

Legislative Analysis



AMEND MICHIGAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR CREDENTIALING REQUIREMENTS

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Senate Bill 162 (H-1) as reported from House committee
Sponsor: Sen. Sean McCann
House Committee: Education
Senate Committee: Education
Complete to 6-21-23

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

(Enacted as Public Act 111 of 2023)

SUMMARY:

Senate Bill 162 would amend section 1233 of the Revised School Code to add requirements regarding counselor credentialing that are currently found in the administrative rule set for the Certification and Licensure of School Counselors¹ and to make other amendments to school counselor credentialing requirements. School counselors are credentialed through the Michigan Department of Education (MDE).

The bill would define a *school counselor credential* as one of the following:

- A school counselor endorsement on a valid Michigan teaching certificate.
- A preliminary school counselor license as described in section 1233.
- A temporary school counselor license as described in section 1233.
- A school counselor license.

This definition would not include a credential issued in another state, country, or federally recognized Indian tribe and would match the term as it is currently used in R 390.1301 of the Michigan Administrative Code. Under the rule set presently, an individual must apply for and receive one of these credentials to be employed in a role that is defined as being the role of a school counselor.

Section 1233 presently requires that the board of a school district or an intermediate school district (ISD) not allow a teacher who does not have a valid teaching certificate (or an alternate credential, as identified in the code) to teach in a school overseen by that board and contains a similar requirement for individuals to be properly credentialed to serve in a school counselor role.

For individuals seeking a school counselor's license, one of the current requirements is that they must hold a master's degree awarded after completion of an approved school counselor education program that includes at least all of the following skills and content areas or their equivalent:

- Guidance services—philosophy, principles, and practices.
- Individual and group analysis—nature and range of human characteristics and appraisal methods.
- Guidance information—vocational development theory, educational and occupational information.

¹https://www.michigan.gov/mde/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/educator_services/rules/sch_couns_cert_code.pdf

- Counseling theory and practice—individual and group procedures, administration and coordination relationships, professional relationships, and ethics.
- Supervised experiences—laboratory, practicum, or internship.
- Evaluation—statistics and research methodology, follow-up evaluation, and measurement methods.

The bill would change this requirement to instead require an applicant to hold a master’s degree after completion of an approved school counselor education program based on standards developed by MDE in consultation with practicing school counselors, representatives from school counselor preparation programs, and state associations representing school counselors and eliminated the above enumerated list. The bill also would eliminate a requirement for an individual to be recommended by an approved program in order to be eligible to receive a license.

The bill would reduce the amount of time a candidate from outside Michigan would have to have successfully practiced school counselors to be eligible to apply for the applicable credential in Michigan from the current five years within the immediately preceding seven-year period to at least three years in any time span. In addition, such a candidate would also have to hold a master’s degree awarded after completion of a school counselor education program.

A requirement that an individual complete 600 clock hours of internship (with 300 hours being in a school setting) prior to receiving a preliminary license would not be carried over from the administrative rules to statute. The bill would not rescind this rule set, so they would remain in place until otherwise modified or repealed if the bill is enacted into law.

The bill would also add to statute the current allowance in the administrative rules for a temporary school counselor license² to be issued to an individual who was licensed in another state or country or by a federally-recognized tribe, if they meet all of the requirements for a permanent credential, except for successful passage of the Michigan examination.

MCL 380.1233

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill would create costs for the state and may result in cost savings for local school districts, intermediate school districts (ISDs), and public school academies (PSAs).

MDE has noted that between SB 162 and SB 161, the bills would create around \$10,000 in costs for MDE to update technological systems due to revised school counselor credential requirements (and, under SB 161, requirements related to teacher certification and endorsements). MDE has noted that some of the costs created by these requirements would be lessened because MDE is already using a grant to perform the necessary upgrades to their systems to meet these revised requirements. MDE has also noted that the changes under the bill should reduce staff time necessary to support educators through the certification process.

² <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/ed-serv/ed-cert/cert-guidance/school-counselor-credentials/temporary-school-counselor>

The bill could create a cost savings for districts, ISDs, and PSAs through the potential expansion of the pool of applicants for school counselors.

POSITIONS:

The following indicated support for the bill:

- Michigan Department of Education (5-16-23)
- Michigan School Counselor Association (5-16-23)
- Michigan Alliance for Student Opportunity (5-16-23)
- World Education Services and Church World Services (5-16-23)
- Michigan Education Association (5-9-23)
- Michigan Association of Superintendents and Administrators (5-9-23)
- Mackinac Center for Public Policy (5-9-23)
- Barry, Branch, Calhoun, Jackson, Lenawee and Monroe Intermediate School Districts (5-9-23)
- Education Advocates of West Michigan (5-9-23)
- Michigan Manufacturers Association (5-9-23)
- Michigan Association of School Boards (5-9-23)
- Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals (5-9-23)

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■ 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.