ASSEMBLY, No. 4860
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 22, 2020
Sponsored by:
Assemblywoman ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT
District 31 (Hudson)

Co-Sponsored by:
Assemblyman Simonsen

SYNOPSIS
Establishes certain program requirements for school counselor certification, periodic certificate renewal and professional development for school counselors; number of school counselors per public school; establishes position of School Liaison in DOE.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT
As introduced.
AN ACT concerning school counselors and supplementing Title 1 Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State

1. The Legislature finds and declares that the Department document on the reopening of schools during the COVID-19 pand Restart and Recovery Plan,” directs school districts to consider isolation on both educators and students, and recommends that s plans include the use of social and emotional learning and multi-ti to address the social and emotional needs of students. The Legis school counselors are vital to the effort to ensure that scho adequately address these student needs and to implement appropria

2. In addition to any other requirements adopted by the State school counseling programs, the State board shall require that a sch at a regionally accredited college or university leading to a stand certificate with a school counselor endorsement incorporate the foll a. the American School Counselor Association’s national m school counseling programs; and b. training in the delivery of social and emotional learning and postsecondary and career planning.

3. a. The State Board of Education shall require the holder of a services certificate with a school counselor endorsement to renew endorsement five years following initial certification and every five State board shall establish a renewal schedule for persons hold endorsement on the effective date of P.L. c. (C. ) (pending b this bill).

b. In addition to any other requirements adopted by the State the issuance of a standard educational services certificate with counseling services endorsement, the State board shall require th knowledge related to the varying duties of a school counselor ac well as knowledge related to postsecondary and career planning.

c. The State Board of Education shall establish pro requirements for school counselors. The State board shall r professional development requirements, that each school counsel areas related to the duties of a school counselor including, b promotion of mental health awareness, suicide prevention, crisi informed counseling practices, cultural competency and responsi Tiered System of Supports, delivery of social and emotional lear college and career readiness.

4. a. The board of education of a school district shall, at a assign on a full-time basis to each school within the district at leas
The maximum student to school counselor ratio per school is 250:1.

b. A school district may apply for any federal funds which implement the provisions of this section.

5. a. The Commissioner of Education shall appoint a State School Counselor Liaison. The State School Counselor Liaison shall hold a New Jersey services certificate with a director of school counseling services experience in the delivery of social and emotional learning practices postsecondary and career advisement. The State School Counselor Liaison shall work with school districts and school counselors to facilitate best practices for comprehensive school counseling services that address the mental and wellness of all students. The State School Counselor Liaison, in the position, shall collaborate with other State agencies and associations.

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

   (1) Serve as a liaison and resource expert in school counseling services for New Jersey certificated school counselors;
   (2) Facilitate the certificate renewal process for school counselors pursuant to subsection a. of section 3 of P.L. 2017, c. 1 (C. 52:14-19.1), the Legislature as this bill;
   (3) Foster and promote professional development for school counselors including planning, coordinating, or providing educational guidance services for New Jersey certificated school counselors through the New Jersey School Counselor Association, a continuing education to meet identified needs;
   (4) Monitor, interpret, synthesize, and disseminate relevant information with changes in school counseling practices, legislation, and practice for school counselors; and
   (5) Initiate, participate in, and utilize research studies related to school counselors, the mental health needs of children and youth, and related fields.

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

7. This act shall take effect immediately.

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

Under this bill, the State Board of Education will require school regionally accredited colleges and universities that lead to a school counseling endorsement to incorporate the following: (a) the American School Counselor Association’s model for school counseling programs, and (b) training in the emotional learning programming as well as postsecondary and career readiness.

Under this bill, a school counselor must renew his school counseling certification every five years following initial certification. For current certificated school counselors, the State board will establish a schedule for renewal. Under this bill, an applicant for a standard educational services certificate with a counseling services endorsement to possess knowledge related to school counseling programs across all grade levels as well as knowledge related to career planning. This bill directs the State board to establish professional development requirements for school counselors in areas related to the duties of school counseling, including, but not limited to, the promotion of mental health, prevention, crisis-intervention, trauma-informed counseling practices, and emotional learning programming, as well as postsecondary and career readiness.

This bill mandates a board of education to employ and assign a school counselor at each school within the district at least one school counselor. In each school, the school counselor ratio per school in the district cannot exceed 250:1.

Finally, this bill directs the Commissioner of Education to establish the New Jersey Tiered System of Supports, emotional learning programming, and college and career readiness.

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Finally, this bill directs the Commissioner of Education to establish the New Jersey Tiered System of Supports, emotional learning programming, and college and career readiness.

The person appointed as the State School Counselor Liaison will collaborate with other State and local stakeholders and perform the following duties:

- Serve as a liaison and resource expert in school counseling services;
- Facilitate the newly-established certificate renewal process for school counselors;
- Foster and promote professional development for school counselors;
- Monitor, interpret, synthesize, and disseminate relevant information that impacts school counseling practices, legislative and policy changes, and the mental health needs of children and youth; and
- Initiate, participate in, and utilize research studies related to school counseling services, the mental health needs of children and youth, and career readiness.