

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2017 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

Senate Bill 540

BY SENATORS MAYNARD AND CLINE

[Introduced March 8, 2017; Referred
to the Committee on Education]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §18-5-18b of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating
 2 to county boards of education; school counselors; requiring all counselors to inform
 3 graduating high school students of the availability of student aid; and requiring all
 4 graduating high school students to apply for student aid.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

1 That §18-5-18b of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended and
 2 reenacted to read as follows:

ARTICLE 5. COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION.

§18-5-18b. School counselors in public schools.

1 (a) A school counselor means a professional educator who holds a valid school
 2 counselor's certificate in accordance with article three of this chapter.

3 (b) Each county board shall provide counseling services for each pupil enrolled in the
 4 public schools of the county.

5 (c) The school counselor shall work with individual pupils and groups of pupils in providing
 6 developmental, preventive and remedial guidance and counseling programs to meet academic,
 7 social, emotional and physical needs; including programs to identify and address the problem of
 8 potential school dropouts. The school counselor also shall advise graduating high school pupils
 9 of the availability of free school aid and each graduating senior shall apply for free school aid.

10 The school counselor also may provide consultant services for parents, teachers and
 11 administrators and may use outside referral services, when appropriate, if no additional cost is
 12 incurred by the county board.

13 (d) The state board may adopt rules consistent with the provisions of this section that
 14 define the role of a school counselor based on the "National Standards for School Counseling
 15 Programs" of the American school counselor association. A school counselor is authorized to
 16 perform such services as are not inconsistent with the provisions of the rule as adopted by the
 17 state board. To the extent that any funds are made available for this purpose, county boards shall

18 provide training for counselors and administrators to implement the rule as adopted by the state
19 board.

20 (e) Each county board shall develop a comprehensive drop-out prevention program
21 utilizing the expertise of school counselors and any other appropriate resources available.

22 (f) School counselors shall be full-time professional personnel, shall spend at least
23 seventy-five percent of work time in a direct counseling relationship with pupils, and shall devote
24 no more than one fourth of the work day to administrative activities: *Provided*, That such activities
25 are counselor related.

26 (g) Nothing in this section prohibits a county board from exceeding the provisions of this
27 section, or requires any specific level of funding by the Legislature.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to require school counselors to inform graduating high school students of the availability of student aid. The bill also requires all graduating high school students to apply for student aid.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.