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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 6921

BILL NUMBER: HB 1295

NOTE PREPARED: Jan 25, 2010

BILL AMENDED:

SUBJECT: School counselors.

FIRST AUTHOR: Rep. Porter

FIRST SPONSOR:

BILL STATUS: 2nd Reading - 1st House

FUNDS AFFECTED: **GENERAL**
 DEDICATED
 FEDERAL

IMPACT: State & Local

Summary of Legislation: *School Elementary Counselors, School Social Workers, and Schools Psychologists Program:* The bill establishes specific target counselor/student ratios to be used for the hiring of school counselors, school social workers, and school psychologists.

School Counselor License: The bill requires the Department of Education, in cooperation with other appropriate associations, to develop a uniform job description for school counselors. It requires individuals seeking initial licensure for school counseling to provide evidence of performance in certain areas.

The bill makes a technical correction.

Effective Date: July 1, 2010.

Explanation of State Expenditures: *School Elementary Counselors, School Social Workers, and Schools Psychologists Program:* The bill specifies the staffing ratios goals for the School Elementary Counselors, School Social Workers, and Schools Psychologists Program. The bill would establish a standard of 250 students for each school counselor, 400 students for each social worker, and 1,000 students for each school psychologist. Based on the number of employees reported on the Department of Education's 2007-2008 school year certified staff report about 2,317 additional counselors, 2,237 additional social workers, and 656 additional psychologists would be needed by local schools. The estimated costs of the additional staff would be about \$214.6 M if all school were to meet these goals. The program is to be funded by grants from the Elementary School Counselors, Social Workers, and School Psychologists Fund. The current program was not funded during the 2009-2011 biennium.

This bill does not contain any appropriations for this fund.

School Counselor License: The Department of Education should be able to develop of a uniform job description for school counselors within their existing resources. The bill also does not allow the Department to issue a license in school counseling unless the person provides evidence of performance in:

1. Developmental guidance instruction.
2. Educational development.
3. Career development student assistance services.
4. Counseling strategies.
5. Prevention programming.
6. Crisis intervention leadership.
7. Advocacy for students.
8. Professional growth.

The bill could increase the cost of the Department to license counselors depending on the amount of performance data that has to be reviewed. The additional work would be done within existing resources.

Explanation of State Revenues:

Explanation of Local Expenditures: *See Explanation of State Expenditures:*

Explanation of Local Revenues:

State Agencies Affected: Department of Education.

Local Agencies Affected: Local Schools.

Information Sources: Department of Education databases.

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