

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1622 Session of 2019

INTRODUCED BY THOMAS, KENYATTA, McCLINTON, HOHENSTEIN, FRANKEL, ULLMAN, DAY, DiGIROLAMO, McNEILL, HILL-EVANS, T. DAVIS, SCHLOSSBERG, DeLUCA, SCHROEDER, O'MARA, NEILSON, STEPHENS, SHUSTERMAN, DAWKINS, DONATUCCI, FREEMAN, SAPPEY, CALTAGIRONE, OTTEN, DALEY, TOOHL, RADER, BROOKS, MIHALEK, MADDEN, BULLOCK, GALLOWAY, KINSEY, JOHNSON-HARRELL, MALAGARI, WARREN, BURGOS, POLINCHOCK, HANBIDGE, ISAACSON, MURT, KIM, FIEDLER, ROZZI AND HELM, JUNE 12, 2019

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, JUNE 12, 2019

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An  
2 act relating to the public school system, including certain  
3 provisions applicable as well to private and parochial  
4 schools; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the  
5 laws relating thereto," in preliminary provisions, providing  
6 for study of school mental health professionals.

7 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
8 hereby enacts as follows:

9 Section 1. The act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known  
10 as the Public School Code of 1949, is amended by adding a  
11 section to read:

12 Section 128. Study of School Mental Health Professionals.

13 (a) The department shall conduct a study of public schools  
14 regarding school mental health professionals, which shall  
15 include the following:

16 (1) The number of full-time and part-time school counselors,  
17 school social workers and school psychologists in each school in

1 this Commonwealth.

2 (2) In each school in this Commonwealth, the ratio of  
3 students to:

- 4 (i) school counselors;
- 5 (ii) school social workers; and
- 6 (iii) school psychologists.

7 (3) Whether a school counselor, school social worker or  
8 school psychologist is providing counseling assistance to more  
9 than one school.

10 (4) The nationally accepted ratios of students to:

- 11 (i) school counselors;
- 12 (ii) school social workers; and
- 13 (iii) school psychologists.

14 (5) Recommendations regarding how a school can increase the  
15 number of school counselors, school social workers and school  
16 psychologists to meet the nationally accepted ratios.

17 (b) The department shall prepare a report based on the study  
18 conducted under subsection (a) and shall submit the report by  
19 December 21, 2021, to the chairperson and the minority  
20 chairperson of the Education Committee of the Senate and the  
21 chairperson and minority chairperson of the Education Committee  
22 of the House of Representatives.

23 (c) As used in this section, the following words and phrases  
24 shall have the meanings given to them in this subsection unless  
25 the context clearly indicates otherwise:

26 "Department." The Department of Education of the  
27 Commonwealth.

28 "School counselor." A person licensed and certified by the  
29 Commonwealth as a school counselor and hired to provide  
30 individual or group counseling assistance to students in the

1 elementary, middle or high school grades.

2 "School psychologist." A person licensed and certified by  
3 the Commonwealth as a school psychologist and hired to provide  
4 individual or group counseling assistance to students in the  
5 elementary, middle or high school grades.

6 "School social worker." A person licensed and certified by  
7 the Commonwealth as a school social worker and hired to provide  
8 individual or group counseling assistance to students in the  
9 elementary, middle or high school grades.

10 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.