effective July 1, 2022, G.S. 115C-47(65), as enacted by this  
14 section, reads as rewritten:

15 "(65) School Counselors. – Local boards of education shall comply with the  
16 requirements for school counselors provided in G.S. 115C-316.1, including  
17 the requirement to employ at least one full-time, permanent school counselor  
18 for every 300-250 high school students in the local school administrative unit."

19 **SECTION 1.2.(a)** Effective July 1, 2021, G.S. 115C-12 is amended by adding a new  
20 subdivision to read:

21 "(47) School Counselors. – The State Board of Education shall ensure that each  
22 public school unit operated under the control of the State Board of Education  
23 complies with the requirements for school counselors provided in  
24 G.S. 115C-316.1, including the requirement that each public school unit with  
25 at least 300 high school students employs at least one school counselor for  
26 every 300 high school students in the unit."

27 **SECTION 1.2.(b)** Effective July 1, 2022, G.S. 115C-12(47), as enacted by this  
28 section, reads as rewritten:

29 "(47) School Counselors. – The State Board of Education shall ensure that each  
30 public school unit operated under the control of the State Board of Education  
31 complies with the requirements for school counselors provided in  
32 G.S. 115C-316.1, including the requirement that each public school unit with  
33 at least 300-250 high school students employs at least one school counselor  
34 for every 300-250 high school students in the unit."

35 **SECTION 1.3.(a)** Effective July 1, 2021, G.S. 115C-218.75 is amended by adding  
36 a new subsection to read:



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1       "(i) School Counselors. – Each charter school shall comply with the requirements for  
2 school counselors provided in G.S. 115C-316.1, including the requirement that each charter  
3 school with at least 300 high school students employs at least one school counselor for every 300  
4 high school students enrolled in the charter school."

5           **SECTION 1.3.(b)** Effective July 1, 2022, G.S. 115C-218.75(i), as enacted by this  
6 section, reads as rewritten:

7       "(i) School Counselors. – Each charter school shall comply with the requirements for  
8 school counselors provided in G.S. 115C-316.1, including the requirement that each charter  
9 school with at least ~~300~~250 high school students employs at least one school counselor for every  
10 ~~300~~250 high school students enrolled in the charter school."

11           **SECTION 1.4.(a)** Effective July 1, 2021, G.S. 115C-238.66 is amended by adding  
12 a new subdivision to read:

13       "(17) School counselors. – Each regional school shall comply with the requirements  
14 for school counselors provided in G.S. 115C-316.1, including the requirement  
15 that each regional school with at least 300 high school students employs at  
16 least one school counselor for every 300 high school students enrolled in the  
17 regional school."

18           **SECTION 1.4.(b)** Effective July 1, 2022, G.S. 115C-238.66(17), as enacted by this  
19 section, reads as rewritten:

20       "(17) School counselors. – Each regional school shall comply with the requirements  
21 for school counselors provided in G.S. 115C-316.1, including the requirement  
22 that each regional school with at least ~~300~~250 high school students employs  
23 at least one school counselor for every ~~300~~250 high school students enrolled  
24 in the regional school."

25           **SECTION 1.5.** Effective July 1, 2021, Section 6(d)(2) of S.L. 2018-32 is amended  
26 by adding a new sub-subdivision to read:

27       "p. G.S. 115C-47(65) [School Counselors]."

28           **SECTION 2.(a)** Effective July 1, 2021, G.S. 115C-316.1 reads as rewritten:

29 **"§ 115C-316.1. ~~Duties of school~~ School counselors.**

30       (a) School counselors shall implement a comprehensive developmental school  
31 counseling program in their schools. Counselors shall spend at least eighty percent (80%) of their  
32 work time providing direct services to students. Direct services do not include the coordination  
33 of standardized testing. Direct services shall consist of:

- 34           (1) Delivering the school guidance curriculum through large group guidance,  
35           interdisciplinary curriculum development, group activities, and parent  
36           workshops.
- 37           (2) Guiding individual student planning through individual or small group  
38           assistance and individual or small group advisement.
- 39           (3) Providing responsive services through consultation with students, families,  
40           and staff; individual and small group counseling; crisis counseling; referrals;  
41           and peer facilitation.
- 42           (4) Performing other student services listed in the Department of Public  
43           Instruction school counselor job description that has been approved by the  
44           State Board of Education.

45       (b) School counseling program support activities do not include the coordination of  
46 standardized testing. During the remainder of their work time, school counselors may assist other  
47 staff with the coordination of standardized testing.

48       "(c) Each public school unit with at least 300 high school students shall employ at least  
49 one full-time, permanent school counselor for every 300 high school students in the unit."

50       "(d) The superintendent of a public school unit or, if there is no superintendent, the highest  
51 decision-making authority in a public school unit shall ensure that every school in the unit with

1 fewer than 300 students has access to a school counselor for at least two instructional days of  
2 each week of the school year.

3 (e) The State Board of Education shall adopt requirements for professional development  
4 for school counselors that include annual training in at least the following areas:

5 (1) Issues related to student access to colleges and universities.

6 (2) Policies, processes, and strategies to navigate the admissions process for  
7 colleges and universities."

8 **SECTION 2.(b)** Effective July 1, 2022, G.S. 115C-316.1, as amended by this  
9 section, reads as rewritten:

10 "**§ 115C-316.1. School counselors.**

11 ...

12 (c) Each public school unit with at least ~~300~~250 high school students shall employ at  
13 least one full-time, permanent school counselor for every ~~300~~250 high school students in the  
14 unit.

15 (d) The superintendent of a public school unit or, if there is no superintendent, the highest  
16 decision-making authority in a public school unit shall ensure that every school in the unit with  
17 fewer than ~~300~~250 students has access to a school counselor for at least two instructional days  
18 of each week of the school year.

19 ...."

20 **SECTION 3.(a)** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of  
21 Public Instruction the sum of six million one hundred thousand dollars (\$6,100,000) in recurring  
22 funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year and the sum of nineteen million five hundred thousand dollars  
23 (\$19,500,000) in recurring funds for the 2022-2023 fiscal year to increase the Instructional  
24 Support Allotment. These funds shall be used to increase positions for school counselors as  
25 provided in this act.

26 **SECTION 3.(b)** Funds provided for school counselors pursuant to this section shall  
27 supplement and not supplant any funds already provided for school counselors.

28 **SECTION 4.** Section 3 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2021. Sections 1.1(a),  
29 1.2(a), 1.3(a), 1.4(a), and 2(a) of this act apply beginning with the 2021-2022 school year.  
30 Sections 1.1(b), 1.2(b), 1.3(b), 1.4(b), and 2(b) of this act apply beginning with the 2022-2023  
31 school year. Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective when it becomes law.