

HB 2536 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Education

Action Date: 03/20/17

Action: Do pass with amendments
and be referred to Ways and Means by prior reference. (Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 9-0-0-0

Yeas: 9 - Doherty, Evans, Hernandez, McLain, Parrish, Sollman, Sprenger, Vial, Wilson

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Alethia Miller, LPRO Analyst

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to design professional development courses related to guidance and counseling programs for students in kindergarten through grade 12. Directs ODE to make courses available to all school districts in the state. Directs ODE to provide technical assistance and other training to school districts and school counselors related to courses developed. Appropriates money from the General Fund beginning July 1, 2017 for the purpose of developing professional development courses, making the courses electronically available, and providing technical assistance to school districts. Declares emergency; takes effect July 1, 2017.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- School counselors in smaller districts or rural communities and a low-cost approach to providing online courses for professional development
- Online workshops and supervision allow school counselors to receive quality professional development and access to other professionals for consultation
- Professional development services will be offered at minimal cost to Oregon school counselors

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Removes the appropriation of \$250,000 from the General Fund.

BACKGROUND:

The American School Counselor Association ("Association") recommends that for every 250 students in school, there is one counselor present. Data from the Association indicates that during the 2013-2014 academic year, Oregon had one counselor for every 604 students present. Professional development opportunities for school counselors vary depending on the money districts can spend on such services. The option of online coursework and networking will reportedly provide professional development opportunities for districts that are unable to send staff to out-of-state or in-state functions. This flexibility reportedly may benefit school counselors wishing to enhance their network and skills.

House Bill 2536-A directs the Department of Education (ODE) to design professional development courses related to guidance and counseling programs for students in kindergarten through grade 12. It further directs ODE to make these courses available throughout the State of Oregon and provide technical assistance to school districts and counselors for the courses in development.